

Advocacy Toolkit

A guide to effective school board advocacy

Advocacy Toolkit

Introduction

Advocacy for education can make the difference in our schools – active Iowa school board and administrator advocates have proven it! This toolkit is specifically designed to help board/superintendent teams plan ahead so they can be most effective and achieve results that matter for their students, staff and communities. The toolkit covers:

- Learning the basics of advocacy
- Ideas on how to build strong relationships with legislators
- Key pieces of coalition building
- Ways to use the news media to communicate with legislators and the community
- Getting involved in election campaigns and holding forums
- Strategies for putting it all together, including a two-year timeline you can develop and tailor to your specific needs.

The toolkit has two main components. The first section offers clear, to-the-point reading material and examples. The second section is a workbook you can use as you complete each chapter. Together, these tools will help you better understand the legislative process and your role, and arm you with a plan of action so you can put your knowledge to practical use.

Instructions

We urge you to complete the toolkit with your colleagues, at the board table, although this can also be helpful for board members or superintendents doing their own research and learning. This also provides a good opportunity to work with neighboring boards on a county-wide or regional basis, especially when you share legislators.

When you are finished, please send a copy of the Chapter 6 *Two-Year Advocacy Strategy* to IASB, so that we can better understand the issues important to your district and what other ways we may be of assistance. Members who send in the completed *Two-Year Advocacy Strategy* will earn 5 *Better Boardmanship credits*. You can e-mail the completed strategy to Mary Gannon, IASB's attorney, at mgannon@ia-sb.org or mail a copy to her at 6000 Grand Avenue, Des Moines, IA, 50312.

We are always available to answer your questions as you progress through the toolkit or anytime you have advocacy needs or issues. Thank you for taking the time to build grassroots advocacy efforts in your district. Together, we can continue to be an influential voice on behalf of students in Iowa.

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Chapter 1: Learning About Advocacy

They say the legislature works in mysterious ways. There is a method however, to its madness. Once you know the process by which bills become law, you can determine when and how to most effectively influence decisions.

How a bill becomes a law

A legislative bill is a written proposal for a law. Ideas for bills come from many sources: a legislator's constituents, businesses, government agencies, professional associations, interest groups and other state legislatures. When a legislator recognizes or is made aware of a problem that could be pursued through legislation, that idea is put into the form of a bill. In Iowa, only legislators are able to sponsor and introduce bills.

Bills may be sponsored by a senator or representative, by a Senate or House committee, by a state agency, or submitted by the governor. All bills must be approved by both the Senate and the House before being sent to the governor for final approval.

“Most lawmakers’ votes are won or lost at fish fries, not in committee meetings.”

Bob Guyer of Engineering the Law, Inc.

That’s why building a productive legislative relationship is so extremely important!

When a bill is introduced by members of a legislative chamber, it must follow a process and, if passed, be sent to members in the other legislative chamber where this process is repeated. The bill and its language must be approved in identical form from both chambers before being sent to the governor.

Introduction

After the bill draft is completed by the nonpartisan Legislative Services Agency (LSA), it is returned to the sponsor for review and filed with the Secretary of the Senate or Chief Clerk of the House, who assigns the bill a number. The bill is reviewed by the Senate or House legal counsel's office for accuracy of format, and when completed the bill's number, title and sponsor's name are read to the Senate or House. The President of the Senate or Speaker of the House assigns the bill to a standing committee for review.

Standing Committee Work

A standing committee is a group of legislators chosen by the leadership of each party and chamber to examine all bills relating to a specific subject area. Once a bill is assigned to a committee, the committee chairperson and ranking member appoint a subcommittee. The subcommittee, usually composed of three or five members of the standing committee, reviews the bill in detail and reports its conclusions to the full committee. The full committee then discusses the subcommittee's conclusions and makes recommendations to the entire chamber. The committee may recommend they pass the bill, pass the bill with amendment, refer the bill to another committee for study, postpone the bill indefinitely, or pass the bill without recommendation.

Calendar

A report of the committee's recommendation is sent to the Secretary of the Senate or Chief Clerk of the House, who will place the bill on the Regular Calendar, which lists bills that are eligible to be debated. A bill considered important may be brought up for consideration by the chamber ahead of the other bills listed before it on the calendar. The majority leader is responsible for deciding which bills on the calendar will be debated.

Debate

After the committee completes work on the bill, the subcommittee's chairperson usually becomes the bill's floor manager. The floor manager's job is to present the bill to the chamber and follow the bill's progress during debate, when members discuss and may propose amendments to the bill. Amendments are adopted by a simple majority of the senators or representatives voting. If a constitutional majority (at least 26 Senators and 51 Representatives) votes to pass the bill, it moves to the other chamber. If fewer legislators than a constitutional majority vote to pass the bill, the bill fails. Votes on bills and amendments may be reconsidered on a motion by a member who voted on the prevailing side of the issue. If the motion to reconsider is approved, a new vote is taken on the bill or amendment. If the bill is then approved by a constitutional majority vote and all motions to reconsider are cleared, it is delivered to the other chamber.

Second Passage

Amendments adopted by the chamber of origin become part of the bill before it is sent to the other chamber. As the bill follows its path through the Legislature, the procedure in both chambers is basically the same. A bill introduced in the Senate will retain its Senate number as it travels through the House and a bill introduced in the House will retain its House number as it travels through the Senate. If the bill is further amended by the other chamber, the amended bill is sent back to the chamber of origin for approval. If the chamber of origin concurs or agrees with the amendment(s), the bill has passed both chambers in identical form and will be sent to the governor for review. If the chamber of origin refuses to concur with the other chamber's amendment(s) or amends the amendment, the bill is returned to the other chamber, which may recede from, or insist upon, their amended version of the bill or adopt the amendment of the house of origin. If they recede, the bill is sent to the governor; however, if they insist upon their amendment(s), a conference committee is appointed to work out the differences.

Conference Committee

Conference committees are composed of Senate and House members representing both the majority and minority parties and both sides of the issue in dispute. The 10 members of a conference committee are appointed by the Senate Majority and Minority Leader and the Speaker of the House and the House Minority Leader to study the points of disagreement between the chambers in an attempt to reach a compromise. If an agreement is reached, it is presented to both chambers in a report that contains the compromise version of the bill. The report cannot be amended by either chamber. If the report is rejected by either chamber, a second conference committee may be appointed. If no agreement is reached, the bill fails. If the conference committee report is adopted, the chambers again vote on the bill. If the bill is approved it will be enrolled and sent to the governor for review.

Enrollment

Final preparation of a bill before it is sent to the governor is called enrollment. When both chambers have passed the bill in the same form, it is prepared with all approved amendments incorporated. After the bill is enrolled, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House sign the enrolled version and the Secretary of the Senate or Chief Clerk of the House certifies that the bill originated in that chamber. The bill is then sent to the governor for final action.

Governor's Action

Bills passed by the Legislature must be reviewed by the governor. The governor takes final action on all bills passed by the Iowa General Assembly. The governor has three options: sign the bill, veto the bill (or item veto an appropriations bill), or take no action. In the case of a veto, the Legislature may override the veto with two-thirds of the members of each chamber voting to reconsider and pass the bill a second time. If, during session, the governor does not sign or veto

a bill, it becomes law after three calendar days (except Sundays). Bills received by the governor during the last three calendar days of session (except Sundays) must be signed or vetoed within 30 calendar days.

The governor has the option to use three types of vetoes: the veto, item veto and pocket veto. The veto indicates the governor's disapproval of an entire bill. The item veto may be used only for bills which appropriate funds. It strikes a specific item of an appropriations bill. A pocket veto occurs when the governor fails to take action within 30 calendar days on a bill received in the last three calendar days of session (except Sundays). The entire bill fails to become law. When the governor vetoes or item vetoes a bill, a veto message explaining why the veto was made is delivered to the chamber of origin with the bill and is filed with the Secretary of State. The governor's veto messages can be accessed on the Iowa General Assembly Web site in the "Enrolled Bills" section.

Iowa Law

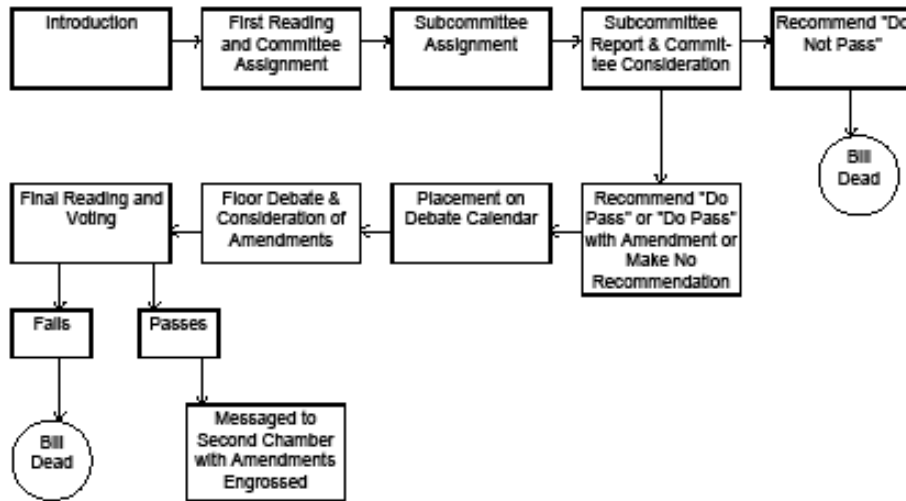
After the bill is signed by the governor or is passed by the Legislature over the governor's veto, it is sent to the Secretary of State who is the custodian of original copies of all bills enacted into law. Bills normally go into effect July 1 following their approval, unless another date is specified in the bill. Bills passed by the Legislature before July but signed by the governor after July 1 become effective August 15.

