

PLAN Parent Action Toolkit:

EDUCATE! ORGANIZE! MOBILIZE!

Vote November 8th to Save Our Schools!

Contents:

- Voter Education Action Check-list**
- Prop. 76 Fact Sheet**
- Not a Citizen? You can still get involved
in Elections (talking points)**
- Perfecting Your “Pitch”**
- Message and Pitch Worksheet**
- Get Out The Vote Pitch Worksheet**

VOTER EDUCATION ACTION CHECK-LIST FOR PARENTS: What You Need to Succeed

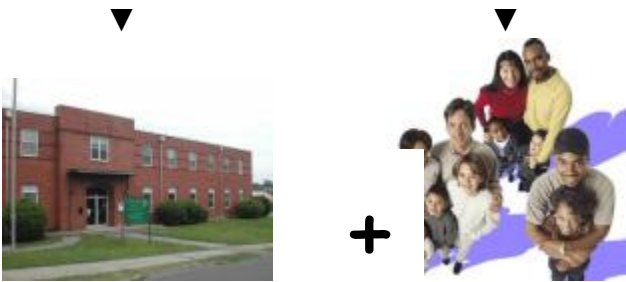
Volunteers

A portable table

An eye-catching sign

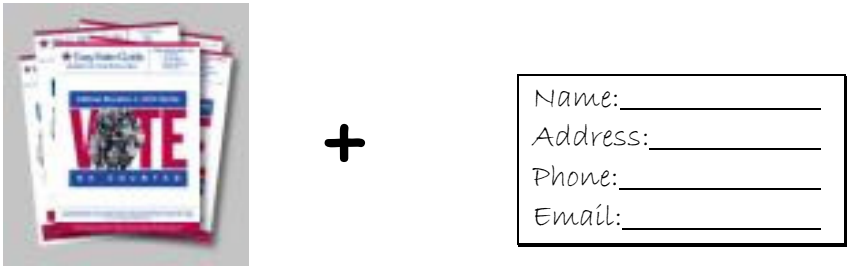


A time and place in your community where parents gather (for example, drop-off times outside your child's school, a community event, a family resource center)



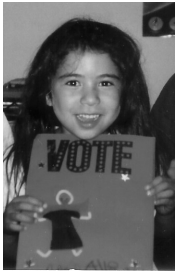
Voter education materials (voter guides, fact sheets, etc.), voter registration forms (until Oct 24)

A sign-in sheet, so you can follow up with people and remind them to vote on November 8th.



=

**EDUCATED PARENTS READY TO EXERCISE
THEIR DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS ON NOV. 8!**



Prop. 76 and Our Schools: Get the Facts – and Vote on Nov. 8!

Prop. 76, the Live Within Our Means (LWOM) Act, would have a dramatic impact on funding for local schools. This ballot initiative, to be decided in the November 8 Special Election:

- Guts Prop. 98, which voters approved in 1988 to guarantee that education spending wouldn't be cut below a minimum level.
- Limits state spending overall, giving the Governor power to make across the board cuts if state revenues fall below a certain level.
- Would result in cuts to education – as much as \$4 billion per year, or \$600 per student.

Current Education Funding Guarantee (Prop. 98)	If Prop. 76 Passes...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensures a minimum level of funding to schools. Schools cannot receive less funding than the year before, and can receive more if the economy or student population grows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Governor has more power to decide how much money goes to schools. If the state's revenues are low, and the Legislature can't agree on a solution within 45 days, the Governor can cut programs, including education.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If state revenues are short, the legislature can suspend the Prop. 98 minimum guarantee with a 2/3 vote, but must pay back the difference when revenues rise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Governor can cut education funding below the current levels and is not required to pay back money to schools if funding is cut.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Whenever schools get more funding than guaranteed by Prop. 98, the minimum spending level increases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If schools receive extra funding one year, the minimum level would not increase.

Adapted from *Children's Advocate*, Sept-Oct 2005.

