



# Albany Information Session

Facilitator | Grace Ramsey | Co-Director, Democracy Rising



# Agenda

- **Welcome**
- **RCV: 101**
- **How to talk about RCV**
- **How RCV Changes Campaigns**



# RCV 101

# How did we get here?



- Measure BB was placed on the ballot in 2020.
- Measure BB would establish Ranked-Choice Voting as the means of electing members of the City Council and Board of Education.
- 73% of Albany voters voted to pass Measure BB.

# What is ranked choice voting?



**1st choice:** The candidate you love.

**2nd choice:** The candidate you like.

**3rd choice:** The candidate you like slightly less.

**4th choice:** The candidate you can stand.

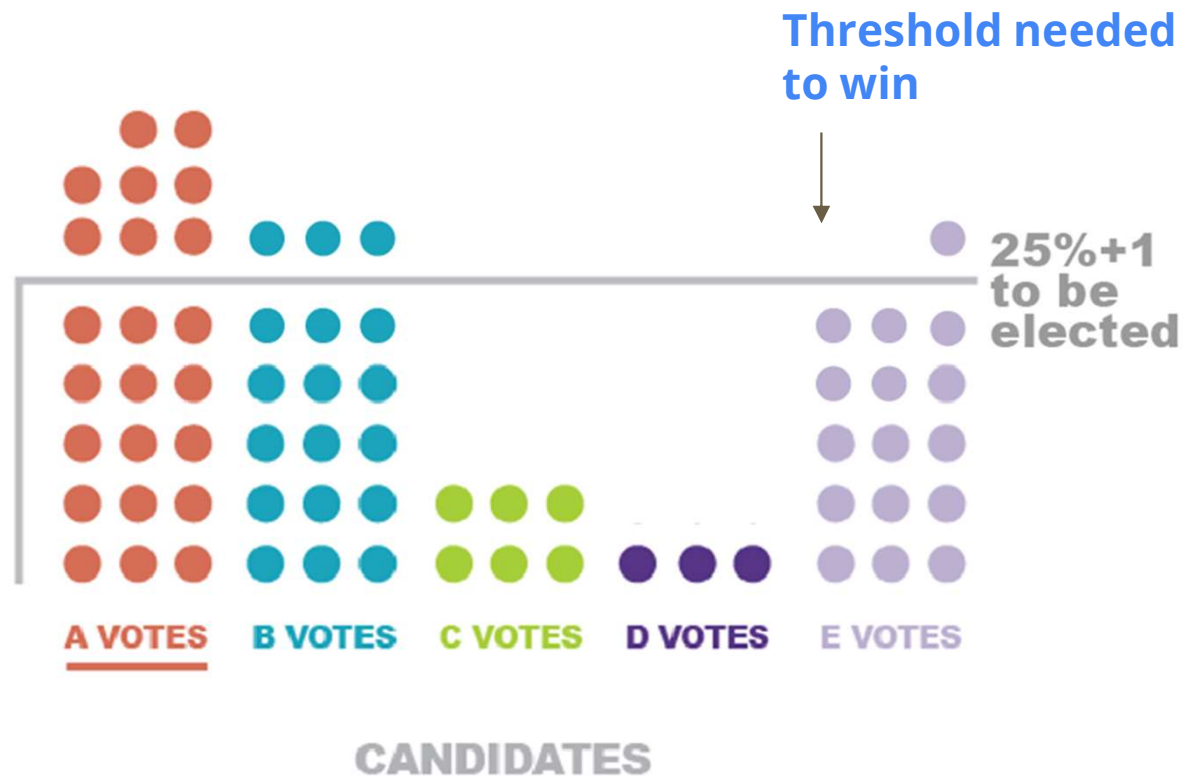
RANKED CHOICE VOTING					
<b>INSTRUCTIONS: VOTE BY RANKING CANDIDATE OF YOUR CHOICE</b>					
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WHAT DO WE WANT FOR LUNCH?					
	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice	5th Choice
CHICKEN	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DUMPLINGS	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BURGER	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
PIZZA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TACOS	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SANDWICH	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