The enacted bills are then printed in the Acts of the General Assembly, published after each legislative session. The portions of the enacted bills that are laws of a permanent nature are incorporated into the Code of Iowa, a compilation of Iowa laws published every other year. A supplement to the Code is published in the year in which the entire Code of Iowa is not published. These documents are published by the Iowa Code Division of the LSA.

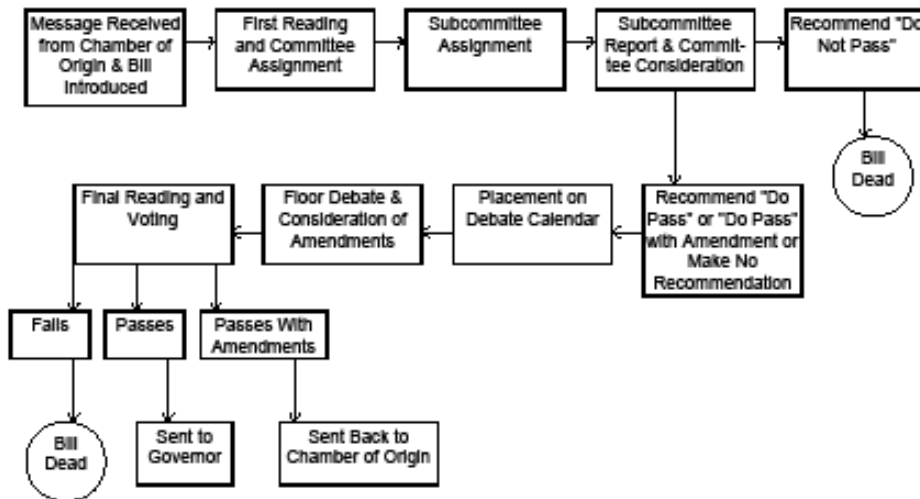


VI. THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS.

A. Chamber of Origin.



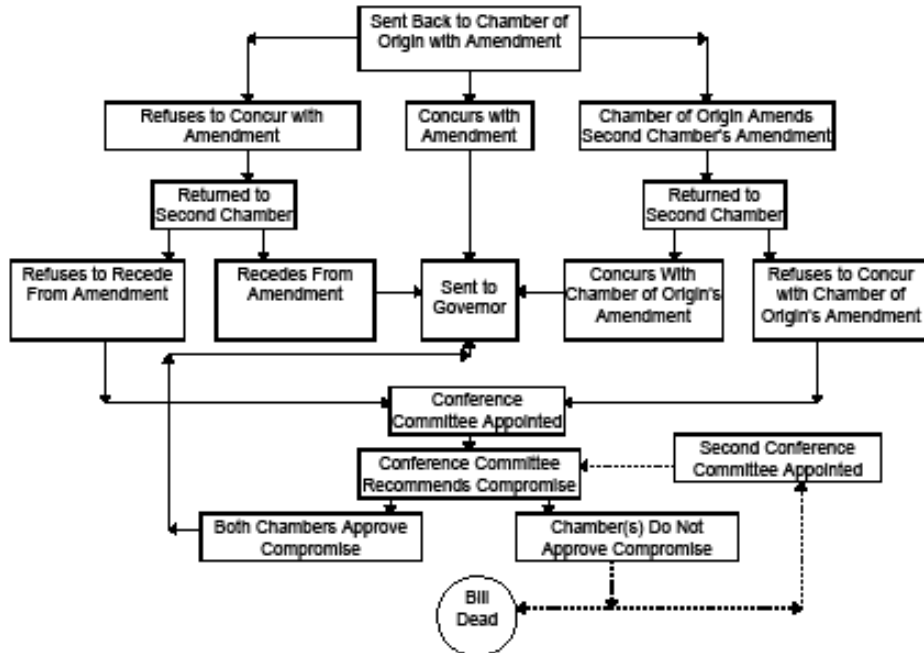
B. Second Chamber.



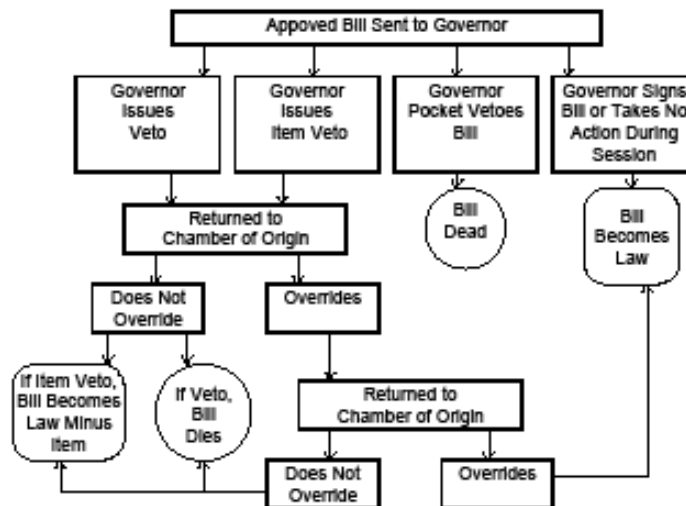


The Iowa General Assembly

C. Final Legislative Actions.



D. Governor's Actions.



Chapter 2: Building a Productive Legislative Relationship

It's important to learn as much as possible about your legislators before you contact them. This may influence the arguments you make and the actions you take.

Background to learn

Committee assignments: The committees your legislators are assigned to indicate their primary areas of interest and influence. For example, a legislator sitting on the Ways and Means Committee may be a critical player in the battle to increase tax revenues for education funding.

It is important to keep all legislators advised on education issues. Ultimately, they all vote. Think long-range: Committee memberships change and your legislator – now well-informed through contact with you – may one day serve on a key committee.

Voting records: Knowing how your legislator voted in the past on key education issues will give you an idea of where each is likely to stand on the issue at hand. It may also help you shape your arguments.

Staff members: Legislative assistants play a key role because their contacts, opinions and knowledge are passed on to their legislator. Get to know your legislator's assistant by name, and make sure the assistant knows your name. They are the gate-keepers and can assure you an appointment or a returned phone call and make sure your message is delivered.

Personal information: Knowing some personal details about your legislator can help establish ties. Where did each go to elementary school, high school or college? What are their professions? What is their governmental service background? Did they serve on a school board or other local government position? What are their hobbies? Consider inviting your legislators back to their "old" school to see first-hand what's going on now.

Learn as much about your legislators as you can before you contact them. Visit the legislator page on the Iowa Legislature Web site

<http://www.legis.iowa.gov/Legislators/find.aspx>

Legislative committees that impact education

Many issues beyond traditional "education" programs impact education. Pay close attention to state laws dealing with such areas as state and local taxation, health care, personnel and environmental mandates.

When looking to see if your legislators are on "key" committees that impact education, keep in mind the following committees that are important to public schools:

- Senate and House Education Committees – consider bills impacting education policy issues:
- Senate and House Appropriations Committees – consider bills impacting state and local funding
- Senate and House Business, Labor and Consumer Affairs Committees – consider bills impacting school personnel and labor-management issues
- Senate and House Local Government Committee- considers bills that impact political subdivisions
- Senate and House State Government Committees – consider bills that impact governmental bodies such as sunshine legislation, public bidding requirements, IPERS, elections
- Senate and House Ways & Means Committees – consider bills that impact tax policy.

How to make your voice heard in Des Moines

Legislators value clear, concise and informative communication from education advocates. Board members are in a good position to know what state-level policies work and don't work in public schools. Here are some proven ways to communicate effectively with your legislators.

Meeting face to face with your legislator

Meeting in person with your legislator is the most effective way to make your views known and influence legislation. You can visit your legislators in Des Moines or meet with them when they're in their home district. During legislative sessions, legislators often hold town hall meetings in their districts or attend other community functions, often in the evenings or on Saturdays.

Consider inviting your legislator to visit a school in your district to see programs in action! If a face to face meeting cannot be arranged, consider setting up a conference call with your legislator and several other education advocates. Use IASB talking points, sample questions, or the weekly **Action Line** during session to prepare for your meeting.

Invite your legislator to visit a school in your district.

Writing your legislator

Personal, thoughtful letters have a considerable impact. When writing, keep the following in mind:

- Try to focus on one issue or bill per letter and identify the bill, if known, by name and number.
- Express your point of view and explain why your legislator should be supportive. Be brief and courteous.
- Briefly explain the local impact of the legislation – just the facts.
- Request that your legislators take a specific position on the bill. If you want their support, you may want to ask them to co-sponsor the bill or to vote for its passage.
- Ask for a response from your legislator.
- When writing an individual letter, use your signature and personal letterhead and state that you are a board member. If it is a collective letter written by the board, have the board president sign it and put it on the board's letterhead.
- Make sure your return address is on the letter (envelopes often get lost) so that your legislator can respond.

For the fastest response to letters, address them to:

The Honorable [Full Name]
State Senator
State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319
Dear Senator [Last Name]:

or

The Honorable [Full Name]
State Representative
State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319
Dear Representative [Last Name]:

E-mailing your legislator is also an option for shorter or time-sensitive messages. Because of the volume of e-mails legislators receive, however, yours may be retrieved by a staff member or accidentally deleted and never seen by your legislator. A hard copy letter mailed is by far your best choice, but you can print and mail a copy of your email to ensure it gets noticed.

Refer to IASB's Legislative Advocacy section on our Web site for legislators' interim and regular session snail mail and e-mail addresses and phone numbers at www.ia-sb.org/LegislativeAdvocacy.aspx?id=5010.

Sample Letter to Your Legislator

School District Letterhead

The Honorable Sam Sample
Iowa State Senate
State Capitol
Des Moines, IA 50319

Dear Senator Sample:

(If you know the legislator personally, customize the greeting as shown.)

I am a school board member from the Dreamfield School District. On behalf of my district, I urge you to support SF 123, which provides adequate and stable funding for Iowa's public schools.

With the enactment of SF 123 my district will be able to **(insert local information)**.

