

ACTIVITY 3 – TIPS FOR RUNNING FOR OFFICE



So you've decided to run for President as a part of the Kids Voting, Marathon County Mock National Party Convention. Now you need to build a campaign organization to win the election! This guide will take you through the process of running for office and will offer tips for running an effective campaign.

Keep in mind that every candidate and campaign is different. You may choose to be an active candidate, or a more passive candidate; you don't have to take up every aspect listed in this document.

Filing to Run

The first step in running for office is completing and submitting the Declaration of Candidacy Form. You can get this form from your teacher. Once completed and submitted, you will be officially registered to run for office.

Running for Office

Ultimately, as a candidate you need to persuade voters to cast their votes for you. This is done through a variety of mediums, which will be covered in this section.

Internet

Keep in mind that there are about 8 schools participating in this electoral process. To win the election, you will probably need to persuade registered voters from other schools to vote for you. The internet is one way to accomplish this. Kids Voting of Marathon County will create a space on its website for each of the candidates. Your page will give you the opportunity to post information about your campaign, where you stand on the issues and what issues are most important to you. Here, you can also provide links to your social media pages and contact information for the campaign.

As the candidate, you (or your campaign team) are responsible for creating any content you want Kids Voting of Marathon County to post on its website. If you are not sure where to start, complete our President's Candidate Questionnaire and e-mail your answers to Kids Voting so we can put them on your candidate page.

Candidates should email content to kvusamc@live.com and Kids Voting staff will upload it to their website at <http://www.kidsvotingusa-wimc.org/convention/>.

Social Media

The most popular method of reaching voters is through social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc). Each candidate can choose to create his/her own social media sites. Please inform Kids Voting at kvusamc@live.com of any campaign-related social media sites you have created so that we may post the links on our website. While Kids Voting will *not* assume any responsibility for updating and maintaining candidates' social media

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accounts, Kids Voting staff *will* monitor all social media accounts to ensure content is appropriate for all audiences.

Advertising

TV commercials are a well-known method of campaign advertising. If you would like to create a TV commercial for your campaign, Kids Voting will post it to its YouTube account so it can be shared. A TV commercial for this process does not have to be anything fancy. A simple phone video of the candidate speaking to the camera can be very effective. If received with enough advance notice, Kids Voting will try to play any TV commercials created by candidates at the Mock Convention.

All TV commercials should be e-mailed to kvusamc@live.com for posting on YouTube and so Kids Voting can arrange to try to play the commercials at the Convention.

Other forms of advertising include print media. As a candidate, you could create a handout or pamphlet to distribute to potential voting delegates. Any such handout could include similar information to what you post on your web page.

Campaign Team

Since there are many aspects to a campaign and you will be trying to reach voters at different schools, you may want to consider forming a campaign team. A campaign team consists of a Campaign Manager, volunteers to manage different aspects of the campaign (TV Commercials, web page, social media, etc), and general volunteers to spread the word about your campaign. Having a campaign team in place will allow you, the candidate, to focus on other parts of the campaign. It will also help you reach more voters.

Party Platform

Although candidates within each party may have similar views and opinions, each candidate may have differing opinions on what the top issues should be and how exactly to tackle those issues. Because of this, it is important for candidates to research the top issues and form opinions on them. This research will help candidates form content for their web page, social media sites, and advertisements. As the party platform is what the candidate will ultimately run on, it will be important for candidates to come prepared with knowledge of their party's proposed platforms, so they can be prepared to discuss and debate them at the Convention.

Convention Delegates

Since there are multiple candidates running for President within your party, you will need to receive the endorsement of your party at the National Mock Convention. To win your party's endorsement, you may want to recruit supporters to attend the convention as voting delegates. The more voting delegates at the convention who support you, the better your chances of winning your party's endorsement. Recruiting alternates to attend the convention is also important so that you have back-up voters in case a primary delegate is unable to attend.

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At the Convention

The day of the convention is the best opportunity to win votes. There are several ways to do this. The first and most common method is by talking to delegates directly. In the past, candidates have created handouts to distribute to delegates, some have even handed out candy or other trinkets with their name or campaign slogan attached to it. These are simple methods to reach lots of voters. Having a network of volunteers to support you will enable you to reach more voting delegates. When you campaign on the day of the convention, please be respectful of our generous hosts at UW-Stevens Point at Wausau by following their facility rules:

- ✪ Freestanding, floor and table decorations/arrangements are acceptable
- ✪ NO glitter, confetti or sand
- ✪ Any balloons must be non-latex and must be secured
- ✪ Any decorations that will be attached to walls must be attached using blue or green painters' tape
- ✪ Posters *cannot* be put on campus walls, doors, above drinking fountains or in restrooms. They *may* be placed on bulletin boards that are not reserved for a specific purpose. They *may* be posted on the glass blocks outside the student union as long as they do not cover other posters. *Kids Voting will provide foam board for placing campaign posters, but any candidate who places more than one poster may have additional posters removed to make room for posters of other candidates.*
- ✪ Please remove your posters, decorations, etc. after the convention

Finally, you will have an opportunity to have a supporter nominate you for President. Once all candidates have been officially nominated, they will face off in a debate moderated by members of the local news media. Again, issue research is important here, as candidates will need to articulate their positions and persuade the delegates that they are better than the other candidates for President.

The descriptions of these aspects of a campaign are meant to get you started and give you an idea of how to navigate the campaign process. Feel free to incorporate other things into your campaign and do not be afraid to ask questions.

Good luck!