1. **Pick your audience.** What official or agency do you want to address your petition to and who will be most influenced by its presentation?

2. **Clearly state your purpose.** At the top of your petition should be a short but powerful statement about the problem you are addressing, what you are proposing to do about it and your reasons for taking action. It should not be more than a few sentences so people will be more likely to read it and easily understand your position.

3. **Look official.** Print the petition on professional-looking paper that identifies your group, including your address and phone number so that supporters who return completed petitions can get in contact with you for more information.

4. **Provide space for names and more names.** Provide blank lines after the statement where people can sign their names, addresses, and/or organization or group affiliation. You also may want to consider space for e-mails or phone numbers so you can contact new supporters of your cause in the future for recruitment efforts.

5. **Circulate, motivate, activate.** Your petition must be visible, accessible and appealing to get the signatures you need. Strategize how you can get the petition out to the most people—door-to-door solicitations, tabling in a public place, standing on a street corner, etc. Have plenty of copies, pens and papers ready at all times.

6. **Devise a follow-up plan to share your success.** Set a deadline for signature collection and decide what you are going to do with all the petitions once they are collected. BE SURE TO USE YOUR RESULTS! You won’t score any points with your position if you don’t let others know what you’ve got in your hand. Some super follow-up ideas are:

7. **Write a news release** announcing your results.

8. **Hold a press conference** and invite the public official to attend so you can publicly deliver your petitions and make a public appeal for action.

You can also create action pledge cards. Though it requires a little more effort, sending off multiple copies of signed pledge cards from individuals can also deliver a strong message that you mean business. Pledge cards can send a simple and serious message stating a person supports an issue and promises to do something if action is not taken by the person being addressed. Presented in a powerful way, stacks or bags full of several hundred pledge cards can potentially be much more impressive than five or six pieces of paper with signatures.

Adapted from http://www.firstamendmentschools.org/resources/handout1a.aspx?id=13295