Thank you for your leadership in support of Iowa public schools. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

John Doe
President
Dreamfield School Board
515-123-4567
1234 Dreamfield Drive
Dreamfield, IA 12345

Calling your legislator

Phone calls are an effective and fast way to communicate with your legislator, especially when a critical vote is coming up.

Phone calls can remind legislators that constituents are closely monitoring their votes. Sometimes you may be able to have a conversation with your legislator. Other times, your calls may simply be tallied by the receptionist and your legislators are then given counts of constituents for and against the particular issue.

When phoning your legislator, prepare notes to stay on message and keep the following in mind:

- **Ask to speak with the legislator or legislative assistant**, or briefly state your position to the receptionist. This is one of the times your relationships pay dividends!
- **Give your name**, title, and school district or education agency.
- **Focus on one issue or bill**. Whenever possible, identify the bill by number and name.
- **Briefly state what position** you want your legislator to take on the issue. Be prepared to give a locally based rationale for your position.
- **Ask for your legislator's position on the bill**.
- If asked, **give your address** so that you can receive a written response.
- Follow-up with an email or letter **thanking them** for taking the call and reiterating any commitment made to sponsor or support the bill.

It's OK to call your legislator at home when not in session, either during the interim or on Fridays and weekends, January through April. To contact your legislator during the regular legislative session, call the House switchboard, (515) 281-3221, or Senate switchboard, (515) 281-3371, and ask to be connected to your legislator's office.

Tips for setting up meetings:

- **Write or call your legislator** and ask to schedule a meeting. State the subject(s) to be discussed and the time needed. Most meetings in Des Moines last 15 to 20 minutes, although they can last longer especially if a coalition of people is included. Be flexible and patient. Legislators aren't often in control of their schedules so even though you may have a meeting scheduled, it may have to be delayed due to the legislative calendar that day.
- Depending on the issue, arrange to make your visit along with several other board members, educators or community members to demonstrate broad support for your position. **Let the legislator's office know who will be attending the meeting with you.**
- **Call IASB's Government Relations staff** to let us know that you have a meeting scheduled. We'll provide you with the latest information for your meeting.

How to set up a successful meeting

- **Call the legislator's assistant** to discuss issues in advance of meeting and afterwards.
- **Contact IASB for assistance.** Ask us for talking points, talk about what we might know about your legislator and what caucus positions are being taken.
- **Hold a pre-meeting** with everyone who will be lobbying to make sure all agree on your position. Decide in advance who will discuss which points so that your visit runs smoothly.
- **Be concise** and focus on just a few issues or bills. Remember, your legislator may have no understanding of the bill, so be prepared to educate!
- Whenever possible, **speak from personal experience.** Provide brief anecdotal evidence of how this issue affects your school district, and therefore, the legislator's constituents.
- **Ask directly for your legislator's support.** If legislators are supportive, ask them to convince other legislators of the merits of your position. If they disagree with you, express respectful disappointment, and rebut their argument if you have the facts to do so. Be courteous – you'll have other issues to take up in the future.
- Always provide a concise, one-page **fact sheet or letter** describing your position to be left with your legislator as a reminder of the issues and your visit.
- After the meeting, **write a letter to thank legislators** for their time and reinforce your position.
- **Contact IASB** and let us know how your legislator responded to the issues. Call IASB's Government Relations staff at (800) 795-4272.

Top 10 tips for effective lobbying

1. Research your legislators' backgrounds, committee assignments, and voting records on your issues.
2. Develop relationships with your legislators by routinely visiting, writing and calling.
3. Don't overdo your lobbying. Only write when you have something important to say - including "thank you".
4. Invite your legislators to visit your schools. Plan a tour of your school district to showcase successful programs in action and demonstrate what schools need from lawmakers.
5. Lobby with your real life experience. Make it local. It's your most persuasive tool.
6. Set priorities. When everything is important, nothing is important.
7. Shore up lobbying allies from your community to demonstrate broad support.
8. Don't forget the news media. Getting your message out to the news media can influence your legislators and public opinion.
9. Always be positive and courteous. In politics, there are no permanent friends and no permanent enemies.
10. Everyone likes a pat on the back. Remember to thank each of your legislators for jobs well done and for their service.

2013 Legislative Priorities

The Iowa Association of School Boards:

3. Supports continued progress in the development of rigorous content standards and benchmarks consistent with the Iowa Core focused on improving student achievement, including the following state actions:

- Provide and fund technical assistance to help school districts fully implement the Iowa Core.
- Develop or obtain high-quality summative and formative assessments aligned to the skills students should know and be able to do to succeed globally and locally.
- Include and fund all the components of successful standards systems: assessments aligned to high expectations, improved and aligned instruction and quality professional development.

7. Supports continuation of sufficient incentives and assistance to encourage sharing, reorganization or regional high schools to expand academic learning opportunities for students and to improve student achievement. IASB supports expansion of sharing incentives to include special education, curriculum and other critical administrative positions. The incentives must be available to school districts regardless of the location of the sharing partner(s).

12. Supports reform of Iowa's k-12 education system that:

- Is research-based;
- Is focused on student achievement;
- Includes comprehensive assessments to measure the full range and rigor of the Iowa Core;
- Maintains oversight and control by locally elected boards of directors;
- Does not "repurpose" existing education funds; and
- Does not impose new mandates unless they are fully funded **NEW**

13 Supports setting allowable growth at a rate that encourages continuous school improvement and reflects actual cost increases experienced by school districts and AEAs. Our financial priority is to increase and maintain the state cost-per-pupil and the spending authority associated with it, to build a strong base for future education resources with full state funding of the state's share of the cost-per-pupil.

19. Supports the repeal of the mandatory school start date, while offering incentives to school districts to provide extended days and/or innovative calendars. School districts receiving these incentives will evaluate and determine the impact on student learning when establishing the start day for school. **NEW**

Chapter 3: Strengthening your Message with a Coalition

Coalition building is a natural part of your local leadership as a board member and it can be a powerful advocacy tool. When working on a specific lobbying effort, decide if a coalition will help achieve your goals. Think about the nature of the issue; some have a broader appeal than others.

Look to other boards, teachers, parents, administrators, other local elected officials, business leaders, advocates, etc. to join your effort. Ask yourself who else has a stake in the outcome of the issue and how important it is to them. Also, consider who may have a particular influence with decision makers.

In politics, there are no permanent friends and no permanent enemies.

A team including your board president, superintendent, local Iowa State Education Association (ISEA) president, and the head of your parent advocate group makes a strong statement to your legislator.

The 5 Cs of coalition building

1. Consistency.

Focus on one issue and make sure everyone agrees on the goal. An easy way to reach solidarity is to have coalition members sign a “coalition letter” to your legislator that outlines your position. Also, if you are working on a statewide campaign, check in with IASB if you want to ensure that your message is consistent with other boards. Fully participate in IASB’s call for resolutions and Delegate Assembly to engage other board members in your priority.

2. Commitment.

Your issue does not have to be the top priority of every coalition partner – but partners do need to commit to action that furthers the cause. Never have a meeting without giving out assignments – signing a joint coalition letter, making a phone call, agreeing to attend a lobby visit together.

3. Convenience.

Make getting involved easy for your coalition partners. The easier it is, the more likely they will help. Provide talking points, background information and contact information so the grunt work is done for them.

4. Communication.

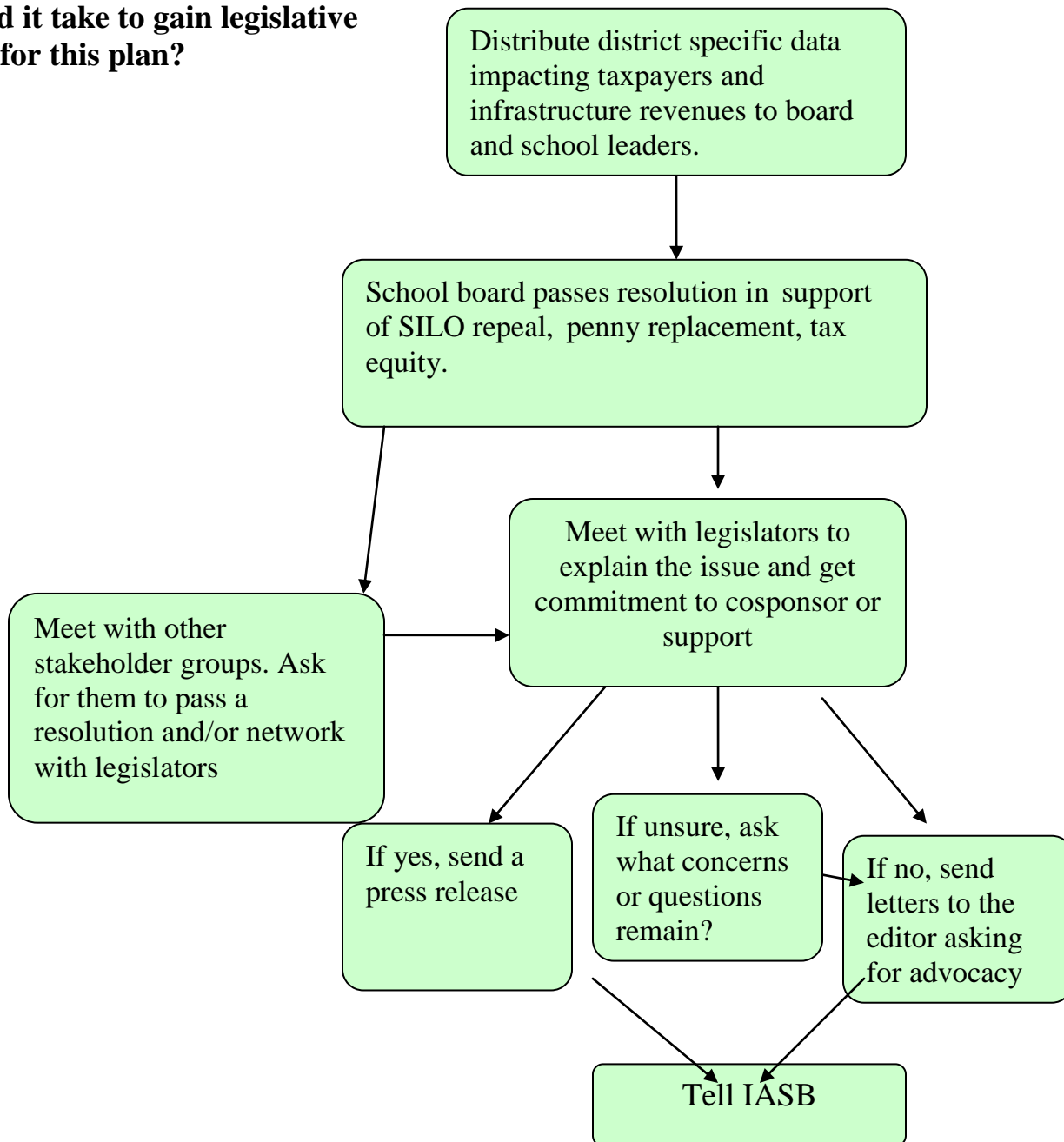
Keep in touch with your allies by fax, phone, e-mail, mail or blog. You can work effectively with groups or individuals even if you rarely see them. Regular communication ensures that all partners continue to understand and agree on the goals and message of your advocacy.

