



## Virtual Advocacy Toolkit

What do we mean by **virtual advocacy**? Virtual means "extended by computer software" and advocacy means "the act of advancing or promoting." This Virtual Advocacy toolkit contains tips and sample scripts for engagement via email, phone, and various social media platforms.

Consider posting an action photo on **#LibrarySnapshotDay, the 10th of every month.** Remember to post what your libraries are doing to support your communities during **#NationalLibraryWeek** as well.

## WRITE YOUR LEGISLATOR

Find your legislator using the **OLA Engage Center for Legislative Advocacy**:

<http://www.cqrcengage.com/alaok>

Our OLA Engage Center allows you to customize your email to your policymakers--whether at the local, state or federal level. With specific action alerts, we provide a template message, talking points and background information about pending legislation. Any text in brackets is either a note and should be removed before sending, or a section that should be edited by you, the writer. Each letter references bill numbers if they exist.

### Writing Tips

- When you write, it's best to advocate for a specific issue or bill, and particularly if that issue or bill is under consideration in one of the committees where your legislator is a member.
- Review the OLA or ALA Policy Priorities via the OLA Engage Center, where we post about specific issues of interest.
- Make your communication as personal as possible (share how you use a library service, for example), which will be more effective than a form letter.
- Email is an effective method of communicating with your legislator, but make sure you check with his/her website to see if there is a specific form that needs to be filled out first. Email sent to a legislator's email may be filtered as spam, so it is best to check the website for details.
- Postal mail is acceptable, but if you are pressed for time, it may not be the best method of communication for an action alert.
- A hand-written note sent through postal mail is ideal to show appreciation to a policymaker.
- Be respectful and polite.
- Be concise, specific, and support your argument with facts that can be verified.
- Stay on message and keep to your main points.
- Thank them for their time.

## CALL YOUR LEGISLATOR

### State Representatives:

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am a constituent of/I work at a library that is served by Rep. [NAME]. Please pass along that I ask his/her support of [name of bill], Libraries, and I hope to have Rep. [NAME] visit our library after session. For any questions, I may be reached at \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you.

### Senators:

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am a constituent of/I work at a library that is served by Sen. [NAME]. Please pass along my thanks for their support of [name of bill]. I would like to invite him/her to visit our library after session. I may be reached at \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you.

### Generic Support Message:

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am a constituent of/I work at a library that is served by Sen./Rep. [NAME]. Please pass along that we encourage him/her to support libraries in any related legislation. I hope to have Sen./Rep. [NAME] visit our library after session. For any questions, I may be reached at \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you.

Thank you for your time.

### Other Phone Tips:

- Don't expect to speak to your legislator directly. Phones are often answered by staff who are responsible for taking messages, which are then passed along to your legislator.
- Be prepared with a written statement that will help you stay focused and on message. What is your local, regional, state level elevator speech about how libraries are important in your community?
- Make your communication as personal as possible (share how you use a library service, for example).
- Be respectful and polite.
- Be concise, specific, and support your argument with facts that can be verified.
- Stay on message and keep to your main points.
- Thank them for their time.

## SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

Use social media to contact your Representative or Senator to thank them for their support of Oklahoma Libraries. Or use some of the more general tweets below to show the value of Oklahoma libraries to your followers and the public.

Remember to post what your libraries are doing to support your communities during **#NationalLibraryWeek**.

Oklahoma Library Association is promoting **#OKLibrarySnapshotDay** on the 10th of every month in 2021.

Post a photo or video on various social media (FB, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) to show activity in the modern library. Use **#OKLibrarySnapshotDay**, **#OKLibrariansTeach**, and tag OLA and community partners.

### Follow OLA on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube:

 [@oklibs](https://twitter.com/oklibs)

 [@oklibs](https://www.facebook.com/oklibs)

 [@oklibraries](https://www.instagram.com/oklibraries)

 [Oklahoma Library Association](https://www.youtube.com/OklahomaLibraryAssociation)

### Four Ways to Use Instagram to advocate for Oklahoma libraries:

1. Use the hashtag #OKlibraries anytime.
2. Post a photograph of your library building and include a message about your library. Include the hashtag #OKLibrarySnapshotDay.
3. Post a photograph of people using a service at your library. Include the hashtag #OKLibrarySnapshotDay.
4. Post a photograph/video outside or inside your library. Include the hashtag #OKLibrarySnapshotDay.

