



Board Development

Grassroots Advocacy

Legislative Action Network Workshop

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Welcome LAN



**Welcome
to ASBSD's
Legislative Action Network
Workshop**

Welcome LAN



Introductions

Who is here?

What do you hope to learn?

Overview



- Why school board advocacy is important
- The Role of the LAN Representative
- Building Trust with lawmakers
- How the legislature works
- Getting to know legislators
- Making your voice heard
- How to respond to an advocacy question or alert
- ASBSD tools

ASBSD Mission and Vision

- **Vision**

Leadership to Achieve
Excellence for South Dakota
Public Education

- **Mission**

Partnering, Advocating, Leading

ASBSD Mission and Vision

Mission

Partnering, Advocating, Leading

Advocacy is a critical part of
ASBSD's mission.

We are partners and advocates for
school boards

Legislative Action Network

An important question to ask yourself today is:

Are you willing to do the following work as a LAN representative?

Legislative Action Network

So, what is your job as the
Legislative Action Network
Representative?

Legislative Action Network

LAN Representative duties:

- Maintain dialogue with state policy-makers.
- Stay informed about current education issues.
- Willing to call or email their legislators within a short period of time after receiving the notice from ASBSD to advocate on behalf of their local board.
- Willing and able to provide specific information to legislators from their local district perspective.
- Inform other board members of the relationship between state policy and public schools.

Legislative Action Network

LAN Representative duties:

Your primary role is to act as a liaison between your legislators, your Board and ASBSD

You need to represent your Board first, and not take a position of your own.

You need to represent your Board even if it is contrary to ASBSD's position. That can happen.

Why Is Advocacy Important?

Table Talk.

- Do you think school boards members understand the importance of being involved in advocating for public education?
- What are some barriers that stop people from being involved?
- Do you think board members are somewhat intimidated to talk to their local representatives?

Show
No
Fear



Why Is Advocacy Important?

- Public education has never been under attack as much as it is today. Local control of our schools is eroding at a very fast pace.
- How did we allow that to happen?

School Board's Role: Advocacy

- Growing need to deliver our message: The education of South Dakota's children must be the top priority of our state's policy makers.
- We must help lawmakers understand how their decisions impact CHILDREN in your district.
- Growing trend to usurp local decision-making.

School Board's Role: Advocacy

“The ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council) goal to eliminate school districts and school boards is a bit shocking — but the idea is to make every school, public and private, independent through vouchers for all students”.

Wisconsin School News, May 2013

Why School Boards?

- **It's school board members that need to make the contact with Legislators.**
- **We know that ELECTED Officials talking ELECTED Officials has the strongest influence on legislators**

Board Development



Effective Grassroots Lobbying

Tools for Advocacy

Key website tools

1. Legislative Research Council website

www.legis.state.sd.us

2. ASBSD Billtracker website

www.asbsd.org

Click on Billtracker at the top of the webpage

3. ASBSD website under Advocacy

www.asbsd.org

Using the Advocacy Tools Activity

Activity #1

- One of your Local Board members comes to you with questions about specific legislation. They want to know what a particular bill means, what ASBSD's position is on it, and where would they find more information.
- Another Board member wants to help with lobbying, but wants to know how to get in touch with their representatives. What would you tell them?

Board Development

How the Legislature Works



The Political Process

- What is the “political process?”
 - Governor proposes a fiscal budget and other legislation.
 - Legislature meets 40 days
 - 85 to 90 bills affect education
 - Consistently a discussion on funding for schools. Why?

How a bill becomes law

- Introduction of Bill
 - Governor, State Agency, Legislative Committee, Legislator
 - Introduced in a CHAMBER
 - Either in the House (HB XXXX) or Senate (SB XXX)
 - Referred to a COMMITTEE
- Committee Action
 - Support (Do Pass, Consent)
 - Kill (Table, Defer to the 41st Day)
 - Change (Amend, HOG HOUSE)

How a bill becomes law

- Floor action
 - Support (Pass)
 - Kill (Declared lost, Table)
 - Change (Amend)
 - Special Circumstances
 - Move to reconsider (vote again)
 - Smoke out (bill lost in committee, but floor tells committee to deliver it to the floor)
- If a bill is supported on the floor, it moves to the other CHAMBER
 - Goes through the process again

How a bill becomes law

- Politicians never, EVER, disagree... but in case they do...
 - Original chamber must agree to amendments
 - EX: If House amends a Senate Bill, the Senate must agree with the changes
 - If they don't agree, bill goes to CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
 - Three from each the House and Senate
 - Four members of the majority party, two members of minority party
 - Each chamber must agree to conference report.