5. Compromise.

Sometimes bringing diverse groups together requires compromise. Decide where you have flexibility that does NOT compromise your overall goal. Compromise on some points that are not truly important to you to gain the strength of numbers and the diversity of coalition partners. Sometimes an important goal is to neutralize stakeholders who might otherwise oppose your efforts.

State Penny Success from Advocacy Action

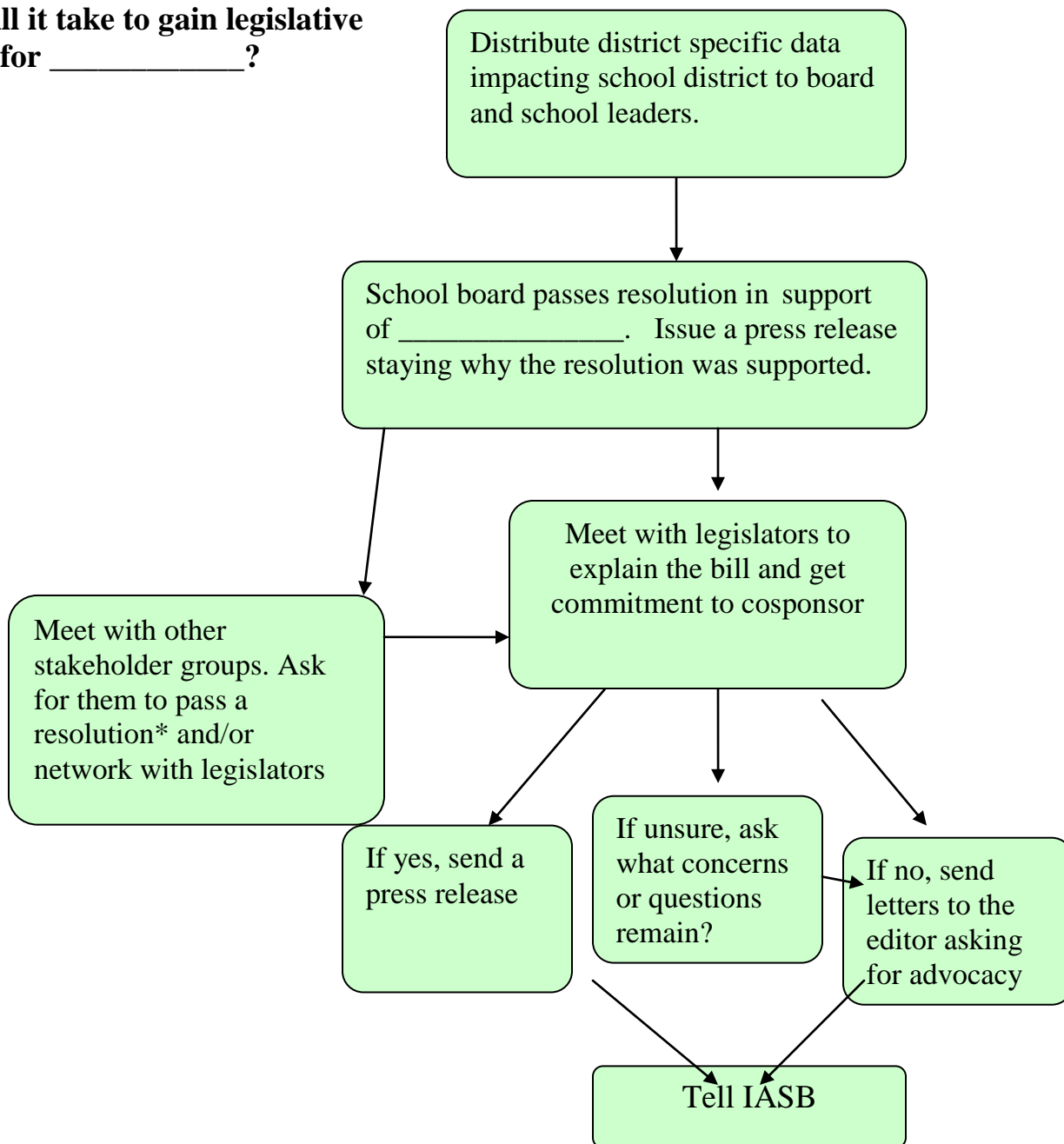
What did it take to gain legislative support for this plan?



IASB Government Relations and School Finance staff is here to help:
Mary Gannon, mgannon@ia-sb.org, Patti Schroeder, pschroeder@ia-sb.org and Gary Sinclair, gsinclair@ia-sb.org at (800) 795-4272 and Emily Piper emily@ialobbyresources.com at (515) 202-7772.

Next Success and Required Advocacy Actions

What will it take to gain legislative support for _____?



IASB Government Relations and School Finance staff is here to help:
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Chapter 4: Using the News Media to Communicate with the Legislature

Never underestimate the power of the press. Not only does it help shape public opinion, but it can be one of the most powerful advocacy tools. Legislators look to the news media to “take a pulse” on what is important to their constituents. If you educate the news media effectively, your issues are likely to get positive coverage that goes straight to your senator and representative.

Writing letters to the editor & guest opinions

Letters to the editor and opinions written by readers (called op-eds) are useful ways to speak out on an issue, respond to an article or editorial, or express your position in your own words. Letters and guest opinions often are read by legislators and can do double-time as a lobbying tool.

Concentrate on writing letters to the editor or op-eds for your local newspaper since that will have the greatest impact at the Statehouse. Even a letter or op-ed that does not get published is valuable because it may be considered by a newspaper’s editorial board, or it may cause the paper to write a story on the issue.

Tips for effective letters and op-eds:

- **Be brief and focus on one issue.** If the letter or op-ed is too long, the newspaper may edit out some important facts. How long is too long? Look at your newspaper’s opinion page and count the words in an average letter to the editor or op-ed, or call the paper and ask – some have guidelines for length. The average op-ed is usually longer than a letter, between 500 and 750 words.
- For a letter to the editor, **refer** to a recent event or an article that appeared in the newspaper and include the article’s date and title.
- When applicable, close your letter or op-ed by **asking readers to contact their legislator** or other policymakers about the issue.
- **Give your address, title and phone number** so the newspaper can verify authorship.
- **Clip** your published letter to the editor or op-ed and mail or fax it to your legislators.
- **Prep coalition partners** to respond to your op-ed or other articles to keep the conversation going in the news.

Meeting with editorial boards

A lead editorial supporting your cause makes a powerful statement.

It is unlikely, however, that this will happen without some effort on your part. Meeting with newspaper editorial boards in advance to explain your views can be the catalyst for a favorable editorial that will address the issue at home as well as in Des Moines.

Tips to facilitate a successful meeting:

- **Request a formal meeting** by writing a letter to the editorial page editor or by calling the editorial office. Briefly explain the issue you would like to discuss and who will be with you at the meeting.
- **Go to the meeting prepared** to lay the facts on the table as well as your background materials. If possible, take the board chair and other leaders from a coalition, if one exists, to lend weight to the meeting. Anticipate tough questions and be ready to respond.
- Although a face to face meeting is more effective, you can also simply write to the editorial page editor, send your background material, and follow up by phone.

- When preparing the background material, try to **include both the local and broader implications** of the issue so the editor can see that it hits home and is of wider concern.
- Once you have made contact with members of the editorial board, **keep that relationship going**. Send a thank you note for the meeting and another note if they run a favorable editorial.

Holding successful news conferences

Use news conferences sparingly, if at all. In most communities, meeting one-on-one with your local reporter is a much more effective way to get your message out.

Tips for organizing your news conference:

- **Pick a date when there is a “news hook”** and articles already are likely to be written about your subject. Also, avoid times when a competing event will attract the news media away from your event.
- News conferences should be **scheduled for early in the day** in order to assure TV news coverage that day and newspaper coverage the following morning. It’s best to schedule them after about 9 a.m. when many reporters start their work day, and steer clear of the noon hour, when some TV stations are broadcasting the news.
- **Notify the news media** a few days before the news conference by sending a simple news advisory indicating date, time and location of the event and briefly explain its importance. List a contact person and their phone number.
- Provide a **visual backdrop** and hold the press conference in a place that reinforces the message you want to convey for television cameras – for instance, a school building in need of repair would be a good place for a news conference on the need for capital improvement funds.
- Choose a **room of appropriate size** with enough chairs for those who said they would attend. Make sure there are enough electrical outlets and space for cameras and microphones. Cameras are usually set up behind the audience if people are sitting.
- **Identify a person** to be in charge and let each speaker know when to speak.
- **Keep all comments brief**, a few minutes at most. You should have no more than three or four speakers, preferably each with an important point of view and different perspective. Make sure they introduce themselves, including their names and titles.
- **Develop a kit** of materials for the event. This should include the news releases you have prepared, the day’s agenda, the text of any speeches to be given, the names of speakers, background on the issue, facts about your district, AEA or community college and other sponsors of the event.

