



## School Administrators Alliance

*Representing the Interests of Wisconsin School Children*

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# School Administrators Alliance Calendar of Advocacy Activities

We offer many ideas on advocacy and say, “*No one should engage in all of these but everyone should engage in some.*” By the same token, advocacy is about relationship building - it takes time! The following calendar suggests ways to integrate advocacy throughout the school year; thereby cultivating strong, lasting relationships with your legislators.

### July

- Share your school district’s annual goals with your local legislators. It will help them understand what your plans are, possibly identify needs and paint a clear picture of the district’s direction.
- Meet with your legislator regarding your preliminary district budget.
- Provide legislators with board member contact information.

### August

- Invite your legislator to speak to students at a back-to-school event.
- School is getting ready to start – now is the time to make contact with your legislator! Invite your legislator to a school event, or for a cup of coffee, to speak generally about your district and education.

### September

- Mail (or email) a copy of the district calendar highlighting major events and dates. Include a schedule of specific student activities such as sporting events and concerts. A short personal note should accompany any such mailing.
- It’s high school football season – invite your legislator to be a guest at a game in your district!
- Communicate with local community leaders to highlight the bottom-line impact of the state budget on your district.

### October

- With school underway, this is a good time to invite legislators for a visit. They could read to an elementary class, speak to a high school or middle school assembly, present at career day, etc.
- Meet with your legislator to go through your district revenue limit worksheet together. Also, take the opportunity to explain your district’s fund balance policies and cash flow projection.

### November

- In an election year, congratulate legislators on their recent win. Follow up with a district informational packet mailing, suggesting a future meeting.
- Regionally, work with your CESA Administrator to invite a legislator to address a CESA-wide superintendent’s meeting.

## December

- Send a holiday greeting to legislators and staff.
- Let legislators know about any holiday concerts or other special winter events.
- With colleagues or boards, plan a regional legislative breakfast to take place during the month of February.
- Often, a legislator will host an event or town hall meeting to discuss important issues with his/her constituents – please try to attend.

## January

- Meet with newly elected lawmakers and offer your assistance on any education policy and state budget issues. You are a valuable source of information for a new legislator who is not particularly well acquainted with educational issues.
- Ensure legislators are included on your district newsletter mailing lists.
- Continue work on planning a regional legislative breakfast for February.
- Do your homework! Become familiar with your legislator's background (personal history, political issues that are important to them, what committees they serve on, etc.)

## February

- Hold regional breakfast, planned in a prior month.
- Bring civics back to life! Invite your legislator to visit classrooms – this is an excellent opportunity for a brief article in your local paper, which you should then pass on to your legislator.
- Communicate with your lawmakers the importance of having a more sustainable school finance system in Wisconsin.

## March

- March is reading month! Work with your lawmakers to set up time to read to students – and don't forget press opportunities.
- Continue to talk with your legislator about providing budget stability to Wisconsin's schools. Share with them the budget reductions you have been forced to make in the last few years and the impact on your district's children.

## April

- Invite your legislator in to meet with a district wide group of parents/community members.
- Continue to work with your legislator on education issues – the better the relationship with your lawmaker, the greater the impact you will have helping form education policy.

## May

- Send district graduation information to your legislator, so that your legislator may send their congratulations to your graduates.
- Express any concerns you may have on particular legislation to your legislator and work with them to resolve any problems that may develop.

## June

- Legislators know the importance of education to their constituents – continue to develop and nurture relationships with legislators and key staff members over the summer months.
- Communicate with local community leaders to highlight the bottom-line impact of the state budget on your district.