How a bill becomes law

- Governor's Desk
 - Signs it
 - Doesn't sign it, it becomes law in 10 days
 - Veto
 - Whole bill
 - Line item
 - Can be over turned by 2/3 vote of the House and Senate

Board Development



Getting to Know Legislators

Getting to Know Legislators

- Knowledge is power: pick up facts.
 - Committee Assignments
 - House and Senate Ed
 - House and Senate Appropriations
 - House and Senate Local Government
 - House and Senate Taxation
 - House and Senate State Affairs
 - Voting Records
 - Personal Information
 - Leadership Assignments
 - Location of crackerbarrels

Getting to Know Legislators

Who are your legislators?

- Watch for Appropriators, or Education Committee members who are in your districts or legislators that you know personally.

Getting to Know Legislators

- Senate Appropriations Committee (9)
 - Deb Peters (R) – Chair - Sioux Falls
 - Phyllis Heineman (R) – Sioux Falls
 - Stan Adelstein (R) – Rapid City
 - Al Novstrup (R) – Aberdeen
 - Larry Tidemann (R) – Vice Chair - Brookings
 - Jim White (R) – Huron
 - Bill Van Gerpen (R) – Tyndall
 - Tom Jones (D) – Viborg
 - Billie Sutton (D) - Burke

Getting to Know Legislators

- House Appropriations Committee (9)
 - Fred Romkema (R)– Chair - Spearfish
 - Spencer Hawley (D) – Brookings
 - Jim Bolin (R) – Canton
 - Dan Dryden (R) – Rapid City
 - Don Hagggar (R) – Sioux Falls
 - Mark Mickelson (R) – Sioux Falls
 - Lance Carson (R) – Vice Chair -Mitchell
 - Dick Werner (R) – Huron
 - Susan Wismer (D) - Britton

Getting to Know Legislators

- Senate Education Committee (7)
- Deb Soholt (R)– Chair - Sioux Falls
- Angie Buhl (D) – Sioux Falls
- Bruce Rampelberg – (R) – Rapid City
- Phil Jensen (R) – Rapid City
- Tim Rave (R) – Vice Chair -Baltic
- Ryan Maher (R) – Isabel
- 1 Vacant to be appointed

Getting to Know Legislators

- House Education Committee (14)
 - Jacquelin Sly (R)– Chair – Rapid City
 - Jenna Hagggar (R) – Vice Chair – Sioux Falls
 - Hall Wick (R) – Sioux Falls
 - Julie Bartling (D) – Gregory
 - Burt Tulson (R) – Lake Norden
 - James Schaefer (R) – Kennebec

Getting to Know Legislators

- House Education Committee (14)
- Blaine Campbell– (R) – Rapid City (N)
- Scott Ecklund (R) – Brandon (N)
- Dan Kaiser (R) – Aberdeen (N)
- Timothy Johns (R) – Lead (N)
- Elizabeth May (R) – Kyle (N)
- Mike Stevens (R) – Yankton (N)
- Paula Hawks (D) – Hartford (N)
- Kathy Tyler (D) – Big Stone City (N)

Building Relationships

- It's critical everyone fosters a positive relationship with your legislators. To have any effect in grassroots lobbying, board members need a strong relationship with policy makers.
- Why? We have two disconnects

Building Relationships

- There is a disconnect between the perception of what legislators believe about education and what we as school boards perceive are our needs for education.
- Let's fix the disconnect between our legislators and our school districts.

Building Relationships

- There is a disconnect between solutions that come from Pierre and local school boards governing effectively at home.
- For some reason some legislators believe your problems can best be solved at the State level. What happened to local control?

Building Relationships

- The best policy should be “the best government is that which is closest to the people”.
- So, how did we lose that connection with our representatives?

Building Relationships

- I believe it is, in part, because we've lost the relationship with our lawmakers.
- It's all about TRUST. How do we get it back?