Writing a news release

A news release is the basic means of official communication with the media.

It can state your board's position, announce a newsworthy event such as the creation of a coalition, or the launching of a campaign. Reporters may use information from news releases to supplement stories they are already writing, or they may be inspired to write stories. A news release should tell the facts – who, what, when, where, why and how, and should also intrigue the reporter into wanting to find out more.

A real life testimonial goes a long way to show your point.

Try to meet one-on-one with a local reporter to get your message out.

Tips for writing a news release:

- Write a **headline** that grabs the reader's attention (use active verbs, not passive voice).
- Write the release so it **reads like a news story** with the more important details first. Present your viewpoint in the most positive way.
- Make your board, school district or coalition the active player in the first sentence, e.g., "The Dreamfield School Board commended State Representative Sample for agreeing to support legislation to update buildings of the Dreamfield School District."
- **Quote a spokesperson** from your coalition. Reporters can use these quotes in their stories. Keep quotes brief and conversational – remember, people are quoted to lend color and opinion. Quotes are not meant to impart facts that can be found in your release.
- **Include a release date, contact name, and contact phone number/e-mail address** at the top of the release.

A press release template to get you started can be found on the next page or online.

Go to our Web site at <http://www.ia-sb.org/assets/07e918a9d6b1440ab90f7a37075094df.doc> to find an electronic version.

Sample news release

School District Letterhead

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: Month, day, 20XX
Contact: Jane Doe, President, Dreamfield School Board
Telephone: 515-123-4567

Dreamfield School Board Forms Coalition to Lobby for Adequate and Stable Long-Term School Funding

Dreamfield, IA. — The Dreamfield School Board today announced the formation of a countywide coalition of local school boards, school administrators, teachers, business leaders and parents to lobby the Iowa Legislature for adequate and stable long-term K-12 school funding.

Coalition leaders say they will present a strong, united front to urge local legislators to support the referral of the Adequate and Stable School Funding Act to Iowa voters at the next statewide primary election. The act raises taxes on the incomes of Iowa's wealthiest citizens to fund schools.

"It's time for the Legislature to make educating our children a priority," said Dreamfield School Board Chairwoman Jane Doe. "We need to foster a real state and local partnership to support the resources needed to fund our children's education."

The coalition includes the Dreamfield School Board, the Dreamfield Education Association, the Dreamfield Chamber of Commerce, school personnel, parents and local business leaders.

Last year, the Dreamfield School Board cut its budget by 8 percent because of the lack of state funding. In the past five years, the district's budget has dropped by 12 percent.

"Clearly, the money received from the state is woefully inadequate to provide the quality education our students deserve," Doe said.

John Smith, a business leader in the community, stated that "a strong state investment in the education of our children is a real investment in the economic development of our area."

The coalition will work with the entire Any County legislative delegation to secure adequate and stable long-term school funding.

- end -

Distributing your news release

Make two lists – a mailing/e-mailing list and a telephone list – of all your local media outlets. Learn the times for local TV news programs and the deadlines for newspapers. When calling daily newspaper reporters, try to call in the morning or early afternoon since most deadlines are in the late afternoon. Keep lists handy so you can deliver your message fast when news breaks.

Tips for distributing a news release:

- Your news media list should include the education reporters and columnists from local and state media. Include print, radio, TV and “wire services.” Only send one release to each place, but consider using e-mail, fax or traditional mail, depending on your time constraints. If you contact local media outlets regularly, ask which method they prefer.
- If you don’t know which reporters cover the issue, send the news release to the assignment editor of TV and radio stations and the news editor at newspapers. Keep updating your list – reporters change often.
- Keep a clipping file of stories about schools, education and local government so you will get to know which reporters cover which topics.
- Many local groups, parent associations, teacher unions, colleges, churches, business and civic organizations have newsletters that might be interested in your issue. Send releases to them – which also shows your leadership on an issue and can generate new allies.

Tips for good media relations

- ✓ **Work locally, but spread your message.** One strong article in your legislator’s hometown newspaper may be worth 10 in The Des Moines Register, to your legislator. But it doesn’t hurt to send press releases or letters to regional or statewide media to get the word out and make real people’s voices heard in the capital city.
- ✓ **Keep it focused.** You may have many issues, but stick to one at a time to make sure your most important point is covered.
- ✓ **Clip and send positive stories.** A good article can have a long life. Send newspaper clippings to your legislators, coalition partners and other decision makers.
- ✓ **Don’t forget your own news outlets.** Take advantage of school district, AEA and community college newsletters, publications, radio and cable programs to educate and get others involved in your advocacy campaigns.
- ✓ **Just the facts.** Stick to what you know and never exaggerate. You can always get back to reporters after finding the right answer.
- ✓ **Don’t just say it — show it.** A demonstration or real-life testimonial goes a long way to illustrate your point and make it more meaningful. Use examples.
- ✓ **Build news media relationships.** Get to know the education reporters and take the time to meet with editorial boards.
- ✓ **Appoint a spokesperson for your board.** This contact person must be fully informed about your legislative advocacy agenda to know what to discuss and what not to discuss.
- ✓ **Take advantage of all the news media outlets.** Legislative offices may read newspapers most often, but radio and television have a powerful impact on public opinion and shouldn’t be overlooked.

Television and radio programs

- Once you have identified a TV or radio program that might be interested in your issue, contact the producer of the show to suggest that you or someone from your coalition be featured on the program.
- Prepare a follow-up letter and have a packet of materials ready to provide background information.
- If it is a show where guests debate, make sure you know the format, who you are debating and how much time you have. If you don't like the format, ask if they can restructure. Otherwise, you need to decide whether to do the show.
- Stay focused on one issue. Prepare "talking points" to help you deliver your main message(s).
- Anticipate the tough questions before you go on the air and prepare some solid responses. Do not be afraid to let the host/producer know if there is a question or issue you are not comfortable discussing, prior to going on air. Schedule a role play in advance with others who can try to trip you up so you get practice transitioning or bridging back to your main point.
- Use repetition. On radio talk shows in particular, your message could get lost in a lengthy discussion. Since listeners end up with a few key impressions of the show, repetition will help deliver your main message. Write down your key message and use it often.

Stay focused on one issue and anticipate the questions.

Cable access channels and community message board announcements

Don't forget these media outlets - cable access channels are always looking for content. Look for opportunities to highlight the good news happening in your school district, as well as helping to keep the community in the know about how your board is leading the district forward.

Chapter 5: Getting Involved in Election Campaigns

Election time is a perfect opportunity for local board members to bring education issues to the forefront and to promote an education agenda. Raising these issues on the campaign trail can persuade current and future lawmakers to make public education a top priority.

Suggested election activities

The following are proven strategies to engage candidates in meaningful debate and raise awareness of key education issues. At all times, remember what you learned in Chapter 2, Relationship Building. During the campaign season and right after the election, consider doing several of these activities:

Meet, greet and debate:

- Use every public forum to discuss candidates' views on education issues, thereby raising the profile of those issues and getting the candidates to "go on the record."
- Develop a list of questions on education issues to ask legislative candidates at public campaign forums. Consider sharing the questions with panelists in advance so they can prepare.
- Invite legislative candidates to visit your schools and campuses so they can see successes and challenges in person.
- Offer to assemble a group of "education experts" to brief candidates and their campaign staffs.
- With other local education groups, sponsor a town meeting, forum or debate featuring the candidates to discuss education issues.
- Meet personally with the candidates.
- Write letters to candidates about important education issues and use examples from their legislative districts.
- Support a candidate who shares your views on education. Hold an open house and invite neighbors to meet the candidate. Stuff envelopes, make phone calls, help with yard signs, show up at political fundraisers and events.

Use the news media:

- Submit a guest opinion to your local newspaper on the importance of education in the campaign.
- Meet with editorial boards of local newspapers, television and radio stations. Discuss the candidates' policy positions on education issues and present your legislative agenda.
- If a legislative candidate makes a campaign appearance without fully addressing education issues follow up with the candidate or campaign. If you're still not satisfied, write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper and send a copy to the campaign.
- Use radio or public access television to sponsor a candidate debate on the public education needs in your community.

Contribute money to a candidate or political action committee

Contributing money to candidates, or to a political action committee (PAC) with others who share your goals, gives legislative candidates what they need most during the campaign season – funds to effectively deliver their message to voters. Being a contributor may also give you greater access during their campaigns.

Actions after the election

- Meet with your newly elected legislators to discuss how you and other board members can help them with education policy decisions.
- Share a copy of IASB's Legislative Summary from the previous year to provide background information and help structure your conversation about education policy, taxes, funding and appropriations.
- Invite the newly elected legislator to visit a school or education facility in your community, thereby launching a supportive advocacy relationship.
- Ask a newly elected legislator with a strong stance on education to request an assignment on legislative committees that directly affect public schools.
- Urge the newly elected legislator to form an education advisory committee and volunteer to convene and chair the group.

A word of caution!

The board's role in legislative election campaigns

Hosting a legislative candidates' forum or debate between candidates on public education issues in your school facilities is allowed under Iowa law. You can also invite legislative candidates to address your board meeting or visit your schools. All announced candidates should be invited to avoid showing favoritism. ***Iowa law prohibits the endorsement of a particular legislative candidate by your board.***

An individual board member, as a citizen and voter, may publicly support any candidate of their choosing. There are, however, certain political risks – the greatest of which is the potential strain in your relationship with the victorious candidate if you publicly endorsed the opponent.

