

Building The Will

Pro Tips for Strategic CaseMakers™



Making Your Case at Public Meetings

Q:

Our school board is considering a measure that would help the district recruit and retain talented and diverse teachers. We're preparing a group of residents to advocate for a yes vote. Many of these folks have never spoken in public before. How do we use CaseMaking to help them?

A:

That's so exciting! You've obviously done a lot of work to build confidence and trust among community members. And you're right to thoughtfully prepare folks for the room they're walking into. Every public meeting is an opportunity to persuade decisionmakers and get bystanders more deeply involved. It's a perfect place for CaseMaking!

Visit our [website](#) to join the wider community of Strategic CaseMakers and help lead the charge for justice.

Here's how you do it:

1. Listen first. Talk to different kinds of people about their hopes and dreams for the community. Jot down the words they use.

⇒ THEY MIGHT SAY:

- *A better life for my kids.*
- *Places for our kids to have safe adventures outside.*
- *High quality teaching in every school.*
- *Fun, vibrant downtown.*

2. Frame the bigger problem you're solving. Brainstorm how teacher recruitment and retention will help the community achieve those hopes and dreams.

⇒ YOU MIGHT COME UP WITH:

Passionate, diverse teachers help fully prepare our kids to become the next generation of entrepreneurs and innovators who strengthen our community.

3. Map the entire universe of people you need to recruit talented and diverse teachers. Make a list!

⇒ YOUR LIST MIGHT INCLUDE:

Teachers, school board members, school leaders, PTSA, parents, students, chamber of commerce, environmental groups, planning and economic development.

4. Strategize who you might have the opportunity to persuade in the room. Prioritize where to focus your efforts. Can you convince the board itself? Certain folks in the audience?

⇒ YOU MIGHT DECIDE:

- *One pivotal board member.*
- *The PTSA president.*
- *Our citizens who are listening or watching.*

5. Tap into their aspirations. Put yourself in their shoes. What do they want to be able to deliver for the people they represent?

⇒ THEY MIGHT WANT:

- *Passionate teachers who represent the diversity we see in our world today.*
- *Strong educational outcomes for all our kids.*

6. Build their sense of urgency. Brainstorm what's happening now that adds urgency.

⇒ YOU MIGHT LAND ON:

It's become harder for our schools to fill current vacancies and easier to lose teachers to nearby districts.

7. Tell them what they'll lose if they don't act. Brainstorm what's at stake if they don't take action.

⇒ YOU MIGHT SAY:

If we continue to lose quality teachers, school quality will go down, and kids will be ill-prepared for the world ahead.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Now that you've done your homework, create a framing everyone can use, in their own way and their own words.

For example:

There's nothing more I want in life than to see my children thrive and be fully prepared for the future. The only way OUR children get to experience that is if we surround them with people, places, and opportunities to learn about the world they are about to inherit. I've talked to many neighbors and friends. They all want to live in a safe place that nurtures their growth. Unless we invest in our children the same way we are investing in upgrading and beautifying our downtown, we won't be able to give our children that future. These measures make our school district the kind of place where teachers and support staff want to live and work. That's why I support them, and I'm asking that you do too.