# Multi-Winner Ranked Choice Voting

RCV ELECTION THRESHOLD	
SEATS UP FOR ELECTION	# OF VOTES NEEDED
1	50%+1
2	33.3%+1
3	25%+1
4	20%+1

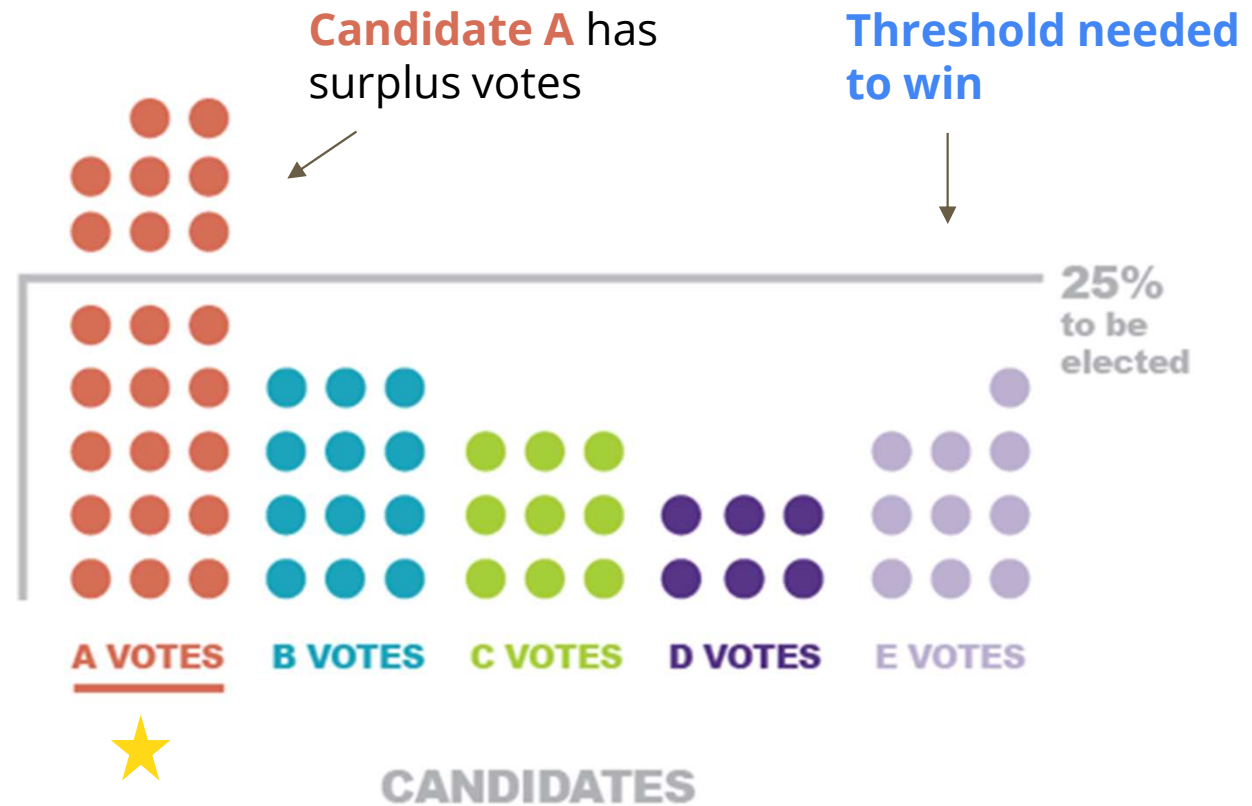
# Multi-Winner Ranked Choice Voting

Candidates meet the  
threshold of  $25\% + 1$ .



# Multi-Winner Ranked Choice Voting

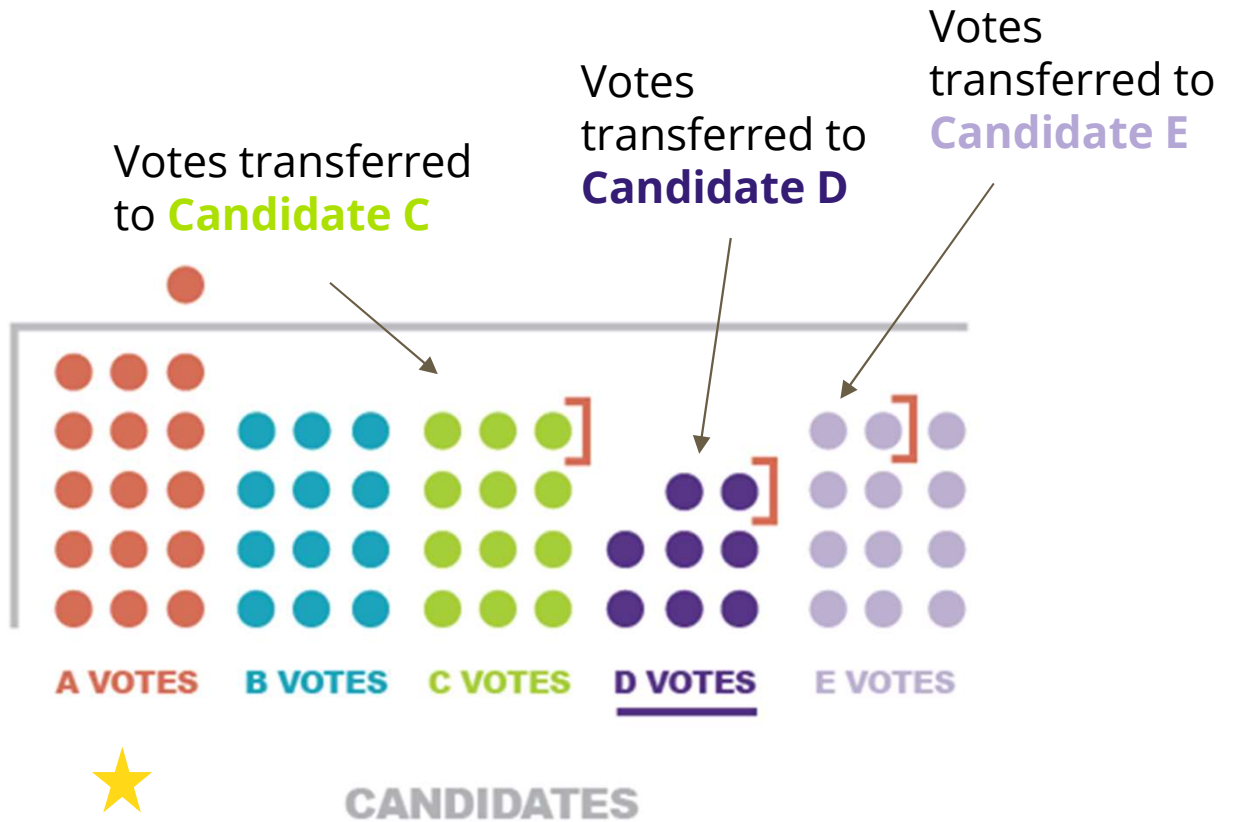
One candidate meets the  
threshold of  $25\% + 1$ .



