Rule #1: Know Thy 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?

- 56% of Oregon voters are over 45
- 78% of Oregon’s 3 of 4 voters are over 45
  - 55% of these voters are 60+
- 86% of Oregon’s perfect voters (4 of 4) are over 45
  - 66% of perfect voters are 60+

Source – L2 Political Oregon voter data
Who are your District’s Voters?

- Find Percentage Male vs. Female voters
- Add top column age - add up 45-59 yrs + 60+ yrs
- Find 3 or more elections - add up 45-59 + 60+ yrs
- Find 4 of 4 elections - add up 45-59 + 60+ yrs
- Find voters w/telephones
- Find voters w/cell phone only households

Total
Number of Votes Needed to Win

- Your # registered voters
- X expected % turnout 68% Nov/79% Pres/35% May/36% Primary
- = # who will probably vote Multiply # voters by % turnout
- 50% + 1 needed to win = Multiply # above by .5 then add 1
- + 25% to assure a win = Multiply # above by .5 then add 1
- = Total needed to win Add last 2 columns
Strategies to Reach Older Voters

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

Choir gave a preview of their concert to patrons at a Senior Center - Colorado Springs
Older Voter Engagement Activities

- Senior dinners
- Senior proms
- Student tech helpers
- Reading buddies
- Special communication to seniors about volunteer opportunities
School Bond Only Passage Rates

- **80%** passed bond measures in 2019 (May & Nov)
- **68%** passed over last 2 years (2016/2017)
- **58%** passed in **November** over last 10 years (2009-2019)
- **57%** passed in **May** over last 10 years (2009-2019)
- **51%** passed in **Presidential Elections** (2000-2016)

Source – OSBA website – bond & local option election data - Piper Jaffray Seattle NW
Bond Passage Rates Nov vs. May
2009-2019
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?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining level property tax rates</td>
<td>Athletic/Performing Arts improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational/career/technical classrooms, program enhancements</td>
<td>Tear Down buildings w/sentimental attachment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting the community’s investment</td>
<td>Unreasonable cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost Savings w/energy efficiencies</td>
<td>Property Purchase future facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and Security improvements</td>
<td>Lack Communication w/community outside of asking for money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal access to technology</td>
<td>Negative press – Communities have LONG memories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative partnerships between public entities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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
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
Key points during the development of the bond package and the information campaign when SKPS relied on data = ALL THE TIME

- $619.7 million bond approved in May 2018
- Tough market - voted conservatively in 2016 presidential election
2016 Community Survey

- 89 percent agree they would support additional CTE/vocational programs for students
- 69 percent believed overcrowding was a problem
2016 Community Survey

- “I would prefer the district construct permanent classroom space rather than use portables/modular classrooms to address growing student enrollment”
  - 38 percent agree; 49 percent disagree; 13 percent unsure
- “Do you believe portables are better, worse or about the same as regular classrooms?:
  - 53 percent = same; 31 percent = worse; 11 percent = not sure; 5 percent = better
SKPS 2018 Bond Timeline

- 2020
  - Public Information Materials - show we are delivering our promises

- 2019
  - Vote - The Bond Passes!

- 2018
  - Final Bond Package/Info Campaign
  - Bond Feasibility Poll

- 2017
  - Facilities Task Force Process
  - Community Survey

- 2015
  - Community Survey

- 2014
Bond Feasibility Survey

- CTE/vocational education is still #1!
- Adding space to address overcrowding is a key issue
- Safety and security, including seismic resonate
- Improve existing buildings is a strong message
- Within limits, the community is willing to increase taxes to support the work!
Listening & Learning Forums
Meet with neighbors in your school community to learn about the bond measure, ask questions and share feedback. ALL ARE WELCOME!

October 25 at North Salem High School
November 1 at South Salem High School
November 8 at Sprague High School
November 13 at McNary High School
November 15 at Straub Middle School (West Salem schools)
November 16 at McKay High School

ALL MEETINGS HELD FROM 6:00 TO 7:30 P.M.
Find the high school that serves your neighborhood at www.salemkeizer.org or call 503.399.3246
SCHOOL BOARD APPROVES BOND FOR MAY 2018 BALLOT

$619.7 million proposed bond package highlights

Add capacity to support enrollment and educational programs – $442,200,000

- Add or expand general education classrooms, science labs, special education classrooms
- Expand or enhance career/technical/vocational education programs
- Expand traditional high schools to serve up to 2,200 students
- Renovate or expand libraries, gyms and cafeterias
- Integrate a technology data center into a high school expansion project
- Add space for music programs

Increase seismic safety of schools – $67,000,000

- Strengthen areas that are potentially very high-risk of collapse in an earthquake, so students and staff can exit the building
- Increase the design standard of new additions to immediate re-occupancy performance level

Increase safety and security – $21,100,000

- Upgrade electronic badge access and intercom systems
- Enhance security by relocating or renovating front offices at 34 schools

Future (non-routine) maintenance – $76,700,000

- Improve roofs, floors, HVAC, electrical and plumbing systems, parking lots, sidewalks, exterior paint, etc.
- Upgrade support buildings

Technology and ADA upgrades – $12,700,000

- Expand the wireless network and upgrade classroom infrastructure
- Upgrade power and cooling capability of network closets
- Address outdated restrooms and improve general access to buildings
In 2016, the community was lukewarm on portables.
In 2018 we asked, “If you knew replacing worn-out portables with permanent classroom space would save the district thousands of dollars in maintenance costs that could be redirected to the classroom, would you favor or oppose?”

