

Three Easy Steps to Becoming a Strong Advocate for your Schools

Step 1 Get Informed and Know Your Story

- The first step in effective advocacy is to get informed. Talk to the staff, parents and students to thoroughly understand an issue.
- You need to be comfortable with your knowledge of an issue before you talk to others. Resources are available to you at OSBA. Please utilize them.
- Remember, no one is more qualified than you to talk about what is going on in your district and schools.

Step 2 Contact Your Legislator and Develop a Relationship

- Find out who represents your district in Salem.
- Introduce yourself at community meetings.
- Make an appointment in their district.
- Invite them to visit your schools, community meetings or serve as principal for a day. Get them in your buildings.
- Come to Salem. Meet them on their turf.

Step 3 Share Your Story and ASK for Their Support

- Identify the issue clearly and succinctly.
- Tell them why it is good/bad for students in your district.
- Be direct. Ask your legislators to support or oppose a bill or policy. "Please vote NO on House Bill 3333."
- Don't be put off if you sometimes deal with staff. Legislators are very busy and relationships with staff are equally important.

Tips for Communicating with Legislators

- Always identify yourself. Make sure the legislator or their staff understand who you are and which district, ESD, or community college you represent.
- Be brief and be SPECIFIC. It's about the kids, not the adults.
- Use the local angle. Tell them how a proposal or bill will positively or negatively impact schools and students in their community.
- Always thank them for their time. Even if they are not supportive of your position, you may need their support on another issue in the future.

Questions? Contact Lori Sattenspiel lsattenspiel@osba.org