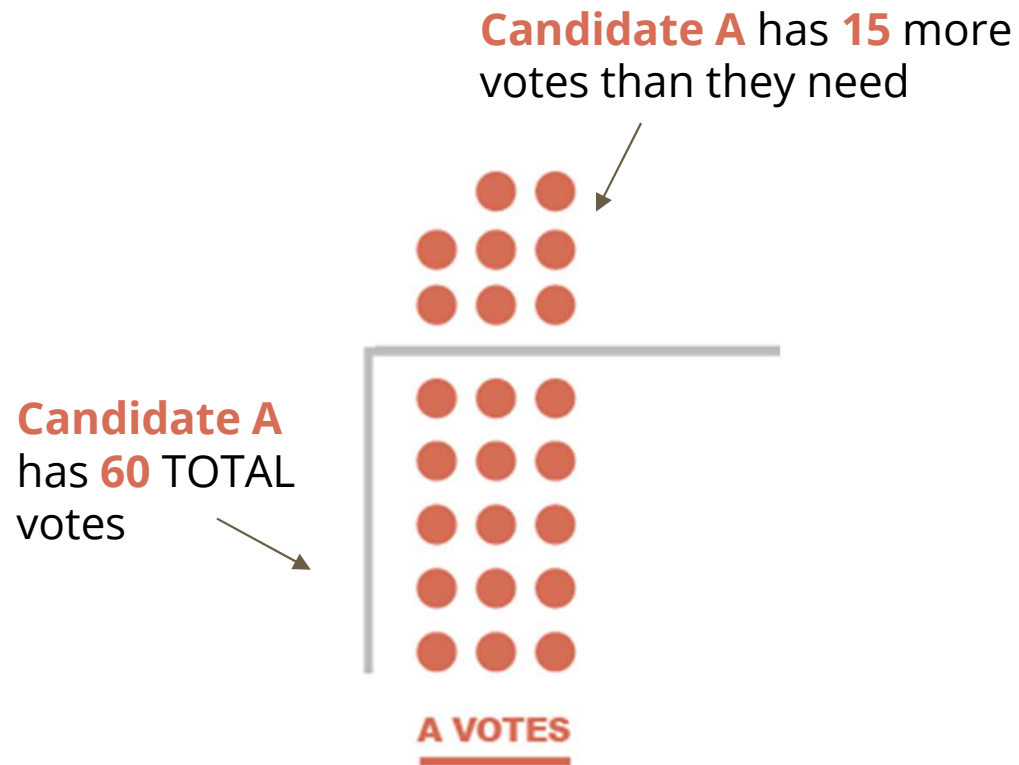


# Multi-Winner Ranked Choice Voting

One candidate meets the  
threshold of 25% + 1.



# EXAMPLE



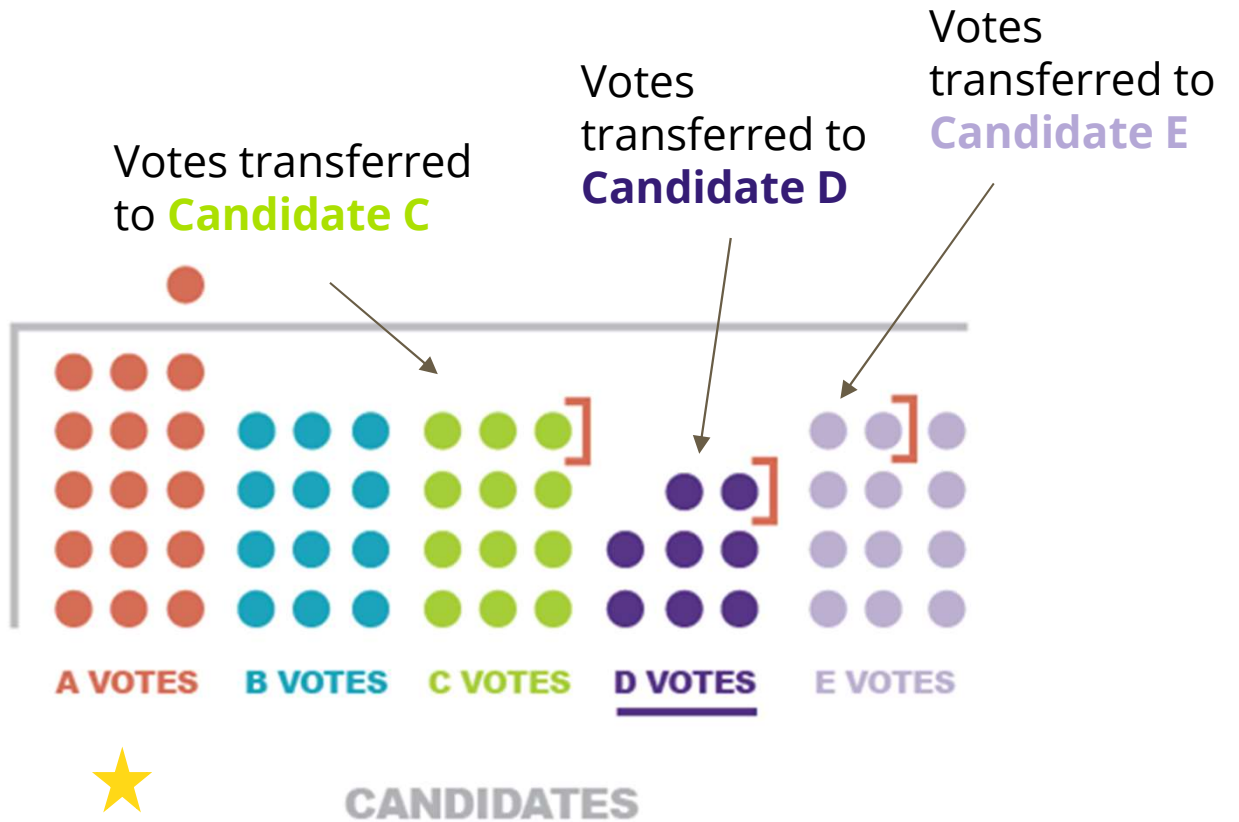
Those 15 extra votes are divided by the 60 total votes.

$$\frac{15}{60} = \frac{1}{4}$$

Each of the voters with Candidate A would have 1/4 of their vote go to their next choice.

