

## THE REFERENDUM PROCESS

- During the summer of 2010 the collective bargaining process with the Monroe County Education Association resulted in restoration of the media specialist positions eliminated in February 2010, elimination of stipends for coaches and sponsors of extracurricular activities and reduction in the amounts of the annual experience stipends included in the teacher salary schedule.
- Soon thereafter the Foundation of the Monroe County Community Schools announced an ambitious campaign to raise \$750,000 to fund stipends for the 400 extracurricular positions during the 2010-11 school year. The result of the Foundation's efforts, the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and the tremendous generosity shown by the community was that the Foundation raised \$675,000 in donations in only 46 days.
- During this same time, multiple community meetings were held to determine the community's priorities for educating our students and to determine the level of support for an operational referendum.
- In June of 2010 the School Board voted to proceed with an operational referendum to establish a tax rate for the Referendum Exempt Operating Fund of 14.02 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation. Beginning with the 2011 budget year and continuing for a total of six years this tax rate would generate a tax levy in the Referendum Exempt Operating Fund of \$7,500,000. This step was followed by approval of the Monroe County Council in July 2010 and the referendum was placed on the ballot for the November election.
- The 14.02 cent tax rate would increase the property tax bill for the average MCCSC residential property (market value \$156,000) by approximately \$8.33 per month.
- A Referendum Steering Committee composed of volunteers from throughout the MCCSC community was appointed by the Superintendent of Schools. The committee was composed of parents, experts in the political process, educators and many others interested in contributing to the educational progress of MCCSC students. The committee's task was to develop and implement communication strategies to promote the referendum, which it accomplished with great success.
- A political action committee composed of community volunteers was appointed to raise money to fund the costs of signs, publications, promotional materials and advertisements needed to support the referendum.
- Hundreds of volunteers from throughout the MCCSC community devoted countless hours to canvass neighborhoods, attend meetings and attend social gatherings to provide information and answer questions regarding the referendum.
- The outcome of the committee's and volunteers' extremely hard work was a substantial margin of victory in the November 2010 election.