Building Relationships

- So, what is your relationship with your local lawmakers? Take the quiz (it's open book)
 1. Name as many Reps and Senators from your district as you can?
 2. Do you know what each of them does for a living?
 3. Do you have a good sense of their positions on education issues?
 4. When was the last time you verbally talked to each of them?

Building Relationships

- Where would you find limited personal and contact information about your legislators?
- Go to the LRC website again.
www.legis.sd.gov

Building Relationships

Lessons Learned at the Capitol

- “Kill the Bill, Lose an Ally” effect.
- Sometimes you just have to bite your lip and learn to play nice.
- Traveled since July to talk to all Leadership and Appropriators on \$4805.

YOU'RE DOING IT WRONG.



Building Relationships Activity

Critical Decision #2: Do you want to start the process of building a relationship with your Legislators? Yes, or No?

- You will be asked to communicate with your legislators at some point. How do you get to know them? How do you contact them?
- What do you say to them? How do you begin the conversations with them that will influence them toward your goal?

Building Relationships Activity

Critical Decision #2:

- Take a few minutes and brainstorm actions you and/or your Board are willing to take to build a relationship with your legislators. Be prepared to share with the group.

Action

So what should School Boards do?

- Build a strong relationship with your lawmakers.
- It's about credibility and trust
- Study page 3 of the tool kit

Action

Building the relationship.

- Meet with your legislators face to face
- Get to know them on a personal level, ask about family, children and interests
- Ask about their experience in school and get to know their opinions about education issues.

Action

Building the Relationship

- Make sure your legislative delegation knows what is going on in your district
- Ask them to visit your schools.
- Let them know how legislation will impact your district.
- Build Trust

Action

- Encourage your legislator to seek your opinion on educational issues.
- Let your legislator know you are willing to provide information on educational issues.
- Be willing to share your insight and experience as a school board member on the issues the legislator(s) will have to vote on.
- Give your legislator your home, work , and fax numbers and your e-mail address so he or she can contact you easily before a vote.

Action

- TLC, Take a Legislator to Coffee
- Some of the best lobbying happens when you ask a legislator about themselves or their family.

Board Development

Making your voice heard



Becoming Informed

So how do I find out about legislative issues in my district?

- Talk to your representatives – Crackerbarrels, emails.
- Read online and newspapers
- Read ASBSD action alerts
- Track bills on LRC or the ASBSD website

Making your voice heard

- Join an organized network
 - ASBSD Legislative Action Network
- Communicating with legislators
 - Write
 - Fax
 - E-mail
 - Call
 - Meet
- Build an advocacy group with your board members and superintendent

Making your voice heard

- Good advocacy is about influencing people to agree with your view point
- Persuasion depends on the credibility of the person trying to influence a lawmaker
- School board members must be credible. Lawmakers need to trust our information for them to be persuaded to vote

