Today’s Voters

WHO ARE THEY? WHAT DO THEY CARE ABOUT? LEARN HOW TO STRATEGICALLY TARGET MESSAGES TO POSITIVELY IMPACT PERCEPTIONS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT.
Who are Oregon’s Voters?

- 62% of Oregon voters are over 45
- 84% of Oregon’s 3 of 4 voters are over 45
  - 59% of these voters are 60+
- 90% of Oregon’s perfect voters are over 45
  - 69% of perfect voters are 60+

Source – L2 Political Oregon voter data
Number of Votes Needed to Win

- Your # registered voters
- X expected % turnout
- = # who will probably vote
- 50% + 1 needed to win =
- + 25% to assure a win =
- = Total needed to win
Money Measure Passage Rates

- **100%** passed money measures in 2015 (May & Nov)
- **79%** passed (2014/2015)
- **53%** passed **November** (even years) (2006-2014)
- **50%** passed **November** (2005-2015)
- **47%** passed **May** Elections (2005-2015)

Source - OSBA website - bond & local option election data - Piper Jaffray Seattle NW
Testing Voter Support

Survey Research
- Provides opinions from a small statistically representative subset of a population in order to generalize to the whole (6-12 months in advance)
- Allows districts to reach older voters w/no children in schools

What Research Tells Districts
- Community perceptions
- Overall support for money measure
- Messages that positively/negatively impact support
- Identify Community priorities
- Can test multiple proposals to help districts put together a package that has greatest chance of success
You Tell Us

- What do you believe are your community’s biggest school district facility priorities?

- What types of messages do you believe will increase support for your measure?
Community Trends/Feedback based on Research

Positive
- Safety and Security improvements
- Protecting the community’s investment
- Cost Savings with energy efficiencies
- Vocational/career/technical classrooms
- Cooperative partnerships between public entities
- Maintaining level property tax rates
- Equal access to technology

Negative
- Athletic/Performing Arts improvements
- Tear Down buildings with sentimental attachment
- Unreasonable cost
- Property Purchase future facilities
- Lack Communication w/community outside of asking for money
- Negative press – Communities have LONG memories
Other Important Aspects To Research

- Don’t be afraid to ask the hard questions
- After Research is completed, be prepared to repeat messages; over, and over, and over...
- If bond is altered to reflect community priorities...
- Surveys don’t always deliver “good news”
- Don’t assume anything
- Survey results are the bible for your campaign messages. They tell you what to say—no deviations
Ways to Reach Older Voters

Choir gave a preview of their concert to patrons at a Senior Center - Colorado Springs
Additional Strategies

Children made Thanksgiving cards using their hand prints for seniors living in local senior centers.

A note under the glass counter in one diner says: The local diner is where you can hear about all the small town gossip.
Older Voter Engagement Activities

- Senior dinners
- Seniors proms
- Student tech helpers
- Reading buddies
- Special communication to seniors about volunteer opportunities
Small Districts Unable to Survey

“Not much happens in a small town, but what you hear makes up for it.”

Enumeration

- Solicit a group of volunteers to telephone everyone in the community.
- Design universal unbiased script asking whether they would favor/oppose bond measure.
- Have volunteers identify those who favor and oppose directly onto phone list.
- Host public forums to talk about bond measure, why it’s needed, what it will pay for, what it will cost and solicit feedback.
- As election nears have volunteers contact “yes” voters and encourage them to VOTE!
After Bond Passes

Keep **communicating** with your community:

- Keep the community **updated** about how construction is going through:
  - Website
  - Newsletters
  - Newspaper Articles
  - Direct Mailings

- Keep the community **updated** about how bond proceeds are being spent:
  - Especially if projects come in **under budget**

- Let the community know **who your contractors** are; especially if district uses **local** subcontractors.
After Bond Fails - Then What?

- Determine **what** happened
  - Were there competing measures on the ballot?
- Solicit input as to **why** measure failed
  - Was it too much money?
  - Were there components included that should have been dropped?
  - Was there unanimous support for the measure by district staff/board members?
  - Was there an opposition campaign?

- Go back to the drawing board
  - Begin education campaign to help the community understand why construction projects are needed.
  - Consider a smaller proposal.
  - Repeat positive messages from survey for those projects included in a smaller proposal.

- Use the communication **tools** developed for the campaign
  - Find out where voters are getting their information.
  - Were there components included that should have been dropped?
  - Use a community perception/exit survey to build more positive perceptions in the community.
  - Was there an opposition campaign?
Win or Lose - Keep Voters Engaged

- **Engaged voters** result in:
  - Increased community investment in schools
  - Increased positive perceptions of the district
  - Increased ability to pass bonds in the future

- **Remember** you work for the community.
  - You owe it to them to seek their input, listen and respond to what they tell you, even if it hurts