How would these changes affect local schools?

Even with Prop. 98's education funding guarantee, California schools face major challenges due to underfunding:

- **School Spending Has Plummeted:** In 1978, California's per-pupil spending relative to other states was \$600 greater than the national average. Today, despite the higher costs of educating students, California's per-pupil spending is \$600 lower than the national average.
- **Class Sizes Are Among the Largest in the Nation:** With an average of 23 students per class, California has the 8th largest average elementary school class size in the nation.
- **Student/Teacher Ratio Is Among the Highest in the Nation:** California has among the highest number of students for each teacher in the nation – only one state has a higher student/teacher ratio.

Last year, after the Governor backed out on a deal to pay back \$2 billion that he took from education funding to balance the budget, local districts had to make tough budget choices – including increasing class sizes, cutting programs, laying off teachers, and even closing schools. If Prop. 76 passes, funding for schools and other programs would decrease dramatically.

Prepared by Bay Area Parent Leadership Action Network (PLAN). Sources: California Budget Project, Action Alliance for Children, California Teachers Association.

Not a Citizen?

You Can Still Get Involved in Elections!

Non-citizens aren't allowed to vote in U.S. elections, even though election results can affect immigrants very directly. For example, non-citizens with children in California public schools will be affected by Proposition 76. This proposition would allow the Governor to cut education funding below the minimum level approved by voters if he decides there is a fiscal emergency. More cuts to education could result in classroom overcrowding, school closures, teacher layoffs, and fewer textbooks.

But immigrants *can and do* get involved in elections. For example, immigrants were very involved in the in the fight against Proposition 187, an anti-immigrant ballot initiative approved by California voters in 1994. Even though the proposition won statewide, it lost in every part of California where immigrants were actively involved in the campaign.

Here are some things you can do, even if you are not eligible to vote:

- Help other people register to vote.
- Find someone who *can* vote — maybe a friend, co-worker or family member — and make them promise to vote in your place.
- Make house-to-house visits in your community, passing out literature, informing people about ballot issues that affect them and making sure they vote.
- Make telephone calls to voters in immigrant communities in their own languages.
- Be a “Precinct Leader.” In an electoral campaign, a Precinct Leader gets to know each voter in the precinct (usually six or eight square blocks) and which way they’ll vote. He or she makes sure that the “good” voters actually get to the polls on Election Day.
- Get your church or community organization to work on voter registration and education.

You may not be a U.S. citizen, but you can still have political power.

From Californians for Justice “*Take Back Our Rights*” series

Perfecting Your “Pitch”

Effectively Communicating Your Message to Register & Mobilize Immigrant Voters

Adapted from Mobilize the Immigrant Vote 2004 Bay Area Capacity Building Series, developed by PILA –
Partnership for Immigrant Leadership and Action

Introduce Yourself

- Identify yourself and your organization, if applicable
- Wear a badge, t-shirt or name tag that identifies you and your organization

Be friendly & courteous, be yourself

- Ask if it's a good time
- Ease into it - don't be too direct!
- Don't pressure people
- Give people time to respond, watch their body language

Provide as much information as possible

- Tell people what you're doing
- Describe your organization and its projects or issues
- Give options for individuals to get involved, especially if they are not eligible to vote

Pair up!

- It's easier and more fun
- You share the talking; one person might “click” with an individual
- If you're not from the community or neighborhood, try to find someone who is to join you
- Pair an experienced volunteer with someone new or less experienced

Talk up your organization

- Use your organization's mission & work as an “icebreaker” – are they concerned about education, would they be interested in increasing funding for schools?
- Carry materials and handouts with you

Find ways to involve as many individuals as possible

- Give people options, alternative ways to get involved besides voting
- Ask about other people in their home, their friends or their relatives, would they be interested in getting involved?

Evaluate afterwards

Use common sense, be safe and have fun!