71 percent favored!

We have to be sure we are including these important facts when talking about portables:

- Many current ones are worn-out
- Replacing them saves money!
Use the Tested Terminology

Examples:

- “Electronic badge access systems”
- “Relocate front offices for better line of sight to the front entrance”
- “Improve existing buildings”
- “Vocational education” along with Career and Technical Education or CTE
How We Reached Out Was Informed by Research

- Most frequent voters are older, so we visited:
  - VFW
  - Senior centers
  - Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs
  - Golf courses
  - Medical clinics
  - Retirement facilities
  - Faith partners
  - Oldies radio station
  - Bingo halls
  - Libraries
  - Museums
  - Stood outside the building at every town hall meeting held by an elected official
Other Ways We Reached Out

- Attended every neighborhood association meeting at least once
- Spoke at as many service club/community group meetings as possible
- Hung out on the street corner near farmers markets and club events and talked to folks as they passed
- YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs
- Salem and Keizer chambers of commerce
  - Networking meetings
  - Newsletter and website content
- Created an electronic newsletter for the district and directly contacted folks who clicked-through on a bond story
Other Ways We Reached Out

- Table at Saturday Markets in “free speech zone” (tip – bring a dog!)
- Tweet it! Wherever you’re speaking or handing out information, share it on social
liked by amyvalentine555 and others

salemkeizer Chief Operations Officer Mike Wolfe is meeting with our community’s finest – veterans – to talk about what the bond measure means to them. #thankyouforyourservice 🇺🇸 #2018SKPSSBond

March 8, 2018
Other ways we reached out

- Held community meetings and drove attendance by engaging school staff to spread invitations – made it a fun competition for staff
More Staff Engagement

- Listening sessions in all district departments
- Collected their feedback too!
- Served a dual purpose – answered their questions and at the same time informed them about the bond so they could be sense-makers
Other ways we reached out

- Info table at high school sporting events and large events at the Capitol
- “Remember to Register” and “Remember to Vote!” messages on all social media platforms
- Twitter “Ask Me Anything” about the bond with COO Mike Wolfe
- Instagram poll to students – Who’s voting for the first time?
  - Followed up with direct message to these students to remind them of date to turn in ballots
- Info table at screening of movie about Cascadia Subduction Zone, “Unprepared”
- Media pitch after media pitch – come see our crowded schools!
- Radio talk shows – student who is a first time voter, school principal
The PAC’s strategies

- Partnered with PCUN and knocked on doors of thousands of frequent voters
- Mailings, mailings, mailings
- Purchased online and print ads
- Attended neighborhood association meetings
- Phone banks
- "How to fill out your ballot" party for first-time voters
- Voters pamphlet statements
- Lots of social media
- Yard signs
- Etc.
### Bond Projects

- **Relieve Overcrowding**
- **Expand CTE & Science**
- **Increase Safety & Security**
- **Protect Public Investment**

#### Schools Bond Project Start Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>Construction Start Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culver Elementary</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salem Middle School</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McNary High School</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Salem High School</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodburn Middle School</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auburn Elementary</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canby Creek Middle School</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear Lake Elementary</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gervais Elementary</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Englewood Elementary</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evergreen Elementary</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Elementary</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havenwood Elementary</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highland Elementary</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Elementary</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Start year subject to change at any time*

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#### Expansion of CTE & Science
- Engage career technical (vocational) and science education opportunities

#### Relieve Overcrowding
- Add space to relieve overcrowding, prepare for future enrollment and expand core areas

#### Increase Safety & Security
- Secure school entries and upgrade electronic badge access systems, increase seismic safety

#### Protect Public Investment
- Improve existing buildings to ensure longevity of past and present public investments
To Sum it Up

- Research informs the way we talk about the bond from start to finish.
- Research deepens understanding of the audience, which allows us to better connect with them.
- When you demonstrate you KNOW YOUR VOTERS and reflect what they care about in your communications, you open doors to building relationships and support.
Russ Allen - Executive Director of Business & Operations

- **Expiring 10 year $55M issue**
  - Many assumed level levy rate, despite significant needs
  - Survey said support for higher
  - $159M, 10/20 year maturity
Greater Albany SD Presentation

- **Safe Warm Dry (Critical Facility Upgrades)**
  - Roofs, plumbing, electrical, fire alarms, seismic (increase life, reduce maintenance $)
  - STRONG support, $50M and lead with in presenting bond
Greater Albany SD Presentation

- Performing Arts Center and Gyms
  - Auditorium (Phase 1 Rebuild) and Multi-Purpose Space/Gym

- Targeted Message (and general)

- VTE v CTE (older voters)

- Signs Outside Schools