Chapter 6: Strategies for Putting it all Together

To have real impact on the policy decisions made in Des Moines, remember to make advocacy a habit.

Effective advocacy for education is a year-round job. It's not enough to wait until the legislative session when there is a crisis at the Capitol or funding for education programs is on the chopping block. You must work throughout the year to develop and nurture relationships with your legislators. Generally, that requires adopting a legislative advocacy policy for your school district, AEA or community college that states your commitment to advocacy for education. Follow up with regular advocacy actions.

A sample two-year advocacy strategy

The following two-year advocacy plan template can have a real impact with the Legislature.

<p><u><i>January, annually</i></u></p> <p>Adopt a legislative program plan The plan provides direction to get involved in advocacy at the state level. It identifies specific board activities to assure effective legislative advocacy. Consider your superintendent's responsibilities to supporting advocacy. Ask what supports and assistance your superintendent needs in meeting your advocacy expectations.</p>	
<p><u><i>January to April, annually</i></u></p> <p>Sign up for and read IASB's Action Line and Action Networks Make sure you're signed up for IASB's Legislative <i>Action Line</i> and <i>Action Network</i> to receive e-mailed Action Alerts. Also check IASB's Web site regularly for daily updates, bill tracking and Action Alerts.</p>	

<p><u><i>January to May, annually</i></u></p> <p>Stay in contact with your legislators Call legislators to advocate on priority issues. House switchboard: (515) 281-3221; Senate switchboard: (515) 281-3371. Get closer to your legislators by attending local legislative coffees and forums in their home towns on the weekend. Find locations and dates at http://www.ia-sb.org/MemberBenefits.aspx?id=1492.</p>	<p><u>Board assignments and advocacy actions:</u></p>
<p><u><i>January, odd-numbered years</i></u></p> <p>The first session of the next two-year General Session begins The legislature is under way and you're ready! Because of your work over the past year, you know your legislators and they know you. They trust your judgment and will rely on you for information and direction. New legislators have already been briefed on your issues and look forward to working with you. Send them your contact information in a welcome message to the Capitol.</p>	
<p><u><i>February, annually</i></u></p> <p>Attend the IASB Legislative Conference for the opportunity to talk to your legislators about allowable growth and other IASB priority issues. Allowable growth is to be decided within 30 days of the governor's budget.</p>	
<p><u><i>May to August, annually</i></u></p> <p>Complete IASB's Call for Legislative Action Priorities Survey Spend time at your May, June, July or early August board meetings discussing resolutions and voting on your districts priorities for the upcoming legislative session.</p>	
<p><u><i>May, annually</i></u></p> <p>Conduct a school visit Invite legislative candidates to tour schools and campuses. Show off state-funded programs in action or conversely, show places and programs that desperately need state help and aren't getting it. Arrange to have other board members, teachers, administrators, parents or students on hand to tell their stories. Or invite legislators to recognize excellence at awards ceremonies and celebrations.</p>	

<p><u>May, annually</u></p> <p>Send a follow-up letter Follow up on the legislator’s visit within two days with a thank you letter to reinforce issues raised in the visit. Send a copy of the letter to your legislator and/or legislative candidate.</p>	<p><u>Board assignments and advocacy actions</u></p>
<p><u>May, annually</u></p> <p>Advocate as session closes Contact the governor regarding any requested veto actions. Find ways to publicly thank supportive legislators: write a letter to the editor, acknowledge them at your board table, etc.</p>	
<p><u>May, even-numbered years</u></p> <p>Sponsor a town meeting or debate Join with other districts in your area, or ask your AEA, to sponsor a town meeting or debate with legislative candidates facing off in the primary. Invite the public and local news media to hear the candidates share their views on important education issues.</p>	
<p><u>June, annually</u></p> <p>Attend IASB’s Summer District Meetings Attend the regional IASB meeting in your area to hear and discuss the latest on legislative issues. Arming yourself with information is key to successful advocacy efforts</p>	
<p><u>June, annually</u></p> <p>Watch for IASB Legislative Summary Connect with legislators at home to thank them and continue to build the relationships.</p>	
<p><u>Late June, even-numbered years</u></p> <p>Contact primary winners Contact winners of the primary election to offer congratulations and provide additional information as education issues emerge.</p>	
<p><u>August, annually</u></p> <p>Invite legislators to your board meeting Invite your legislators to attend your board meeting and brief you on their work affecting your schools. Praise them for the good job they did and criticize the bad. Give specific examples of how their decisions actually impact your schools and programs.</p>	

<p><u>September, annually</u></p> <p>Review school advocate job description Back-to-school is a great time to reinforce advocacy activities. Review the school advocate job description and commit to advocacy learning. See the IASB web site for the advocate’s job description: http://www.ia-sb.org/LegislativeAdvocacy.aspx?id=1010.</p>	<p><u>Board assignments and advocacy actions</u></p>
<p><u>September, annually</u></p> <p>Invite legislators: Back-to-school event Back-to-school nights are perfect opportunities to reach public education supporters. Arrange for your legislator and/or legislative candidates to speak at a back-to-school event. Your legislator will be grateful to you for connecting them with constituents. These are goodwill non-partisan chances for you to cement the tie with your legislator.</p>	
<p><u>Early October, even-numbered years</u></p> <p>Sponsor a town meeting or debate Join with other districts in your area to sponsor a town meeting or debate with legislative candidates facing off in the November general election. Invite the public and local news media to hear the candidates share their views on important education issues. Share IASB’s Legislative Beliefs and Priorities with your legislators/legislative candidates. Visit IASB’s Web site for sample questions at http://www.ia-sb.org/assets/4FD2B886-124A-4710-B37D-1C7923C93B4D.pdf. See a sample agenda and process for a town meeting online at http://www.ia-sb.org/assets/ffe33db142db464bb89579fbdeec1f6e.doc.</p>	
<p><u>October, even-numbered years</u></p> <p>“Pop the question” at a forum Before the November general election, legislative candidates will participate in a number of debates and joint appearances. Go with the intention of "popping the question" about one critical education issue. This will keep education on their radar screen as an important issue to their constituents.</p>	

<p><u><i>November, annually</i></u></p> <p>Attend the IASB Annual Delegate Assembly and Convention Send a delegate from your district to determine IASB's platform and priorities. Attend IASB's Annual Convention to hone your advocacy skills. Enhance your own professional development and effectiveness as a board member. Send a note to your legislators about priority issues for the next session.</p>	<p><u>Board assignments and advocacy actions</u></p>
<p><u><i>November, annually</i></u></p> <p>Educate your public and media Meet with local press about key issues. Review IASB position statements for background and key messages. Review the impact on your district students and constituents. Share information with the local media about school board priorities and the upcoming session. Send a press release to local media about your district's participation in IASB's Delegate Assembly. Find a sample online at http://www.iasb.org/assets/8739ac0f91e94adb840ce8e59aa52a57.doc.</p>	
<p><u><i>November, even-numbered years</i></u></p> <p>Contact General Election winners Contact winners of the general election to offer additional information on education issues as their needs arise.</p>	

Chapter 7: About IASB

Founded in 1946, the Iowa Association of School Boards is a non-profit association whose purpose is to serve the 2,150 locally elected education board members. These boards serve Iowa's 351 school districts, 9 area education agencies and 15 community colleges, and the state Board of Education.

IASB is governed by a 17-member Board of Directors. K-12 school boards elect their representatives based upon nine director districts. The area education agencies and community colleges each have one representative on the board. This group establishes legislative priorities and annual association goals to help IASB staff remain a strong frontline resource for its members.

We help local boards fulfill their complex roles as advocates for children, visionary thinkers, collaborative leaders – and fiscal guardians of their education resources. Because most of Iowa's school funding comes from state rather than local sources, we also coordinate a strong advocacy network to support public education at the Capitol in Des Moines.

Our services focus on the key areas of leadership training, legislative services, labor relations and collective bargaining, executive searches, policies, legal and financial services, communications and public engagement.

IASB prides itself in helping school board members, employees and citizens become effective local school and community leaders. We do this through annual workshops, seminars, conferences, on-line services and daily phone contacts. Our newsletters and Web site inform members of the latest trends and issues in public education.

Our Web site at www.ia-sb.org is a national award winner and a wealth of resources on public education and board leadership. This site is updated regularly and provides an on-line forum for discussions among members on education issues. IASB maintains listservs to update members on late-breaking news and major issues affecting education.

IASB staff is just a phone call – or computer click – away from the members they serve, bringing decades of experience in all aspects of public education and civic leadership. Call us at (800) 795-4272.

Numbers and Web sites to know:

- Iowa Association of School Boards
 - Phone: Local (515) 288-1991
 - Toll-free (800) 795-4272
 - Fax: (515) 243-4992
 - Web site: www.ia-sb.org
- School Administrators of Iowa (SAI)
 - Phone: (515) 267-1115
 - Fax: (515) 267-1066
 - Web site: www.sai-iowa.org
- Iowa State Education Association (ISEA)
 - Phone: (515) 471-8000
 - Web site: www.isea.org
- Iowa Association of Community College Trustees (IACCT)
 - Phone: (515) 282-4692
 - Web site: www.iacct.com
- Iowa Department of Education
 - Phone: (515) 281-5294
 - Website: www.iowa.gov/educate
- Iowa Legislature
 - www.legis.state.ia.us
- Iowa Area Education Agencies
 - <http://www.iowaaea.org>
- Urban Education Network of Iowa
 - <http://www.uen-ia.org/>
- National School Boards Association
 - <http://www.nsba.org>

Legislative Terminology

ACT

A bill which has been passed by both the Senate and House, enrolled, certified, approved by the governor or passed over the governor's veto, and published.

ACTS

A book published after each regular session of the Iowa Legislature containing all of the bills and joint resolutions approved during that session. Also known as the session laws.

