



# Getting Started with Your Leadership Team

## 1. Place advocacy on administrative team agendas for discussion

## 2. Share the following resources with your team:

- Pathway for World-Class PK-12 Student Success
- Coming Together in Advocacy for Our Public School Students

## 3. Discuss: What are the implications of evidence-based vs. non-evidence-based state policies for our school district, both now and in the future?

## 4. Identify key audiences and determine how to engage them

**Speak at your chamber of commerce or to local service clubs:** Clubs like Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions are always looking for speakers, as are their organizers. Consider speaking at these types of meetings at least once per year, and share information about the great things that are happening in your schools and in schools across the state. This is something that various members of the administrative team can do.

*Resource:* Service club presentations

**Present to your local PTO/PTA groups:** Meetings of the PTA or PTO in your district are a terrific way to reach some of the most influential members of your school community. Make a point of giving regular updates to your PTAs and PTOs. While this is often done by principals, the effort can be shared across the administrative team.

**Reach out to senior citizens:** In many communities, seniors, whose children have long since graduated from our local schools, are among the most important stakeholders. Make a point of regularly reaching out to them. This can be through simple yet formal presentations at retirement homes or less formal information meetings at local coffee shops or other businesses that seniors frequent.

**Provide realtors with information:** Have you ever thought about who is communicating with the parents that are considering moving into our state or your community? In many cases, realtors are among the most important communicators in a community. Consider inviting realtors into your district office, or going in to their offices to update them about the great things that are happening in your schools and with Wisconsin education. Again, this is a responsibility that can be shared across the administrative team.

## 5. Work with your local media outlets

**Appear on a local radio show:** Is there a radio show in your community that provides a friendly opportunity to share news about your schools or about public education in general? Contact the show's producer and ask for a slot. Often this kind of appearance can turn into a regularly scheduled program, which can be shared by various members of the administrative team.

**Submit articles to your local newspaper:** Weekly and daily newspapers are always looking for content. Put this to your advantage by sharing articles with your local newspaper on various topics about your schools, or about public education in general. Articles can be written by various members of your administrative team.

*Resource:* Media relations

**Fact-check local newspaper stories:** Have you ever read articles in your local newspaper and been angered or mortified by misinformation about your school or public education? Have you ever done anything about it? When misinformation is conveyed about education, whether it concerns your school or public education in general, you have a professional right and obligation to contact the journalist involved and correct the mistake.

## 6. Reach out to locally-elected legislators:

It is always worth taking some time to engage your locally-elected state legislators. If you do not yet know your assembly representative or state senator, introduce yourself. If you are a superintendent, invite your elected officials to a meeting in the district to get to know your team. If you are a principal, remember to invite legislators to your school for important events. In every way, seek to engage in ongoing coordinated efforts.

*Resource:* Calling legislators

*Resource:* Writing legislators

## 7. Develop a Plan

- Will you initiate an advocacy committee?
- What are your key messages? How can we customize the statewide talking points to communicate most effectively in your community?
- Who are your key stakeholders?
- What are the dos and don'ts of your advocacy efforts?

*Resource:* Calling legislators

## 8. Stay Connected with the SAA

Have one member of your administrative team be responsible for staying connected with SAA to share what is working and where you need assistance.