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**