



Referendum Communications



A Brief Description of Who We Are

Where Districts Turn For Results

Branding • Communications • Elections

DEHLER PR

mp
+gp

MP+G Marketing Solutions & DehlerPR

- “ **Virtual agencies** – low overhead/flexible
- “ **Years of experience** – special focus on public schools and referenda
- “ **Award-winning and accredited** PR professionals and **leaders** of NSPRA and MinnSPRA
- “ **Passionate** about public education

Our Referendum Campaign Success – 17 Wins / 5 Losses

Carlton	Chatfield (2)	Cleveland
Central	Crosby-Ironton	
Inver Grove Heights	Janesville-Waldorf- Pemberton	Little Falls Community
Pelican Rapids	Pierz	Melrose Area
Robbinsdale Area (2)	St. James	Viroqua (WI)
Waconia	Watertown-Mayer	Waterville-Elysian- Morristown
Westonka	Worthington	Zionsville (IN)

What We Do

A referendum is a complicated issue to communicate

“ **We provide expertise**

- . Many school districts haven't run a referendum recently
- . We help prepare a school district and its stakeholders for a referendum
- . We advise the school district on strategy, and help tell its story
- . We help residents tell their side of the story (pro bono)

“ **We provide extra hands**

- . Many school districts have no dedicated communication staff
- . We're able to produce the volume of materials and get them to the right people

Our 4 Steps to Referendum Success

1. Community Engagement
2. Good Project
3. Good District Story
4. Committed Advocates



What Our Process Looks Like

- . Research
- . Assessment and Planning
- . Communication
- . Evaluation



Research: Community Engagement

Community meetings

- “ Presentation
- “ Small group facilitated discussions

Finance Taskforce

- “ Community members/opinion leaders, some with financial or business backgrounds

Input provided to school board



Assessment, Plan

- “ School board uses feedback to create a referendum proposal
- “ We create a communications plan

Referendum Communications

- “ The goal of a 2020 referendum information campaign for Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted Schools will be to clearly communicate to voters within the district the impact of a “Yes” vote or “No” vote on the school district’s students.





District Informational Campaign

- ” The goal is an informed citizenry.
- ” The district must provide information about the campaign in a neutral manner.
- ” District funds must not be used to promote the election's outcome.
- ” Districts may use funds for a neutral informational campaign.



Citizen promotional campaign (the “Vote Yes” group)

- “ The promotional campaign operates independently of the district.
- “ The goal is to pass the referendum.
- “ The individuals who work on the promotional campaign have a great deal of latitude in their promotional work.
- “ The promotional campaign raises and spends private funds.

Communicate: What We Produce


- ” Campaign Graphic and Tagline
- ” Website (microsite within the district site and/or standalone website)
- ” Fact Sheet mailed to all residents
- ” Brochure Self-Mailer mailed to all residents
- ” Media relations
- ” Speaking points
- ” Key communicator identification and communications
- ” Emails to parents, staff and key communicators
- ” Social media campaign
- ” Vocal/written support from businesses, local area farmers, and/or business groups

Custom Campaigns

- “ No cookie cutter solutions – totally custom communications plan and branded campaign theme that will ring true to your community

All
in for
Inver Grove!

Many
Voices **One**
Community!
St. James: Vote November 3


Chatfield
Working Together For a
**STRONG
FUTURE**

Our Community
OUR LEGACY
CLEVELAND SCHOOL REFERENDUM '18

Growing

HAND in HAND
PIERZ SCHOOL REFERENDUM '18

*It's
Central
It's
Essential!*
Central Public Schools
Referendum 2019

How We Work with You

- “ District staff plays critical role – providing information
- “ Rely on open flow of information about the project, community feedback, and assistance with monitoring local media
- “ Partner with website and social media staff for posting content
- “ Cost efficiencies – strategic messaging, graphic design, printing and distribution costs, etc.
- “ Regular phone calls with one to three point-people at the district
- “ We provide strategy, messaging, writing and editing
- “ Our team provides research, graphic design, clerical help, etc.

Active “Vote No” Campaign Experience

- “ Yes! We have seen it all
- “ Personal attacks, misinformation, 11th hour scare tactics
- “ Solid, transparent communications and an active Citizens Group focused on getting Yes voters to the polls typically prevails
- “ We have run successful campaigns against active “Vote No” groups:
 - . Cleveland
 - . Little Falls
 - . Pelican Rapids
 - . Pierz
 - . Robbinsdale
 - . St. James
 - . Westonka

Timeline

- “ **March-June:** Community engagement as needed
- “ **June-July:** Kick-off meeting, existing research review and inventories, interviews, draft communications plan and timeline
- “ **August:** Key messages, brand, website, Fast Facts, campaign rollout
- “ **September-November:** Weekly tasks and strategic counseling with superintendent and team
- “ **October:** District brochure mailing
- “ **November 3:** Election Day

Budget – Scope of Services

- “ See provided Scope of Services for reference
- “ Campaigns typically run between \$27,000-\$34,000 depending on which services best suit your needs
- “ You choose and we custom design a package for you

Benefits

- ” **We provide expertise**
- ” **We provide extra hands**
- ” **No “B team”**
- ” **Virtual agency**
- ” **We get to know your district inside and out**
- ” **Volunteer to guide Citizens Group**
- ” **Excellent return on investment**

Your total election expense, including survey, communications, investment of time, etc. is a small fraction of a successful referendum

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