Advocacy 2.0
“Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success.” – Henry Ford
Goal Driven Advocacy

1. What is the purpose of the advocacy?

2. With whom are you meeting?
   a. Individual?
   b. Group?
   c. Public?

3. What is your message?

4. What will make the event successful?
Translating the in-PERSON to VIRTUAL

THINGS THAT JUST DON’T CHANGE

Invitations  Registration  Meeting Requests

TOOLS TO TRANSLATE

Chat Box  Breakout rooms  Name Tags  Shared Screen
Best Practices on Zoom

- Log on to the Zoom account at least 5 minutes before each meeting.
- Check to make sure your background and lighting is appropriate.
- Check to make sure your name is written out completely.
- Enter your name and contact information in the chat box.
- Stay engaged. Participants can tell when you are multitasking.
Reminders

Remember to mute yourself when not speaking.

Legislators and Staff can still see and hear you if they shut off their video and mute themselves.

Keep an eye on the time.
Trouble Shoot

Conduct

• For more complicated events, conduct a dress-rehearsal.

Create

• Plan B

Have

• Contact information.
An Insider’s Look
The next few slides will go through a high level overview of the Dos and Don’ts of Advocacy. We hope this advice will help you be the most effective advocate for your school district.
Do Your Research

• Do learn as much as you can about members — their committee assignments, specialties, and interests.
• Do use accurate and substantiated data to help tell your story. Cite your work!
• Do relate to situations in their home district.
• Do ask the member’s position on your issues or other issues.
Keep Calm and Lobby On

- Don’t overload a meeting with too many issues.
- Don’t overstate your case. Members / staff are busy and you’re apt to lose their attention if you are too wordy.
- Don’t be argumentative. Speak calmly to avoid putting the individual you’re advocating to on the defensive.
- Don’t confront, threaten, pressure or beg.
How to approach your Representative
Thoughtfully Engage in Conversation

• Do show openness to counterarguments and respond to them graciously.
• Do admit to things you don’t know. Offer to try to find out the answer and send information back to the office as soon as possible.
• Do spend time developing relationships with staff.
• Do send a follow up thank-you email to members and staff afterwards.
Keep resilient in your advocacy

- Don’t make promises you can’t deliver. Don’t be afraid to take a stand on important issues - it is your role to effectively advocate for your school district, not overly placate elected officials.
- Don’t be put off by smokescreens or long-winded answers. Circle back to the point to maintain control of the meeting.
- Don’t shy away from meetings with legislators whose views oppose yours.
- Don’t be offended if a member is unable to meet with you personally and requests that you meet with a staff person. Staff usually has more control over specific bills than we think.
How does NYSSBA keep me informed?
What if I miss an email?

- All NYSSBA Advocacy Alerts and Updates live on our website
Welcome to NYSSBA Action Center

Advocacy is an important part of board leadership. State and federal policymakers make decisions every day that affect your schools. NYSSBA's governmental relations team works daily to ensure that your voice is heard. But hearing from you is key as well. On this site you will find information about our work on your behalf. In addition you will find resources and tools to support you in your own advocacy.

Active Engagements

Addressing the Digital Divide
Support increased investments in broadband infrastructure and technological devices for students.

Transportation Aid Reimbursement
Ensure school districts will receive state aid for all transportation costs incurred during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Call To Action: 2021 State Budget Advocacy

The Governmental Relations team will be meeting with legislators and key staff to ensure that NYSSBA’s priorities are heard while legislators are putting together their one house budget proposals. Local action is critical to getting our message out. Please reach out to your legislators and share our budget recommendations.

Federal Stimulus Action 2021

The COVID-19 pandemic has left our schools and states reeling. We worry what may happen this year and in years to come if additional aid is not swiftly agreed upon by Congress. Schools have always been the hubs of their communities, and now more than ever, this is being proven day after day.

How do I get here?

https://cqrcengage.com/nyssba/0
Where does this information go?

- We use a specific advocacy program called CQ Engage that uses our district database information to find your representative and send them our pre-crafted letters.
- We design all take action letters so they can be edited by you for personalization. We encourage you to add information about your specific district and share the link with your community.
How do I know it worked?

• Upon “Taking Action” you will receive a confirmation email from the system thank you for your participation.

• We can also run a report and find out exactly who sent out letters on behalf of your district and when. We are always happy to share information with you!
How to get involved
Advocacy Liaison Program

• First to receive invitations to Lobby Days, In-District Federal Legislative Visits, Board Member Volunteerism
• Newsletter specifically for Advocacy Liaisons
• Opportunities to attend NYSSBA advocacy events (with Board approval)
• Detailed information to brief your board on NYSSBA advocacy activities
Turning an Opinion into Position
The Process of Becoming a Position

- Resolution Survey
- Board Resolution Submissions
- Resolution Committee Meeting
- Business Meeting
Resolution Survey

• NYSSBA distributes a survey to all members asking if you support, oppose or are neutral on various topics.
• The survey is distributed via email to all members and is open for 2 weeks.
• For each question that was supported or opposed by at least two-thirds of survey respondents a sample resolution is drafted.
Board Resolution Submission

• A board may submit their own resolution, a sunsetting resolution or a resolution created from the survey.
• Resolutions that become positions last for 5 years.
• The most successful resolutions are those that
  – Are specific to a topic, but, have enough leeway to be interpreted in the future.
  – Are relevant to a variety of boards
  – Are within reason for the NYSSBA Governmental Relations to pursue
Resolution Committee

• Representative from each area attend two meetings
• First meeting, they make recommendations on the resolutions that were submitted.
  – Resolutions recommended by the Resolutions Committee are automatically submitted to the delegates and are voted on first during the Business Meeting
  – Not recommended Resolutions need to be motioned from the floor for review.
• Second meeting, they review all rebuttals to not recommended resolutions that were submitted and have the ability to change their votes from the initial meeting.
Business Meeting

• Takes place annually during the NYSSBA convention

• Each Board (District and BOCES) sends 1 Delegate to the meeting to vote on behalf of their board.

• Those that sit on a School Board and BOCES Board are able to represent both
Priorities and Position Statements

• When a resolution becomes a position it will stay active for the next 5 years unless it is acted upon.

• You can find all active position statements and our legislative priorities on the NYSSBA Website.
Contact Us

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