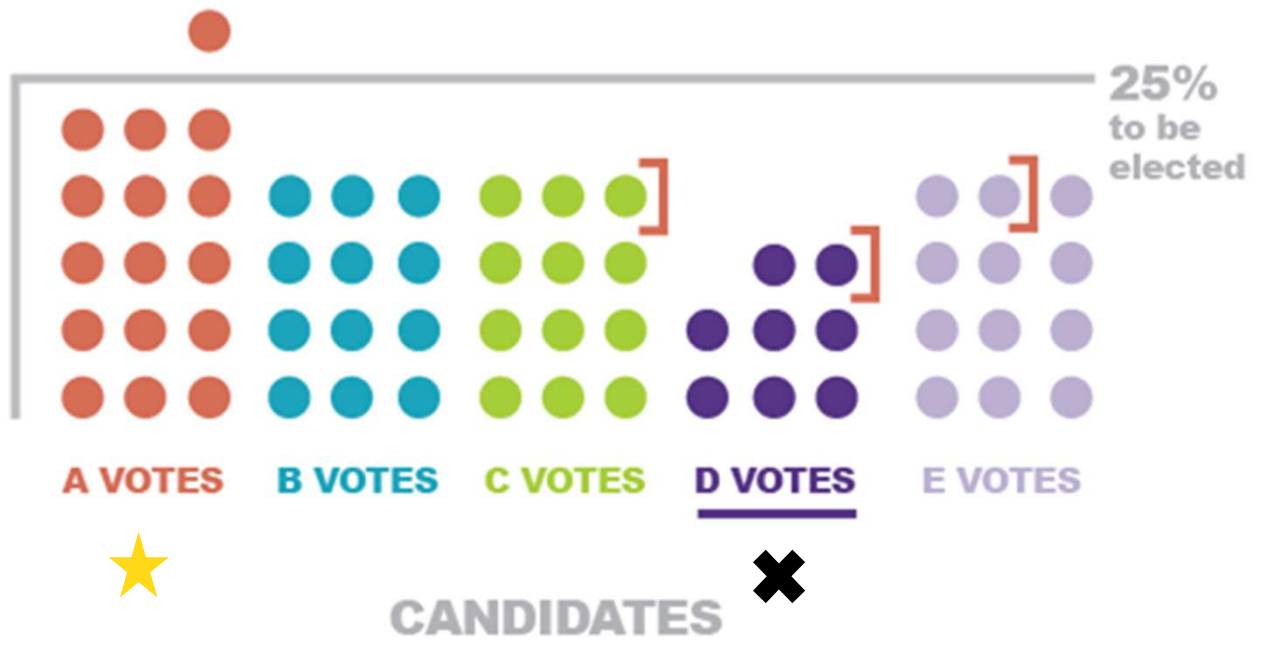
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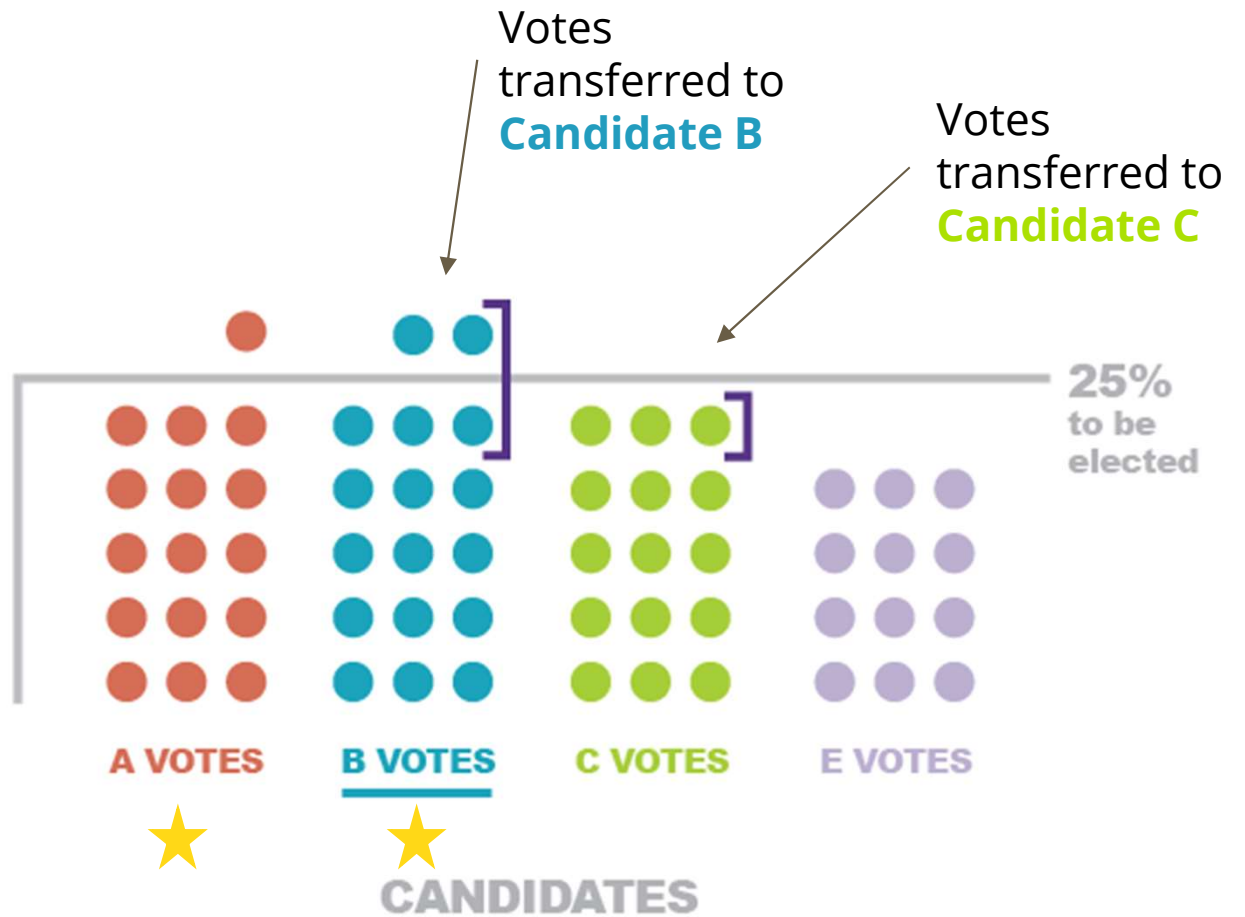
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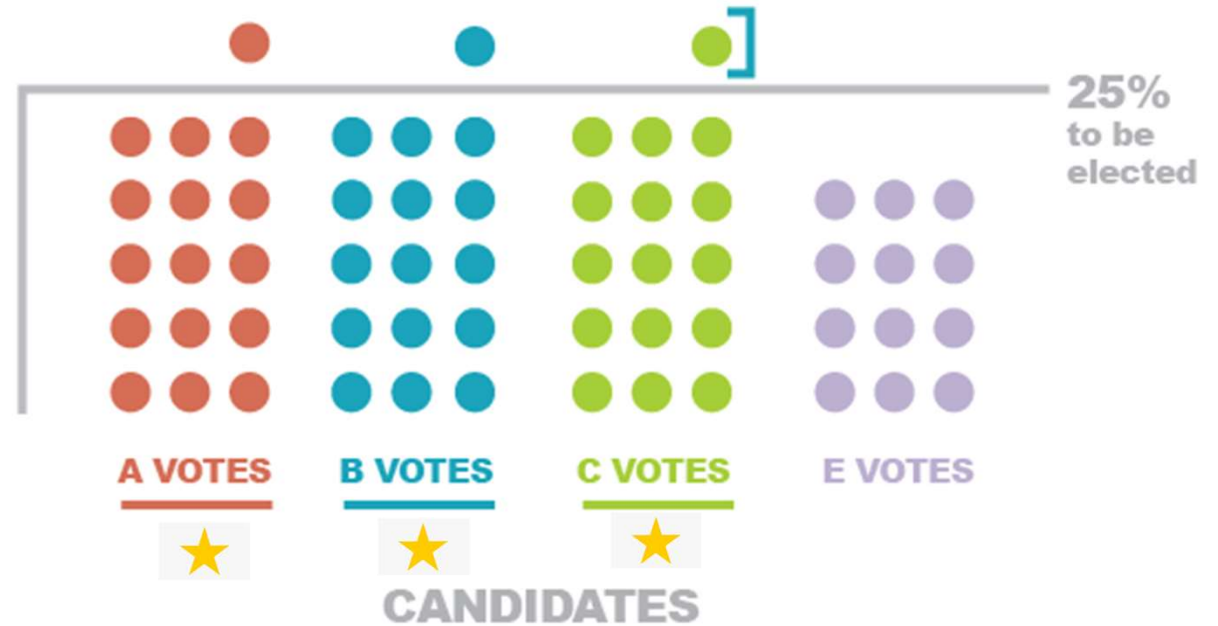


