

Conducting Successful Levy Campaigns: School District Modeling Scores

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Research Partnership
BGSU College of Education and
Support Ohio Schools Research and
Education Foundation

SOS is Nonprofit



- Support Ohio Schools assists public school levy committees
- Nonprofit organization
- Created in 2008
- Worked with over 150 campaigns

Research Based



- SOS is research based
- Recommendations are modeled after Winning Campaigns
- We do not like to lose

Winning is Difficult



- New Operating Issue Passage
- ___% Nov 2013
- 46% March 2012
- 23% Nov 2011
- An excellent campaign is the single most important factor in winning

Reasons for Winning



- Many reasons for winning or losing
- We want “one” reason to explain the campaign outcome
- Do not fall into the trap of the “one” explanation

Top 9 or 10 Reasons



1A. Raise enough funds for a campaign

- 1. Create a sense of urgency***
- 2. Focus on “Yes” Voters***
- 3. Establish a diverse community - driven campaign committee***
- 4. Disseminate information***
- 5. Justify the need for additional funds***
- 6. Conduct a survey***
- 7. Focus on the benefits to students and community***
- 8. Analyze previous election results***
- 9. Ensure Board unity***

*Supported by BGSU research to date

Employing more campaign strategies

- Levy Campaigns that employed more of the 10 strategies passed more levies than those that employed fewer.

Campaign Funds



- The more money a levy committee spent the more likely the levy was to pass.
- Campaign expenditure of successful campaigns was at least \$ 1.51 per registered voter.

Sense of URGENCY



- Create a sense of URGENCY among campaign volunteers, employees, and the community
- Describe both positive and negative consequences of levy outcome
- What will happen if levy fails? If levy succeeds?

Target YES Voters



- Focus the campaign on YES voters
- Major issue are the YES voters who stay home and do not vote

How to Identify YES?



- **Some History First**
 - Precinct data were used in the past
 - Was state of the art before 2009
 - Examined supportive precincts and non-supportive precincts
 - Assumption all voters were similar inside a precinct

Precinct Data Obsolete



- Does not provide household information
- Assumption all voters in a precinct were similar
- Stretch of data to make such an assumption

Value of Polling



- Valuable Data
- Reveals Major Themes
- Cross Tabs
 - Women under 40
 - Males over 60
 - Still not enough information

Voter Targeting



- Never enough money so target the voters you will contact
- SOS predicts support and opposition to school taxes
- Modern voter modeling is used

Voter Modeling



- Predicts a voter's behavior
- Used in all major campaigns
- Obama and Romney campaigns modeled voters in Ohio
- Support Ohio Schools provides voter modeling

Creating Voter Models



- SOS created the first model in 2008
- Updated in 2010 and 2012
- Provides a numerical score (1-10) with 1 being low and 10 being high for each voter

Creating Voter Models



- Score predicts a voter's willingness to support taxes for schools
- Modeling enables a campaign to focus on YES voters

Creating Voter Models



- Poll in Ohio asking select questions about school taxes
- Demographic data of each voter (age, gender, ethnicity, etc.)
- Consumer data are layered
- Algorithm is created for model

1 to 10 Scale for Model



- Model was created and 10% of the population were scored 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9, or 10
- School districts will have voters spread across the scale
- Some districts have more voters at one end or the other

Is the Model accurate?



- 2012-2013 Levies
- 50% of voters 1 to 3
 - 20 levies
 - 5 passed: **25%**
- 50% of voters 8-10, 5 passed **100%**
- 40% of voters 8-10
 - 17 levies
 - 14 passed: **82%**

Turnout Model



- Score of 0-100 predicting the likelihood a voter will vote
- Base on 10 years of voting history
- Valuable tool in combining support for taxes scores with turnout scores

Modeling & Levies



- Raise \$1.51 per registered voter
- Create a sense of urgency
- Direct Voter Contact using the modeling scores for targeted communication

Direct Voter Contact



- Direct Voter Contact = 70% of budget
 - Winning Campaigns directly contact voters
 - Door to Door, Live Phoning, & Mailing of Literature
 - Speakers talk with voters face-to-face

- **Get Out The Vote**
 - Your supporters have to vote
 - Biggest problem is supporters who stay home
 - Last two weekends are most important

Platinum Campaign



- 2 door knocks
- 2 phone calls
- 4 pieces of mail
- Speak before any community group

Questions



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