# Glenn Youngkin's Simple Playbook for Winning Virginia

In the aftermath of Glenn Youngkin's win in the Virginia gubernatorial race, the victorious Republican appears to have written the playbook for the resurgence of his party. Youngkin taught three lessons in his victorious schooling of Democrat Terry McAuliffe.

**Lesson number one:** *Campaign on issues people care about*. Virginians cared about education, they cared about the economy, and they cared about safety. Youngkin appealed to all three. On the flip side, he did not appeal to racism, nor did he appeal to Trump, the two issues to which McAuliffe repeatedly resorted. Those issues played to the Democrats' left-wing base, but not to general voters.

Youngkin knew that he had to woo and win the sector of the electorate that Trump lost: suburban voters, mostly moms. Moms care about education and they are having what I'll call "racism fatigue." They are weary of the constant drone of voices attempting to use the racism issue for political benefit. Virginia flipped red because battalions of mothers in serried ranks of SUVs didn't like being told they had no voice in their schools. When they drop their kids off at school, they don't worry that those little dears will be either the victims or the perpetrators of racism. What they worry about is whether their children will be safe in the bathroom, or that they will be indoctrinated in class.

The left's racist scare tactics didn't work—they are now officially obsolete. The boy can only cry wolf so many times before people finally realize there is no wolf.

**Lesson number two:** *Stay positive*. Youngkin's message was not "look how bad things are," but "look how much better they

could be." In fact, there was something positively Reaganesque about Youngkin's approach. Like the Gipper, he didn't shy away from criticisms of his opponent and his opponent's position, but once he made his critique he turned immediately to his vision for making things better. He offered voters hope.

The effect was that Youngkin appeared cheery and hopeful. He looked like he was having fun. McAuliffe, in contrast, came off as vindictive and worried. One got the impression that as soon as he got back in his campaign SUV his smile would instantly disappear, and he'd start upbraiding a campaign worker for low attendance at his events.

**Lesson number three:** *Keep it local.* Don't nationalize your campaign without a good reason. McAuliffe attempted to nationalize the Virginia election by identifying himself with Biden's presidential administration just as it was reaching a new nadir of popularity. He also tied his campaign with Congress's controversial, multi-trillion-dollar, big government spending bill.

Democratic strategists will now be sifting through the rubble of McAuliffe's mistakes. They need to acknowledge to themselves that there's no racist under the bed, and that what people care about is good education in safe schools and a stable economy.

This election threw the fear of God into Democratic ranks, and they ought to be scared. They found out that their negative strategies now appear threadbare and ineffective in the eyes of voters. And they see now that the issues that won this race for the Republicans are issues that will—or at least *should*—be used against them in race after race over the next year, and possibly beyond into 2024.

If they don't refocus, they're likely to get expelled by voters again.

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