Special Election 2005
Message and Pitch Worksheet

Adapted from Mobilize the Immigrant Vote 2004 Bay Area Capacity Building Series, developed by PILA – Partnership for Immigrant Leadership and Action

Your name: _____ Your organization: _____

Key elements of your pitch	Example	You and your organization
Your name and organization	Hi, my name is Margarita and I am a volunteer with Eastside Parent Action for Quality Education (PAQE). We work to increase funding for education and ensure parents have a voice in education reform decisions.	
What you are doing today	Today, PAQE volunteers are talking to neighborhood residents to about issues affecting education in the Nov. 8 special election and encouraging them to vote.	
Why it's important.	We believe that voting is one way for Eastside residents to have their opinions heard about education & other issues in our community. We are working to prioritize increased education funding for our community.	
What you would like from the other person.	Would you be interested in learning more about what's at stake for education in the Nov. 8 special election?	
If person says "I can't vote." If person says, "I am not into politics." If person says, "I already know about the special election."	<p>Well, voting is only one way to be involved. (Then go to A, B, C...)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Yeah, politics can be a bummer. Eastside PAQE does more than register voters. We work for quality education for low-income, immigrant, and communities of color, and we need more neighbors to become involved. (Then go to A, B, C...)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Great! (Then go to A, B, C...)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>A. Would you be interested in talking about these issues to your friends, family members and neighbors and encouraging them to vote?</p> <p>B. Would you be interested in attending our next parent meeting? There are lots of ways to get involved that aren't related to politics.</p> <p>C. Would you be interested in being on our mailing list so we can send you information issues & actions in our neighborhood?</p>	

Special Election 2005 – Get Out The Vote (GOTV) Pitch Worksheet

Adapted from PILA—Partnership for Immigrant Leadership and Action, MIV 2004

Your name: _____ Your organization: _____

Key elements of your GOTV pitch	Example	You and your organization
Your name and organization	Hi, my name is Margarita and I am a volunteer with Eastside PAQE – Parent Action for Quality Education. We work to increase education funding and ensure parents have a voice in education reform.	
What you are doing today	Today, PAQE volunteers are reminding our neighbors to vote.	
WHY their vote is important. If you are supporting/ opposing a specific initiative, mention it here. If not, stick to your main message.	We believe that voting is one way for Eastside residents to have their opinions heard about education & other issues in our community. On this year's ballot, Prop 76 is an initiative that changes the way the state funds education and could result in drastic cuts to our schools. Election day is (today/ tomorrow/Tuesday) Have you voted yet? / Do you plan to vote?	
<p>If the person has already voted— say “Thank you! Have a great day!”</p> <p>If the person says they plan to vote— ask “Do you know where your polling place is? Do you have any questions I might be able to help answer?”</p> <p>If the person hasn't voted yet, or are unsure they will vote, plan for a variety of responses, such as:</p>		
If person says “I work all day on Tuesdays so I won't have time to vote.”	Well, the polls are open from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm. You can vote even after the polls close as long as you're in line by 8:00 pm. Do you know where your polling place is? (<i>Provide this information if they don't know</i>) Do you have any other questions I might be able to answer? Don't forget to vote! Thanks!	
If person says, “I don't know what's on the ballot. It's too late to figure all that stuff out now.”	Well, I can offer you a voter guide that gives information on the issues that are especially important to our community, like Prop 76, which will change the way the state funds education and could result in drastic cuts to our schools. It's easy to read and it's available in (<i>your language</i>). If you don't feel comfortable voting on everything on the ballot, you don't have to. You can choose the issues you think are most important, and you can take the voter guide with you to the polls to help you make your selections. Do you know where your polling place is? Do you have any other questions I might be able to answer? Don't forget to vote! Thanks!	
If person says, “I'm not into politics”	Well, voting is one important way to make change on issues we care about. Eastside PAQE is working to increase education funding for our schools. If we have a large voter turnout from the neighborhood in this election, we have a louder voice when it comes to getting more funding for educating our children, yours and mine. Can we count on you to help make our community's voice stronger?	