Adapting to the New School Election Landscape:
How will the community support our district bonds and initiatives?

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Geno Zamora, Esq.
Nicholas A. Govea, Esq.
Overview

▪ Review of election changes for school boards
▪ Community campaigns explained
▪ How would school districts benefit from community campaigns?
▪ Developing target audiences, community partners and messaging
▪ Project planning and examples
Allows single election day, uniform process for non-partisan elections

- school districts, community colleges, soil and water conservation districts, water and sanitation districts, etc.
- First Tuesday in November of odd numbered years (2019, 2021, etc.)
- Current board member’s term extends until December of that year
- New terms start January 1 after election

Special elections held by mailed ballot only

“[D]efinition to ‘Vacancy in office’ as when a board member moves out of area they were elected or appointed to represent.’
A regular election shall be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of each odd-numbered year

- Municipalities, schools, community colleges, special districts
- Regular election may have bond questions
- Election shall be nonpartisan, without party or slate
Statutory Language – Special Elections

- **Special Election Act Revisions:**
  - A special election called by a school district shall be conducted by mail ballot
  - Ballot mailed to each voter 28 days before election day, postage pre-paid
  - School District pays all of the County’s costs associated with the special election
    - School District may not be reimbursed the costs by a non-governmental entity
Community Campaign

- An organized effort to develop community support for a concept, idea, policy initiative or financial initiative. Examples include:
  - Bond initiatives
  - Support for educational initiatives: programs, facilities, innovations
  - Property tax increases
  - Referendum elections: local taxes, living wage, sports facilities
  - Community support for infrastructure initiatives or development projects

- A community campaign is NOT a candidate-based campaign
Why would your school district need a Community Campaign?

- Develop grassroots support for school initiatives:
  - Bond elections
  - Education Technology Notes (ETNs)
  - Facility improvement/expansion
  - New programs or offerings

- Develop support for community initiatives:
  - Local economic development
  - Municipal/county programs supporting school initiatives

- Enhance community understanding/perception of district performance
  - School grade improvement
  - New/successful programs or educational offerings
  - Supplement or contradict media reports
  - Fill void of local coverage of district successes
Target Audiences – Who do we want to reach?

- Parents, students and teachers – develop understanding of and confidence regarding district benefits and programs
- Residents within district boundaries – develop support for bonds and other community-based initiatives
- Community leaders – raise awareness of district successes and programs
  - State officials – Governor, Legislators, NMPED Secretary
  - County commissioners
  - City councilors
  - Congressional delegation
- Chambers of Commerce
- Unique constituencies
How do we reach our target audiences?

- Print media
  - Mail program – targeted mail pieces (post cards, letters, info sheets)
  - Print ads in local media – newspaper ads
- Video
  - Online video of district successes – possibly generated through district programs
  - Video advertisements – professionally produced
  - Local TV/cable ad buys
  - Movie theaters
- Online - online resources can be targeted to a region, city, neighborhood or individual
  - Banner ads
  - Video ads
  - Social media ads
  - Sponsored content ads
- Radio – local radio and streaming music services
- Earned media – generating new stories, letters to the editor, authored news pieces, radio interviews
Who are your community partners?

Community partners are needed to advance, support and sometimes help fund your initiatives

- Local governments – city and county
- Local chambers of commerce
- Local non-profits
- Unique constituencies
- Other
What is our message to the community?

- Understand the true opinions of your district in the community
  - Understand opinions of segments of the community
- General rating of the district: How do you feel about the district?
  - What is district doing well?
  - What needs to be improved?
- Is there support for technology or facility improvements?
- Where does your community get its news and information?
- Result: Identify most persuasive message and best communication resources
Sample mail piece

VOTE FEBRUARY 3

The Public School Mill Levy will continue to give our kids safe places to learn and keep Santa Fe Schools working.

VOTE EARLY FROM JAN. 26 THROUGH JAN. 30, 8 AM - 5 PM

EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS:
- SPS Educational Services Center, Room A, 610 Alto Vista Street
- Santa Fe Community College, 6401 Richards Avenue, Room 209
- Office of the Santa Fe County Clerk, 102 Grant Avenue

Santa Fe Public Schools
610 Alto Vista
Santa Fe 87505
Sample print ad

VOTE FEB 3
Learn more about how we can keep schools working.

The School Mill Levy:
✓ Gives our students safe and healthy places to learn and succeed
✓ Funds maintenance for ALL schools including Charter Schools
✓ Does NOT increase taxes

San Mateo

VOTE EARLY: 8am – 5pm
Weekdays now until JAN. 30

EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS
SF Public Schools Service Center
Room 145 in East First Street
Santa Fe Community College
Room 127 in Main Street
Office of the Clerk-Mayor
310 Guadalupe Street
Examples – Banner Ads

Jet Fueled Careers

Not Your Average Classroom

Get Career-Ready, New at Alamogordo Public Schools

More Info

Learn More
Project Timeline Example

- **Month 1**
  - Information gathering
  - Development of public opinion research tools
  - Deployment of research tools
  - Develop & deploy initial messaging plan & earned strategy around accomplishments

- **Month 2**
  - Continued earned media activities
  - Analyze research
  - Develop program plans
  - Produce and design program elements

- **Months 3, 4, 5**
  - Launch public campaign
  - Continue public campaign program
  - Analyze and assess program elements
  - Adjust program elements as necessary
  - Continue earned media program
Review/Questions

- New school district election laws
- Community campaigns
- Benefits for school districts
- Target audiences, community partners and messaging
- Project planning

Geno Zamora, Esq.
geno@ortiz-zamora.com
(505) 986-2900

Nicholas A. Govea, Esq.
nicholas@ortiz-zamora.com
(505) 986-2900