

# **Research About Increasing Levy Passage**

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# SOS is Nonprofit



- Support Ohio Schools assists public school levy committees
- Nonprofit organization
- Created in 2008
- Worked with over 220 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
- 31.5% Nov 2014
- 69.5% May 2015
- 23% Nov 2011
- A researched based 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

# Precinct Data Obsolete



- Does not provide household information
- Assumption all voters in a precinct were similar
- Stretching 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, 2012, 2014
- 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 for a passage rate of 25%
- 40% of voters 8-10
  - 17 levies
  - 14 passed for a passage rate of 82%

# 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

# Campaign Message



- Research based message
- Describes the Need for the levy
- Tells why that need is Important
- **NEED and IMPORTANCE**
- Everyone knows the message and repeats it



# Real Example



- Using research to win levy campaigns.

# Questions



- Using research to win levy campaigns.