Advocacy Training Day

David Smith, President
April 5, 2015
Welcome

• Introductions
• Who are we
• Why we are here
• What we can do
• Goal:
  – 30 Center Visits
• Review Agenda
Policy Update

Karen Lampe
Policy Chair
State Policy Update

• State Issues
  – Governors sign on letter
    • Open until April 8th
    • Over 300 “sign-ons”
  – Public Preschool
  – Transportation
  – Rules and other issues
Advocacy 101

Dee Smith, Client Services Director
Pappas & Associates
www.tompappas.com
Willa Ebersole, Vice President
Dee Smith, Client Services Director

THE ALLIANCE
WHAT IS A LOBBYIST?

Lobbyist: Noun

A person who tries to influence legislation or administrative decision on behalf of a special interest

History:

The term lobbyist was first used by President Ulysses S. Grant in the early 1800s. President Grant regularly stayed in the same hotel. People would regularly wait in the lobby of the hotel and approach the President to discuss the individual causes.
LOBBYST

What my friends think I do.

What my parents think I do.

What the other side says I do.

What society thinks I do.

What I think I do.

What I actually do.
131st General Assembly
Fast Facts

• Republicans swept all statewide offices in 2010 General Election; maintained all those offices in 2014
• Ohio House of Representatives (65-34)
• Ohio Senate (23-10)
• 2016 Election Year
  • Entire OHR up for election
    • 14 term limited legislators
      • 11 Republicans
      • Including two the current members of majority leadership
      • 3 Democrats
  • Half of Senate up for election
    • 7 term limited legislators
      • 5 Republicans
      • Including three of the four current members of majority leadership
      • 2 Democrats
Schoolhouse Rock
LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

How a bill becomes law:

– Introduction (House or Senate)
– Referred to Committee
  • Committee Hearings
    – Rule requiring 3 hearings for each bill
– Floor Vote
– Repeat the process in the other chamber
  • If there are any changes, must go back to the previous chamber for concurrence.
– Governor’s Desk
  • Signature
  • 10-Day Non-action
  • Veto
    – 3/5 vote of each chamber to override
"PASSPORT waiver" means the federal medicaid waiver granted by the United States secretary of health and human services that authorizes the PASSPORT program.

(B) The director of job and family services shall submit to the United States secretary of health and human services an amendment to the PASSPORT waiver that authorizes additional enrollments in the PASSPORT program pursuant to this section. Beginning with the month following the month in which the United States secretary approves the amendment and each The department shall establish a home first component of the PASSPORT program under which eligible individuals may be enrolled in the PASSPORT program in accordance with this section. An individual is eligible for the PASSPORT program's home first component if all of the following apply:
UNDERSTANDING ADVOCACY

- Relationship
- Relationship
- Relationship
UNDERSTANDING ADVOCACY

• Most basic principle of politics is:
  “All Politics is Local”

• Put broad policy issues in a local perspective
  • Legislators who know how the issue will impact local voters tend to grasp ideas more easily and are generally more receptive

• Advocacy will not ‘just happen’ it takes a decision and a plan
PLAN YOUR ADVOCACY

- District Grassroots Meetings
- Campaigns and Other Political Events
- Statehouse Office Visits
DO YOU KNOW YOUR LEGISLATOR?

How to find your legislator:

https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/
HOW TO SCHEDULE A VISIT

• Call or email their office (more from Dave later)
• Find a mutually agreeable date and time
• Prepare staff, students and parents
• Prepare an internal agenda for the visit
• Prepare welcome signage, provide refreshments
• Have a camera ready!
We're excited to welcome Representative Marilyn Slaby!
DISTRICT MEETINGS

• Invite the legislator to your site
  • Allow them to meet employees, students, and parents; educate them about the school
  • You should NOT meet the legislator in a neutral location at this point. It is important for them to see your school
  • Initially, don’t worry about advocating or informing them about public policy begin this is a ‘show and tell’ visit; this is the time to ‘sell’ your school, much like you ‘sell’ your school to parents
  • You are the expert and they will ask you questions, be prepared
    – # of employees, students
  • Get to know them as an important organization in their district, so later when you ask for their support you will be dealing with a ‘friend’, not a ‘legislator’
**ADVOCACY TIPS**

- Do not be intimidated
- Don’t ‘guess’ when answering a question – follow-up with correct information at a later time
  - Don’t be afraid to say “I don’t know”
  - Don’t be afraid to ask for assistance
- Don’t assume the legislator is aware of or understands your issue; take time to educate him/her
- Know your issue; provide facts and figures to back up your position.
- Don’t use industry jargon or acronyms
- Don’t be combative or argumentative
NOW WHAT?

• Social Media and/or Press Release
• Follow Up Letter
  – 3-5 days after visit
  – Include:
    • Thank you for visiting...
    • I appreciated talking about...
    • Can we schedule a time to talk more in depth...
SOCIAL MEDIA

- Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn
- Keep your postings positive or neutral
- Know the username of the elected official
- Check in with the official before you post
- Ask before you share a photo
- Use the best hashtag
- Keep your messages short for maximum sharing/retweeting potential
CAMPAIGNS & OTHER POLITICAL EVENTS

• At the least, inquire into the campaign

• Invite legislator and campaign staff back

• Volunteer or donate to a campaign
STATEHOUSE MEETINGS

• Know who your legislator is before making initial contact on an issue

• Establish objective, organized talking points
  • Remember ALL causes are good causes; this is the time to ‘sell’ your school, much like you sell your school to students and potential employers
    • You must convince your legislator that there is something extra special about you, your school and your cause; convince the legislator to care about your issue.
    • Use facts and student stories to make the legislator care about your issue
    • Share personal stories if it helps to make your point. This helps put a face on the issue

• Discuss local issues and impact on constituents

• Put the legislator at ease by convincing him/her that you are there to serve as an educational resource
ADVOCACY TIPS

• Be a good listener and hear out what your legislator has to say on the issue
  – Don’t debate with a legislator
  – Respect the legislator’s right to disagree with you
  – Don’t issue ultimatums such as “I won’t vote for you if you don’t support my position”.
• Be sure to thank the legislator for taking time to hear your position
• Become a resource for you legislator
• Be flexible with advocacy/legislative process
• Always follow up with a thank you note, and reiterate your main points
• Once a legislator gives you a commitment, it is okay to follow up with him/her later, but don’t ‘stalk’/badger your legislator.
SENDING EMAILS/LETTERS

• When to write your email or letter
  – Interested party meetings
  – Committee hearings
  – Floor Vote

• How to write your email or letter
  – The letter should be typewritten
  – Always put your contact information, including your return address on the letter - NOT just the envelope; *envelopes are immediately thrown away*
SENDING EMAILS/LETTERS ...(cont.)

- State who you are and your relationship to the legislator, i.e. constituent, registered voter, member of an association or group, etc.
- Elaborate on why you are writing; make this part of the letter more personal. Describe the issue and then describe your experience. This should be two or three paragraphs.
- Convey a sense of urgency; “People are suffering today. For some, tomorrow may be too late.”
  - Always ask a question of the legislator. “How would you feel if..., etc.”
  - Specifically and respectfully ASK (do not demand) the legislator to support/oppose/amend the bill.
  - Respectfully ask to hear from the legislator regarding their position on the bill.
REMEMBER…..

Decisions in politics are not made by the majority; they are made by the majority of people who show up.
Questions?