ADJOURNMENT

Ending of a meeting or legislative session. Adjournment of the House or Senate takes place at the close of each legislative day, with the hour and day of the next meeting set before adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT SINE DIE

Ending of the Legislature for the year, taking place on the last day of a session. No future meeting date is set except as provided in the Iowa Constitution.

ADOPTION

Approval or acceptance; usually applied to motions, amendments and resolutions.

ALLOCATION

State money or personnel that are appropriated or designated for a function, program or activity.

AMENDMENT

A change proposed or made to a bill or motion. Amendments may be offered by committees or individual legislators.

APPROPRIATION

State money allocated by the Legislature for a specific purpose.

APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR

Acceptance by the governor of a bill passed by the Legislature as indicated by the governor's signature on the enrolled bill.

AT EASE

Describes the condition of the Senate or House when it temporarily stops its floor debate for some other specific activity.

BILL

A legislative proposal sponsored by a legislator or a committee and introduced in the Senate or House. A bill must be approved by both the Senate and House and then by the governor in order to become law. Unless they are study bills (committee sponsored bills), all bills are called Senate files or House files, depending on where they originate.

CALENDAR

The daily agenda of legislative business in a chamber.

CALENDAR DAYS

The days listed on a normal seven-day-per-week calendar, as distinguished from legislative days, which are those days on which the Legislature is in session.

CALL OF THE HOUSE (SENATE)

A procedure used to compel attendance of members for consideration of any specific single item of legislative business.

CAPITAL APPROPRIATION

An appropriation for long-term additions to, or betterment of, state property, such as land, buildings or equipment.

CARRYOVER LEGISLATION

Legislation held over in the same General Assembly from one annual session to the next. It has the same standing as it did at the end of the previous session.

CAUCUS

A meeting of the members of a political party. Also refers collectively to all the members of a political party in a chamber. In each chamber there is a majority party caucus and minority party caucus. (See MAJORITY PARTY and MINORITY PARTY)

CAUCUS STAFF

The employees working for the legislative members of a political party. In each chamber there is a majority party caucus staff and a minority party caucus staff. The caucus staffs help legislators research issues and serve constituents.

CHAIR

The presiding officer of a chamber. As a short form of "chairperson," it refers to the head of a committee. (See COMMITTEE CHAIR)

CHAMBER

The official meeting place of the Senate or House.

CHIEF CLERK

A nonmember officer of the House of Representatives appointed by the House to direct the parliamentary and clerical functions of the House.

Legislative Terminology

CLIP SHEETS

The daily printed compilations of all amendments and fiscal notes filed in a chamber the previous day. The amendments are designed to be cut out and placed with the appropriate bills within a paper billbook. House clip sheets are printed on yellow paper; Senate clip sheets are printed on blue paper.

CODE OF IOWA

The official collection of Iowa's permanent laws. The Code is published after the completion of the legislative session each even-numbered year.

CODE SUPPLEMENT

An official volume containing Iowa's permanent laws enacted during the legislative session of each odd-numbered year. This volume will be incorporated into the Code base with the next publishing.

COMMITTEE

A group of legislators chosen to consider and make recommendations on bills and amendments in a particular subject area.

COMMITTEE CHAIR

The legislator appointed to preside over a standing or special committee as it conducts its business.

COMMITTEE REPORT

An official release of a bill or resolution from a committee to the chamber as a whole. A committee report may be issued with or without recommendation for passage.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

A process by which a chamber meets as a committee to consider legislation informally. Ordinary rules of procedure apply to a committee of the whole, but votes are not taken and the proceedings are not recorded in the minutes.

COMPANION BILL

A House bill identical to one introduced in the Senate (or vice versa).

CONCURRENCE

Agreement by one chamber to a proposal or action taken by the other chamber.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

A resolution acted on by both chambers requiring the approval of a majority of those present and voting. Concurrent resolutions express the sentiment of the chambers or relate to temporary legislative matters.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

A group of legislators appointed by the Senate and House to resolve differences between the two chambers on a bill.

CONFIRMATION

Approval by the Senate of an executive branch appointment, usually requiring that two-thirds (34 out of 50) of the members approve the appointment.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The existence of a personal interest of a legislator which affects the ability of that legislator to vote impartially.

CONSTITUENT

An individual who lives in the district represented by a legislator.

CONSTITUTIONAL MAJORITY

A majority of the membership within each house in the Iowa General Assembly: 26 votes in the Senate and 51 votes in the House of Representatives.

DEAPPROPRIATION

A decrease in the amount of an appropriation for a current fiscal year.

DIVISION

A recorded vote tally that does not include the names of members voting yes or no but only the vote totals.

EFFECTIVE DATE

The date on which a law becomes binding.

ENACTING CLAUSE

The phrase, "Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Iowa," required by the Constitution at the beginning of every bill.

ENROLLED BILL

The version of a bill as finally passed by the Senate and House, signed by the officers of both chambers, and sent to the governor for signing. The enrolled bill is officially filed with the Secretary of State. If the bill is vetoed, the bill is sent to the Secretary of State with its veto message attached.

FISCAL NOTE

A note prepared and attached to a bill or amendment that states the estimated financial impact of the legislation.

FISCAL YEAR (FY)

The 12-month financial period used for record keeping, budgeting, appropriating and revenue collecting. Iowa's fiscal year begins July 1, and ends June 30.

Legislative Terminology

FLOOR

The portion of the Senate and House chambers used to conduct the business of the chamber.

FLOOR MANAGER

The legislator who opens and closes debate on a bill and guides the debate in support of the bill.

FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)

A budgeting and monitoring unit for determining employment numbers that takes into account full-time employee positions, part-time employee positions, vacancy and turnover factors in a given state department or agency. One full-time equivalent position represents 2,080 working hours, the regular number of hours one full-time employee works in a fiscal year.

FUNNEL DATES

The deadlines for legislative action set each session by the Senate and House.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The official name of the Iowa Legislature.

GENERAL FUND

The depository for state moneys that are not earmarked for specific purposes. The money credited the general fund supports the general functions of state government.

GERMANENESS

The relevance or appropriateness of an amendment to a bill. If an amendment is ruled not germane to the bill, it cannot be attached to that bill unless the Legislature votes to suspend their normal rules of operation.

GRANDFATHER CLAUSE

A portion of a bill ensuring that new requirements or standards do not apply to those covered by the previous law.

HEARING

A discussion where the public may express their views to legislators for the purpose of gathering information and ideas on a proposal.

IMPEACHMENT

The procedure used to remove public officials from office that have been accused of misconduct.

INSIST

A motion made by a chamber to indicate that it prefers the bill as amended to those adopted in the other chamber. When a chamber insists, the bill being considered is sent to conference committee unless the other chamber recedes from its own amendments.

INTERIM

The time interval between regular annual sessions of the General Assembly.

INTERIM COMMITTEE

A committee created to study or investigate certain matters during the time the Legislature is not in session.

INTRODUCTION

The formal presentation and numbering of a bill after it has been prepared.

ITEM VETO

An action taken by the governor to prevent enactment of an item in an appropriation bill.

JOINT RESOLUTION

A resolution acted on by both chambers and requiring the approval of a majority of each chamber's members, and, in some cases, the governor. Joint resolutions may appropriate money, enact temporary laws, propose amendments to the Iowa Constitution, ratify amendments to the U.S. Constitution, or make requests to Congress.

JOINT SESSION

A combined meeting of the House and Senate, (usually taking place in the House Chamber). Examples of joint sessions include the governor's State of the State and the Chief Justice State of the Judiciary addresses.

JOURNAL

The official chronological record of a chamber's proceedings, printed daily in pamphlet form. The journals are indexed and bound at the close of each session.

LEGALIZING ACT

A bill to ratify an action by a local government board or council that was contrary to existing law.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

A bipartisan group of Senate and House members that serves as the Legislature's executive committee. During the interim between sessions, the Legislative Council makes decisions affecting the Legislature, its facilities, personnel, and operations.

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

The geographic area of Iowa represented by a legislator. District boundary lines are determined on the basis of population. Each district is known by a number. A Senate district consists of two House districts.

Legislative Terminology

LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY

A nonpartisan legislative agency known as the LSA that provides bill drafting, legal and fiscal research services, computer services, and assists the Legislature in the budgeting and appropriations process.

LEGISLATOR

An elected member of the General Assembly, either a Senator or a Representative.

LEGISLATURE

The Senate and House of Representatives collectively. The informal name by which the General Assembly is known.

LINE-ITEM

A term used to describe funds requested and/or appropriated on a detailed or itemized basis, such as personal services, travel, equipment, or other items.

LOBBYIST

An individual who encourages the passage, defeat, or modification of proposed legislation.

MAJORITY LEADER

The member of the majority party in a chamber elected to be the party's leader.

MAJORITY PARTY

The political party having the most members in a chamber.

MESSAGE FROM GOVERNOR

Official communication from the governor printed in the journal.

MESSAGE FROM SENATE (HOUSE)

An official communication from the opposite chamber printed in the journal.

MINORITY LEADER

The member of the minority party in a chamber elected to be the party's leader.

MINORITY PARTY

The political party having less than a majority of the members in a chamber.

MINUTES

A record of the actions taken at a meeting that serves as the official record of the meeting.

MOTION

A formal proposal offered by a member.

MOTION TO RECONSIDER

A motion which, if approved, allows a second vote on a previous action.

OPINION

A formal expression of legal reasons and principles in response to an inquiry.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

A question posed to the presiding officer of a chamber or chair of a committee for clarification of a procedural point.

PER DIEM

A per diem is a payment a legislator receives for attending official legislative meetings or for conducting official legislative business.

POINT OF ORDER

An action of a member that calls attention to a perceived breach of a chamber's rules.

POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE

A procedure that allows a member to make personal comments on any subject while a chamber is in session.