# Multi-Winner Ranked Choice Voting

One candidate meets the  
threshold of 25% + 1.

Candidate A, Candidate B, and  
Candidate C win the election!

Votes  
transferred to  
Candidate C





# HOW DOES RANKED CHOICE VOTING WORK?

How many candidates do I rank? Do I have to use every ranking?

You can rank as many or few candidates as you like. Your 2nd, 3rd, etc. choices are back ups.





# HOW DOES RANKED CHOICE VOTING WORK?



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• For your 3rd choice, fill in the oval in the 3rd choice column, and					
• If you make a mistake, you can ask for a new ballot.					
● ○ ○ ○ ○					
○ ○ ● ○ ○					
○ ● ○ ○ ○					
○ ○ ○ ○ ○					
WHAT DO WE WANT FOR LUNCH?					
	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice	5th Choice
CHICKEN	○	○	○	○	○
DUMPLINGS	○	○	○	○	○
BURGER	●	●	●	●	●
PIZZA	○	○	○	○	○
TACOS	○	○	○	○	○
SANDWICH	○	○	○	○	○





# HOW DOES RANKED CHOICE VOTING WORK?

Does it hurt my favorite candidate to rank 2nd, 3rd, etc. choices on my ballot?

**No. Your 2nd choice will ONLY be counted if your 1st choice is eliminated or is already elected.**



# HOW DOES RANKED CHOICE VOTING WORK?



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SANDWICH	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



# How to talk about RCV

**There's a good chance some voters won't know about RCV. Some people are going to love it and some people are going to hate it. It is a change and that can be difficult. When educating voters, there are a few best practices.**

# How to talk about RCV



Some people will want to dedicate a lot of time to the what-ifs about past and future elections.

When educating voters, it is important to:

- **Not get bogged down in the theoretical**
- **Avoid jargon**
- **Keep it simple**
- **Bring it back to the voters and their values**
- **We rank things all the time in our day to day lives!**

# How to talk about RCV



Some people are unfamiliar with election terminology or find it confusing. When educating voters, it is important to:

- **Not get bogged down in the theoretical**
- **Avoid jargon**
- **Keep it simple**
- **Bring it back to the voters and their values**
- **We rank things all the time in our day to day lives!**

# How to talk about RCV



Some people might get really into the concept and want to get into the weeds, most just want to know what they need to do when they go to the polls. When educating voters, it is important to:

- **Not get bogged down in the theoretical**
- **Avoid jargon**
- **Keep it simple**
- **Bring it back to the voters and their values**
- **We rank things all the time in our day to day lives!**



# How to talk about RCV



Sometimes the change in elections can feel like the only thing that matters, it's not. What matters is voters being able to express their views. When educating voters, it is important to:


- **Not get bogged down in the theoretical**
- **Avoid jargon**
- **Keep it simple**
- **Bring it back to the voters and their values**
- **We rank things all the time in our day to day lives!**



# How to talk about RCV



While RCV is new to Albany voters, the concept of ranking things isn't. When educating voters, it is important to:

- **Not get bogged down in the theoretical**
  - **Avoid jargon**
  - **Keep it simple**
  - **Bring it back to the voters and their values**
  - **We rank things all the time in our day to day lives!**
- 





# How to talk about RCV

## Show, don't tell!

- The best way to educate people is to show them a ballot, and have them fill it out.
- Mock elections are an effective campaign & voter education tool (Rank Your Food, Rank Your Favorite Movies, etc.)

