Passing School Bond Measures: A Public Opinion Perspective

OSBA Bonds, Ballots & Buildings
February 9, 2018
Today’s Topics

Mood of the Electorate

Most important Issues

Who votes

Connecting values to messages
Mood
How Are Voters Feeling

Direction of the state

- 49% Right Direction
- 35% Wrong Track

Right Direction by Community

- Tualatin: 76%
- Tigard: 68%
- Salem: 62%
- Portland metro: 45%
- Portland: 41%
Oregonians’ worries about their financial situation easing

- 65% in 2011
- 69% in 2012
- 65% in 2013
- 64% in 2014
- 61% in 2015
- 54% in 2016
- 44% in 2017

Graph: Statewide, very/somewhat worried
...However, they remain financially fragile and concerns about cost of living are rising

- **Oregonians Ages 18-64 with Less than $25k in Savings**: 55%
- **Oregonians Report That Their Housing is Not Affordable**: 39%
Who Votes
Who Votes in Oregon: Turnout

Presidential 80%

Midterm 70%

Primary presidential year 40-60%

Primary midterm year 40%
Who Votes in Oregon: Age

- **65+**: 21% (Census 2015), 25% (All Voters), 30% (General 2016), 35% (2 of 4 Voters), 55% (4 of 4 Voters)
- **45-64**: 33% (Census 2015), 33% (All Voters), 36% (General 2016), 37% (2 of 4 Voters), 34% (4 of 4 Voters)
- **30-44**: 25% (Census 2015), 25% (All Voters), 22% (General 2016), 20% (2 of 4 Voters), 9% (4 of 4 Voters)
- **18-29**: 20% (Census 2015), 18% (All Voters), 12% (General 2016), 8% (2 of 4 Voters), 9% (4 of 4 Voters)
Percentage of Households With Children

- All Oregonians: 28%
- 0 of 4: 38%
- 1 of 4: 42%
- 2 of 4: 44%
- 3 of 4: 29%
- 4 of 4: 16%
Support for School Bond Measures: Two Oregon Districts

- District 1:
  - Children in HH: 65%
  - No children: 55%
  - 18-29: 77%
  - 30-44: 65%
  - 45-64: 54%
  - 65+: 43%

- District 2:
  - Children in HH: 73%
  - No children: 52%
  - 18-29: 75%
  - 30-44: 66%
  - 45-64: 55%
  - 65+: 56%
Issues
“Great deal” of concern for Oregonians

- Homelessness: 54%
- Affordable housing: 49%
- Taxes: 42%
- Traffic congestion: 41%
- Funding for K-12 public schools: 41%
- Climate change: 38%
### Five Biggest Issues Facing the Portland Metro Area

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<th>2011</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2017</th>
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<td>Jobs</td>
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<td>Economic conditions</td>
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<td>Education issues</td>
<td>Taxes</td>
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Oregonians' Priorities for Additional Education Spending (top three)

1. Reduce class sizes (54%)
2. Career technical education (48%)
3. Technology for job skills (42%)
4. Maintain, repair existing buildings (35%)
5. Expand curriculum offerings (27%)
6. Hire more teachers (23%)
7. Hire more support staff (21%)
8. Increased teacher pay (17%)
9. Additional hands on learning, such as Outdoor School (14%)
10. Expand extracurricular offerings (8%)
11. Build new schools (5%)
Values & Messages
More Convincing Reasons to Support School Bond Measures

Need — size, growth, condition

Safety — seismic, hazardous materials

Opportunity — job/technical skills, individualized attention from teachers

Efficiency — maintain and repair, more expensive in the future

Accountability — oversight, restrictions on spending

Stability — easier to “renew,” benefits with “no increase in rates”
Less Convincing Reasons to Support School Bond Measures

Process and history – won’t know, won’t care

Explanations of tax policy – raises more questions

“It will only cost…” – dismissive

Impact on property values – maybe, maybe not, maybe not wanted

Jobs and the economy – at least for the time being