## TWITTER AVOCACY

### Sample Tweets for use during #NationalLibraryWeek

# is an annual celebration highlighting libraries, librarians, & library workers. Let library staff know that you appreciate their efforts. Show your appreciation, use the hashtag #NationalLibraryWeek and tag your library.

There's something for almost everyone at the library, & each library serves the needs of its own unique community. Oklahoma library staff are working hard to serve their communities during this time of need. #NationalLibraryWeek

Oklahoma Teacher Librarians are meeting with students, providing resources for teachers, & preparing for next year. Show your appreciation, use the hashtag #NationalLibraryWeek and tag your school library.

Academic Librarians support research needs of their students, faculty, & staff. They also show students how to use computers, find information for assignments, help faculty & staff find information & materials, & more. Thank you, Oklahoma Academic Librarians! #NationalLibraryWeek

In response to the economic disruption resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, many Oklahoma libraries are helping residents apply for unemployment and eligibility programs such as SNAP & healthcare. Check with your local OK library for more information. #LibrariesTransformCommunities #NationalLibraryWeek

### Sample Tweets - Public Libraries

Library access = opportunity: Over [X] million Oklahoma residents opened internet sessions in public libraries in 20XX. #LibrariesTransformOK

Libraries = smart investment: OK public libraries receive, on average, only [X] cents of the property tax dollar and multiply that impact. #LibrariesTransformOK

OK public libraries hosted more than [X] million visits in 20XX--nearly X visits for each resident. #LibrariesTransformOK

OK public libraries help Oklahoma residents apply for jobs, create resumes, prepare for interviews, and more. #LibrariesTransformOK

OK public libraries host supervised visits for foster children #LibrariesTransformOK

Libraries share resources to meet local needs: providing over 700,000 interlibrary loans to Oklahoma residents in 20XX #LibrariesTransformOK

Library staff champion your right to access information privately when you check out materials or browse the internet #LibrariesTransformOK

Our public library opens up at 9 am. For the next 12 hours, it's [town name's] hub for learning, community, eovernment, meetings, and broadband. #LibrariesTransformOK

[NAME Public Library] is open 10am-8pm, but our internet resources are open for business 24/7. Access your eBooks all night long. #LibrariesTransformOK

Learning to tell the difference between factual and fake news are lessons taught in libraries. Keep our country strong by supporting libraries and digital citizens. #LibrariesTransformOK

Find your legislator's social media on their bio page in our OLA Engage Center

### **Sample Tweets - School Librarians**

Why I love my school library: It's the hub of the school. #LibrariesTransformOK

Our school library opens up at 7 am. For 8 hours, it's a hub of energy, learning, and student-teacher collaboration. #LibrariesTransformOK

OK School libraries are active! Students at [school] use the library to check out books, complete research, make connections on projects, and create in the MakerSpace. #LibrariesTransformOK

OK School libraries build lifelong readers and active learners. Check out our students at [school] as they do [activity] today. #LibrariesTransformOK #OKLibrarySnapshotDay

Learning to tell the difference between factual and fake news are lessons taught in our school libraries. Keep our country strong by supporting school libraries and digital citizens. #LibrariesTransformOK

Our school [name]'s students have checked out over [number] of books this year. We are readers! What's the best book that you've read this year? #LibrariesTransformOK

What does the school library mean to you? Here's what our students have to say: [answer]. #LibrariesTransformOK

Our school library provides instruction and support that builds student success. School libraries are powerful and relevant. #LibrariesTransformOK

Students who learn to be responsible readers and learners today will be better educated voters in the future. Support Oklahoma libraries today. #LibrariesTransformOK

## **Sample Tweets - Academic Librarians**

Learning to tell the difference between factual and fake news are lessons taught in our academic libraries. Keep our country strong by supporting libraries and digital citizens.  
#LibrariesTransformOK

The Library is THE hub of activity on campus. Record your group presentation on video. Reserve a study room. Ask a librarian for inter-library loan with another campus.  
#OKLibrarySnapshotDay #LibrariesTransformOK