Candidates	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice	5th Choice
Dumplings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Chicken	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pizza	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tacos	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hamburger	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Write-In	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



# How Does RCV Change Campaigns



# Building A Winning Coalition



# Vote Goal: Expected Turnout

## First, determine EXPECTED TURNOUT:

Use the average of 3 or more similar past elections\*

Hypothetical City X Registered Voters = 12,000

Expected Turnout ~40% = 4,800 voters

## Other factors to take into account:

- Hot (or dead) races above/below you on the ticket
- Highly visible/polarizing ballot initiatives
- Aggressive voter registration/Absentee Ballot Campaigns
- New Ballot Access Laws

# Vote Goal: Your “Win” Number



Threshold = (# of Votes / Number of Seats +1)  
+1

## RCV ELECTION THRESHOLD

SEATS UP FOR ELECTION	# OF VOTES NEEDED
1	50%+1
2	33.3%+1
3	25%+1
4	20%+1

# Vote Goal: Your “Win” Number



Let's assume that our hypothetical city has an expected turnout of **4,800 voters**

**Threshold= (# of Votes / Number of Seats +1) +1**

**3 Seats (4,800 ÷ 4) + 1 vote =  
1,201 votes**

**+ 3 - 5% cushion (e.g. 28%)**

**1,344 Working Win Number**



# In a RCV Election

## A successful candidate should have...

- A large number of 1st choices
- Depending on the number of candidates, 2nd or 3rd, etc. on enough ballots from voters who prefer other candidates.

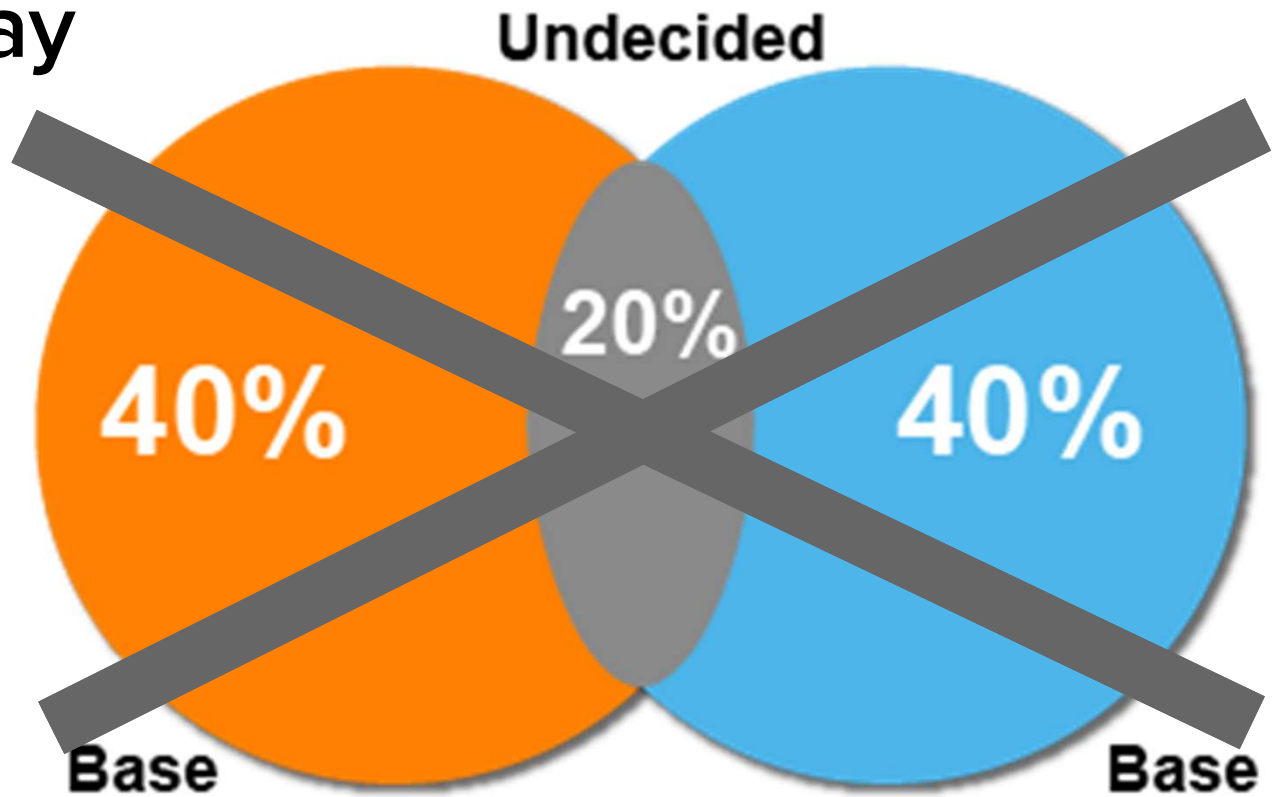
## Two important questions to ask yourself are:

- How can I maximize my first choices?
- How can I be the 2nd, 3rd, etc choices of people who rank other candidates as a first choice?