PRECEDENT

The body of parliamentary law that has evolved apart from the rules. The individual precedents generally are interpretations of rulings by presiding officers on specific rules.

PRESIDING OFFICER

The person elected to direct the activities of a chamber.

PREFILED BILL

A bill that a legislator requests to be drafted during the interim between legislative sessions. The bill is introduced and given a number on the first day of the next legislative session.

PREVIOUS QUESTION

A motion to close debate and bring the pending question to an immediate vote.

PRO TEMPORE

A member of the House or Senate who acts in the absence of the regular presiding officer.

QUORUM

The minimum number of members required to be present in order for a legislative body to conduct business. A quorum is 50 percent of the membership plus one.

QUORUM CALL

The procedure used to determine if a quorum exists.

RATIFY

To approve and make valid.

READING

Presentation of a bill before either chamber by the reading of the bill's title.

Legislative Terminology

REAPPORTIONMENT

Redrawing of the 435 U.S. Congressional districts to reflect various state changes in the nation's population.

RECEDE

The motion made by a chamber to agree with the other chamber and not insist upon its amendments previously adopted.

RECESS

A break in a daily legislative session.

REDISTRICTING

Redrawing the boundaries of U.S. Congressional districts and Iowa legislative districts to reflect changes in the state's population.

REGULAR SESSION

The period each year when the Legislature considers all areas of legislation. It begins on the second Monday in January. Legislators are reimbursed for per diem expenses for up to 110 calendar days during the first regular session and for up to 100 calendar days during the second regular session of a General Assembly.

REPEAL

A method by which a previous legislative action is rescinded.

REPRINTED BILL

A version of a bill that has been amended and passed by a chamber with the amendments incorporated into the bill. Reprinted bills are printed on pink paper.

RESOLUTION

A formal expression of opinion or decision.

RESOLUTION (HOUSE OR SENATE)

A resolution acted on by only one chamber, requiring the approval of a majority of those present and voting, and used for matters relating only to that chamber.

REVERSION

Following the close of a fiscal year, all unencumbered or unobligated balances revert to the State treasury and to the credit of the fund from which the appropriation was made.

REVENUE ESTIMATING CONFERENCE (REC)

A group that estimates the General Fund revenue due the state for the current year and the next budget year. The REC meets quarterly, and the governor and the Legislature are required to use the REC estimates in preparing the state budget. The REC is comprised of the governor or designee, the director of the

Legislative Services Agency or designee, and a third person agreed to by the other two members.

ROLL CALL VOTE

A method of recording votes by printing the names of members and their votes. Roll call votes are tabulated by voting machines in each chamber.

RULES

Regulations and principles governing procedures adopted by each chamber for the duration of the session.

SECRETARY OF THE SENATE

A nonmember officer of the Senate appointed to direct the parliamentary and clerical functions of the Senate.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

A nonmember officer of a chamber responsible for maintaining order, regulating access to the chamber, and carrying out the requests of the presiding officer or the members.

SESSION LAWS

A book published after each regular session of the Iowa Legislature containing all of the bills and joint resolutions approved during that session.

SPEAKER

The presiding officer of the House of Representatives elected by its members.

SPECIAL SESSION

An extraordinary meeting of the Legislature called by the governor or by petition of the legislators and limited to specified matters.

SPONSOR

The legislator(s) or committee that requests a bill to be drafted.

STANDING COMMITTEE

A committee appointed with a continuing responsibility in a specific area of lawmaking.

STANDING COMMITTEE LIMITED APPROPRIATION

An appropriation of a specific dollar amount established by the Code of Iowa.

STANDING COMMITTEE UNLIMITED APPROPRIATION

An appropriation of an unspecified dollar amount established by the Code of Iowa.

STATUTE

A permanent or general act approved by the Legislature.

Legislative Terminology

STRIKE THROUGH

The deletion of codified language (language appearing in the Iowa Code) in a bill.

STUDY BILL

A bill developed for committee consideration. Once a study bill is approved by committee, the bill is given a Senate file or House file number.

SUBCOMMITTEE

A group of members of a standing committee appointed by the chairperson to study and report on a specified subject or bill.

SUNSET

The time at which a legislative statute expires as designated by the law.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATION

Additional funds appropriated for the current fiscal year that are in addition to the original appropriation.

VETO

An action taken by the governor to prevent the enactment of an entire bill. The Legislature may override the veto if two-thirds of the members of each chamber vote to pass the bill again.

WELL

The area of a chamber directly in front of, and including, the presiding officer's bench.



Advocacy Toolkit

Action Activities Workbook



(Complete these pages as you go through the toolkit, then return a copy of the advocacy calendar in Chapter 6 to IASB to earn 5 Better Boardsmanship credits.)

Chapter 1 Action Activity: Learning About Advocacy

Have a discussion answering the following questions:

1) Why is legislative advocacy important?

Additional resources:

IASB's 2011 Legislative Summary is available online:

<http://www.ia-sb.org/Publications.aspx?id=5244>

2) Do we have any legislators on an important standing committee that impacts education?

Committee	House*	Senate*
Education		
Education		
Appropriations		
Ways and Means		
State Government		
Appropriations		

**Please note: new committee assignments are likely made every December based on retirements, elections, leadership positions, and creation of new committees. Watch for notification from IASB or attend the IASB Annual Legislative Conference in January to learn more.*

Additional resources:

Find your legislators' committee assignments online:

<http://www.legis.iowa.gov/Schedules/committees.aspx>

IASB Legislative Directory: <http://www.ia-sb.org/Publications.aspx?id=5010>

Chapter 2 Action Activity: Building Legislative Relationships

1) Identify which legislators represent our school district and discuss relevant background that might help others know better how to build a productive relationship. Check out the legislative biographies link below:

Representatives

Notable Background

Senators

Additional Resources:

IASB 2012-13 *Legislative Directory* is available online:

<http://www.ia-sb.org/LegislativeAdvocacy.aspx?id=5010>

2) How did our legislators vote on key issues in the last legislative session? Verify through bill history on the legislative Web page at www.legis.state.ia.us or go through the tutorial history of the Open Meetings Public Records legislation passed in 2011 detailed on page 1 of the IASB Legislative Summary found at www.ia-sb.org.

3) Discuss as a board if our advocacy contacts last year worked. How do we know?

4) Discuss which of the IASB priorities is most critical to our district and why. (See page 10 of this toolkit for a list of the 2013 priority.)

5) Write a letter from our board to our legislators identifying IASB legislative priorities for the next session. The priorities are set by member districts at the IASB Delegate Assembly in November. Our delegate may want to organize this activity and discuss the event and whether he or she felt fully prepared to represent our district in the discussion and share what key issues received the most debate and the most consensus.

In the letter, provide district-specific information about why each priority is important.

Additional Resources:

IASB Legislative Priorities: <http://www.ia-sb.org/Publications.aspx?id=8492>

Find background information on issues in position statements:

<http://www.ia-sb.org/Publications.aspx?id=998>

Chapter 3 Action Activity: Coalition Building

- 1) **Review the action flowchart on pages 12 and 13** that details advocacy actions encouraged to pass HF 2663, the state penny and property tax equity bill, during the 2008 legislative session. Check out how other organizations registered their positions on the bill at <http://coolice.legis.state.ia.us/Cool-ICE/default.asp?Category=Lobbyist&Service=DspReport&ga=82&type=b&hbill=HF2663>

What do you observe about coalition building?

- 2) **Identify a critical legislative issue** and consider using the flowchart for next year's activities. Identify important coalition partners in your community. Who on your board has connections with these groups? What first steps might you take to initiate their support?

- 3) **Identify a possible coalition partner** and brainstorm – how do we find out what they think about the issue that will prepare us for the first conversation?

Additional resources:

IASB position statements: <http://www.ia-sb.org/Publications.aspx?id=998>

Chapter 4 Action Activity: Using the Media

1) Talk about media coverage in our district. How do the media get information about our district? Do they cover good news?

Who is the person in our district designated as the spokesperson? (Look at your district communications policy to clarify.) Has our media connection been traditionally reactive or proactive? How should it be in the future?

2) As a group, write a sample press release about a priority issue for your district.

Anticipate questions from the public, other stakeholders and parents. What information can you include in the press release to help explain the issue and motivate readers to care? Who would be good to quote for the local connection or to lend expertise? What should the quote say? Pick an issue:

Additional resources:

A sample press release template is available on the IASB web site at <http://www.ia-sb.org/assets/07e918a9d6b1440ab90f7a37075094df.doc>.

IASB position statements, including background, talking points and suggested state actions, can be viewed at <http://www.ia-sb.org/Publications.aspx?id=998>.

Chapter 5 Action Activity: Election Involvement

1) Who is running for legislative office in our district? Do we know them and how they feel about education? Tax policy? Appropriations? School board authority? Check out the candidate's Web site or campaign brochures for additional information.

2) Discuss meetings with candidates – Have we met with candidates prior to elections in the past so they know about important education issues? What worked in those conversations and what didn't? What opportunities exist to network in the next two months?

3) Divvy up election responsibilities among board members – who is most appropriate to connect with each candidate? What key messages must be delivered? What is your follow-up strategy after the initial meeting? After the election?

<u>Candidate</u>	<u>Board Assignment</u>	<u>Key Message</u>	<u>Follow-up</u>
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Additional resources:

Sample Questions for Candidates are available at <http://www.ia-sb.org/assets/0F87E60A-E14D-44DA-9DEB-31464B972668.pdf>.

Secretary of State's Office typically lists candidates online: <http://www.sos.state.ia.us/index.html>.

Chapter 6 Action Activity: Create Your District's Two-Year Plan

See the calendar form on page 22. Talk through each month and assign advocacy items, then brainstorm additional actions and designate leaders.

Additional resources:

Use the IASB legislative Web page for every advocacy resource you need to prepare you throughout the year: <http://www.ia-sb.org/LegislativeAdvocacy.aspx>.