

League of Education Voters

Parent & Community
Training 2016

Introduction to Advocacy



Working to improve public education in Washington state from cradle to career with ample, equitable, and stable funding.



What is Advocacy?

Wikipedia: aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions

- Who do we advocate to?
- What do we advocate about?

We need your help!



- Decisions are made by others
- Don't understand how things “really” happen
- Personal Stories Matter



How do we influence or persuade?

- Personal story
- Facts
- Numbers of people
- Proof points (how others have succeeded)
- Relationships
- Combination



Personal Story

- Easiest
- You will always be right
- No one can tell you it's not true
- Information the policy maker didn't have



Facts

- Is anyone else doing the facts?
- If you use facts, no more than 2
- Be able to back those facts up with references



#'s of people

- 1 = “only one person”
- 3 = “small group”
- 10 = “special interest group”
- 10 diverse people = “hmmmmm”
- 50 diverse people = “significant pressure”
- 100 diverse people = “potential change”



Proof points

- Use examples of others doing this successfully
- Can be another state, school district, school
- The more local to you, the more influential



Relationships

To build a relationship with a policy maker:

- Complement
- Thank
- Help

How do we let policy makers know about our thoughts?



- Email
- Facebook
- Telephone call Hotline 1 800 562-6000
- Snail mail letter
- Letter to the Editor
- Testify
- Local Meeting
- Local Meeting with group

Email



- Easy and fast
- Numbers matter
- Make it as personal as possible

Facebook



- Great place to do public thank you' s
- Great place to ask questions
- But, always be careful about the relationship



Telephone Call

- Hotline 1 800 562-6000
- Call legislative office
- Call legislator private #

Different Education groups to advocate to:



- Teacher/Principal/Admin in charge of school/Superintendent
- School Board
- State Board of Education
- Legislative hearing

Schools



- Each school district has a hierarchy
- Always start with the teacher, then up the chain
- Contact your school board member if you cannot get a meeting with the school district

School board



- Let the Board know in advance, try to set up a meeting beforehand
- Testify when you believe you are getting no support
- Bring a diverse group with you



State Board of Education

- Community event at night
- Testify typically twice during the day
- Very welcoming to community members
- 3 minutes
- *www.sbe.wa.gov/*



Legislative Hearing

- Dress respectfully
- ALWAYS leave a note for your legislators at their offices – they are very likely not at the committee hearing
- Be prepared for a 3 minute testimony and a 1 minute testimony
- Write it out
- Always end with your “ask” know in advance what this is

QUESTIONS?