# How Does RCV Change Elections?



The old way

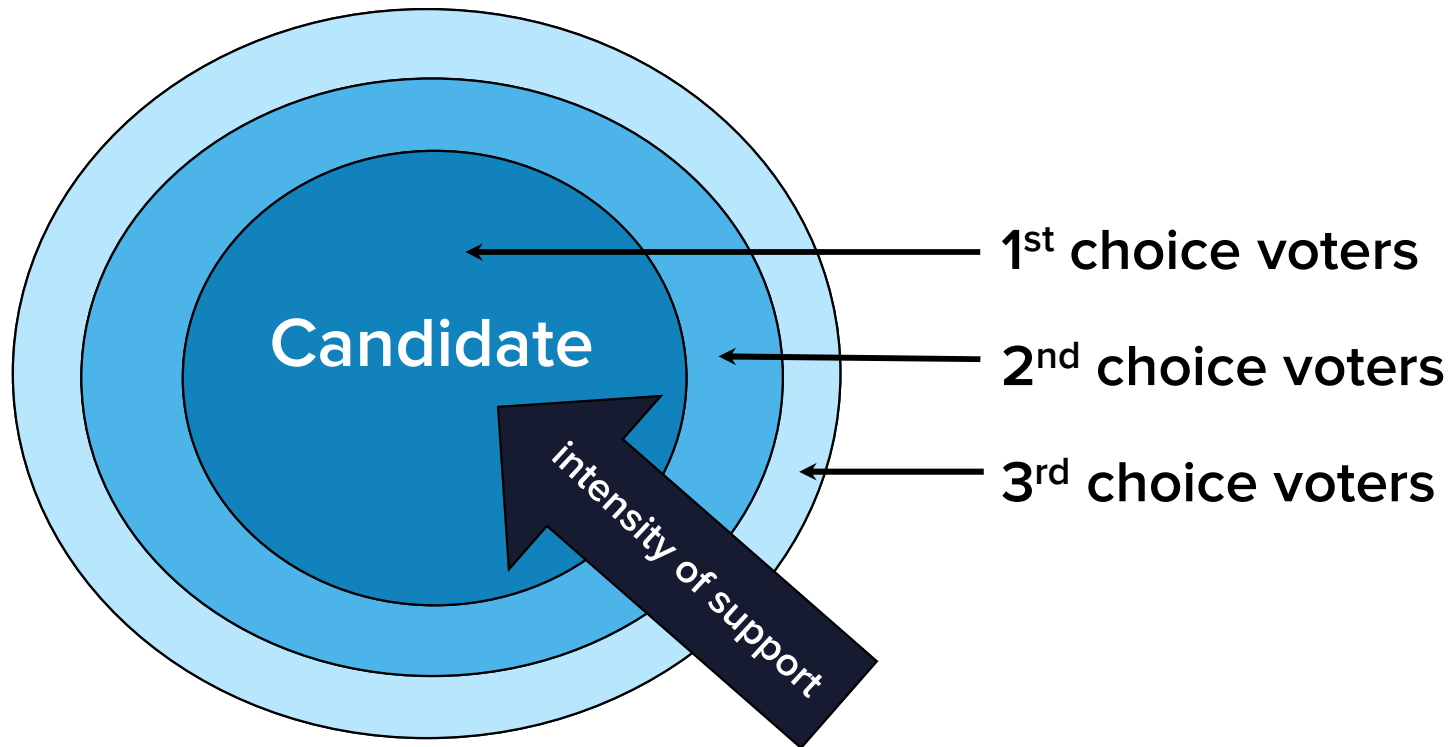




# How Does RCV Change Elections?



## The RCV way





# Campaign Brass Tacks

# Campaign Planning



Campaign plans are developed to determine how best to use these resources. It is important to consider how ranked choice voting will impact how your strategy.

Campaigns have 3 resources...



People



Time



Money

# Research



## Know the **COMPETITION**

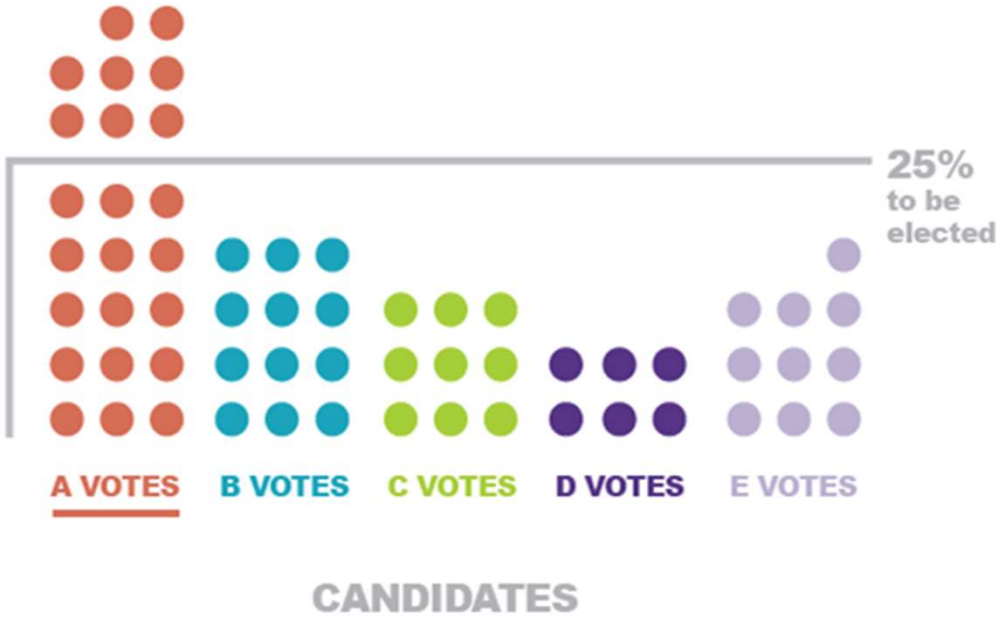
do factual, comparative research on:

- What issues are driving this campaign season?
- What issues are driving your campaign? How does the field of candidates align on your issues?
- Where can you find common ground?
- Where do you stand out?

# Research



- Who will be elected or eliminated and in what order?
- How do those candidates' supporters feel about me?
- Where do we align?
- Where do we differ?





# Targeting



Targeting is the process of prioritizing conversations with voters based on a combination of their likelihood to support your candidacy or to participate in the election.

In a RCV election targeting should be tiered to prioritize 1st choice support then broaden to universes of likely lower ranking support.



# Targeting



1 = Strong Support



Volunteer, GOTV

2 = Leaning Support



3 = Undecided



Persuasion to 1st choice or 2nd Choice

4 = Leaning another candidate



5 = Another candidate's #1



2nd or 3rd Choice

6 = Opposes you



Off the list



# Targeting



How can your voter database help guide your RCV strategy?

