

Advocating During Elections

Elections are a critical opportunity for the library sector to engage political parties and candidates and secure their support in addressing the key challenges facing libraries and the individuals and communities who rely on them. The goal of election engagement is to highlight the vital role of libraries, while raising awareness of the priorities and issues facing the sector.

What Can You Do?

1. Meet with Candidates or Campaign Staff

Meeting with candidates or their campaign teams is one of the most effective ways to build relationships and raise awareness about the value of libraries. These conversations provide an opportunity to share local perspectives, highlight community impact, and position libraries as essential to learning, economic development, and community well-being. Even brief meetings can help establish ongoing connections and identify future champions for libraries.

2. Write or Email Local Candidates

If meeting in person isn't possible, reaching out by email or letter is a valuable alternative. A short, clear message that outlines key priorities and includes a question or call to action can help you understand where candidates stand on issues affecting libraries. Written outreach also ensures your message is documented and can serve as a reference point after the election.

3. Engage through Social Media

Social media is a powerful tool for raising awareness and amplifying your message during an election. Share stories, data, and examples that highlight the impact of libraries in your community. Tag candidates, connect your message to local priorities, and use consistent messaging to help ensure your voice is part of the broader public conversation.

4. Participate in Community Events and Candidate Forums

Town halls, debates, and community events offer valuable opportunities to engage candidates in public settings. Asking thoughtful questions and raising library-related issues helps increase visibility and encourages candidates to consider libraries as part of their platform. These moments also help demonstrate that libraries are a priority for the communities they serve.

5. Make the Most of Informal Engagement Opportunities

Not all interactions need to be formal. Casual encounters—at events, in the community, or within your library—can be meaningful opportunities to introduce yourself, share key messages, and build rapport. These brief conversations can leave a lasting impression and open the door for future engagement.

Learn More

Read [“Librarian as Candidate.”](#)

Read [“From Awareness to Funding: Voter Perceptions and Support of Public Libraries in 2018.”](#)

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