1111566 M 68	<input type="checkbox"/> Personally Spoke To Gerald	<b>Support</b>	<b>Other Candidate Support</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Spoke to Someone Else	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Chicken
	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Home/Bad Time	<input type="checkbox"/> Lean Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Hamburger
	<input type="checkbox"/> Refused to Talk	<input type="checkbox"/> Undecided	<input type="checkbox"/> Pizza
Support:	<input type="checkbox"/> Inaccessible	<input type="checkbox"/> Lean towards CK, HB, PZ, SD, TC	<input type="checkbox"/> Sandwich
2nd Choice:	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Strong Support CK, HB, PZ, SD, TC	<input type="checkbox"/> Tacos

Whether you are tracking information using a high-tech or low-tech voter database - infusing RCV info into your tracking systems will improve your data and your ability to prioritize





# Messaging





**An effective field strategy incorporates RCV education into voter outreach.**



# Candidates are the frontline of voter education



The most common way voters learn about RCV is through candidates like you. Educating voters to rank their ballots helps your chances at the polls and ensures all voters are fully enfranchised.





# How to talk about RCV

## Train your campaign staff and volunteers

Always include a training on the basics of RCV and how this will affect your campaign. It is important that everybody in your campaign speaks about RCV to voters in a consistent way. Things to think about:

- Everyone on your team **MUST** understand and be able to explain at a very basic level how RCV works.
- All volunteers should be able to describe how a ballot works and point to resources that provide more information.



**An effective RCV  
communications  
strategy incorporates  
asks for lower rankings.**

# On your lit...



*A Mayor for All San Franciscans*



**LONDON Breed**

**San Francisco Chronicle**  
London Breed Earns Chronicle Endorsement  
"San Franciscans should vote on June 5 to return her to the Mayor's office."  
*April 13, 2018*

**Election Day JUNE 5<sup>th</sup>**

**Vote LONDON BREED # 1, 2 or 3**

Polls are open from 7:00am-8:00pm  
You can also vote at City Hall from May 7<sup>th</sup> - June 5<sup>th</sup>

*If you vote by mail—vote for London, sign the back of the envelope, and mail it.*

I appreciate your 1st CHOICE  
vote November 8



State Senator District E				
	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice
Holland, Roger (Registered Republican)	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4
Giessel, Cathy (Registered Republican)	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4
Cacy, Roselynn (Registered Democrat)	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4
Write-in:	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4

If not your 1st choice, I would be honored to have your  
**2nd CHOICE VOTE**

EXPERIENCE

History of effectively working with all sides.

ENERGY

Knocked on over 7000 doors listening to you and your neighbors.

COMMITMENT

Years of dedicated service as a nurse, legislator & community volunteer.

**REAL PEOPLE OF SANDY  
RANK MONICA Z  
#1 FOR MAYOR**



**SANDY FOR LODGE 51**

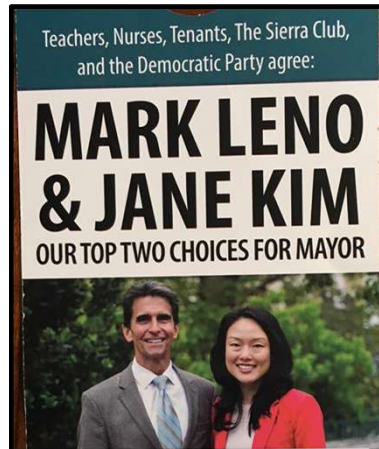
**PROUDLY ENDORSED BY  
Both Sandy Police & Fire Unions**



# Endorsements...

Many endorsing organizations will change their endorsement process, this is no longer a zero sum game. In other cities with RCV, we've seen:

- Top two endorsements
- Ranked endorsements



**2022 Gubernatorial Endorsement**

Governor / Lieutenant Governor		1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice	5th Choice
LES GARA / JESSICA COOK		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
BILL WALKER / HEIDI DRYGAS		<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

After an in-depth process, The Alaska Center Board of Directors has unanimously voted to endorse the Les Gara and Jessica Cook Gubernatorial ticket, and encourages voters to rank the Bill Walker and Heidi Drygas ticket second.

**AEA-PAC Endorses Julius D. "JD" Spain and Maureen Coffey for County Board**

The Arlington Education Association Political Action Committee (AEA-PAC) is pleased to announce its endorsements of Julius D. "JD" Spain and Maureen Coffey for Arlington County Board.






# Risks of Going Negative



In an RCV election you must give voters a reason to rank you as their 1st (or 2nd, 3rd) choice. Telling voters to vote “against” other candidates is a losing strategy.

The best practice has been to distinguish yourself, without disparaging other candidates.

Learning how to ask for a 2nd choice is essential to win - also those conversations can help you govern, if elected.





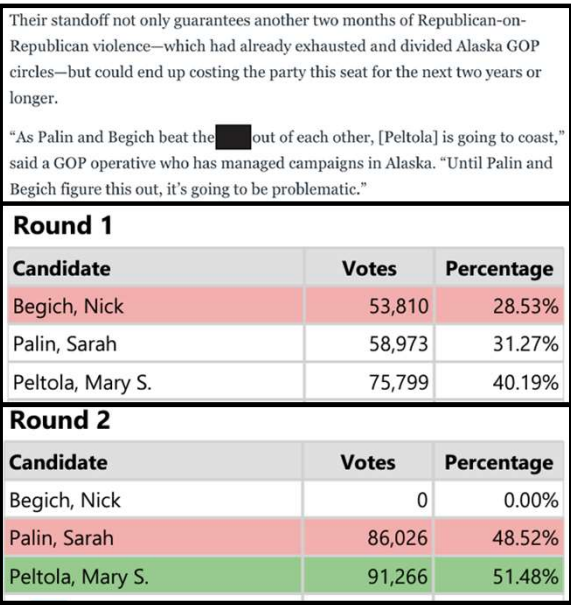
You as a candidate determine the tone of your campaign. In an RCV election it is particularly important to instill that tone from the top down and weigh the risks before making changes. .

Your campaign should have guidelines and training on:

- Understanding the vote-losing risks of going negative/the vote-getting benefits of staying positive
- Talking points to find shared values with other candidate’s supporters
- Social Media Etiquette - how to engage with those who support other candidates.



New York City



Alaska





**THANK YOU!**