Making your voice heard

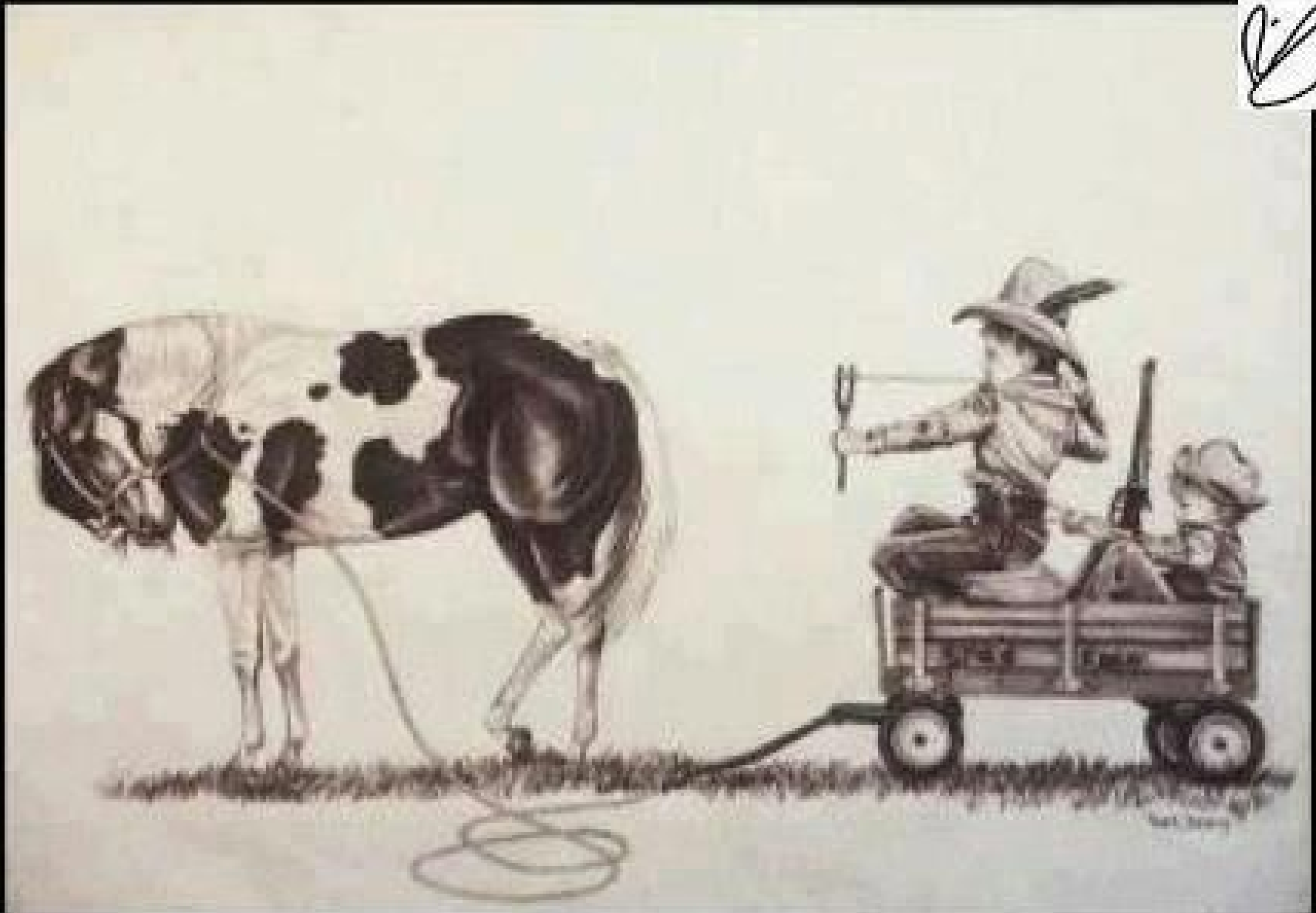
Table Talk

- What do credible people look like? What do credible people do? What do credible people say?

Making your voice heard

- Good advocacy is about influencing people to agree with your view point
- Legislators have a vote you want, so establishing a credible relationship with them is the key to influencing them.
- Start on page 2 of the Advocacy Toolkit

Motivation: think twice about your technique



Making your voice heard

What persuasive strategies work best?

- Good arguments have sound, credible information – limit the stats though
- Legislators like a good story
- Always be truthful, avoid exaggerating
- Look for common ground to find solutions
- Bills are designed to solve a problem, so do they actually do that?

Making your voice heard

- Creating the communication message:
- Be brief and to the point
- Create the message as if it were a 2 minute speech
- Know what you are talking about
- Use a local angle – relate to the person
- Show respect – be positive
- Recognize legislators efforts – *THANK Them!*

Making your voice heard

- Creating the communication message:
- Use your best three points – nothing beats a strong argument that makes sense
- Consider compromise
- Be sensitive to partisan politics
- Use correct forms of addressing legislators
- Have others proof your message

Making your voice heard

Tips for what NOT to do in your messaging:

- Don't be rude
- Don't be intimidated
- Don't underestimate your legislators
- Don't distort the facts
- Don't cover more than one subject at a time
- Don't criticize when asking for a vote

Making your voice heard

Tips for what NOT to do in your messaging:

- Don't burn any bridges – there will always be another issue
- Problems without solutions are still problems, give them options
- Don't break a promise

Making your voice heard

Tips for email messages:

- Be sure to have the right address
- Be sure to tell them you are a school board member and the school
- Subject lines are important – Legislators get hundreds of emails, why read yours?
- Be brief and to the point – best three points

Making your voice heard

Other methods to communicate:

- Call the capital – 605-773-3161
- Face to Face meetings are most effective
- Letters give a personal touch, but keep them brief
- Get to as many Crackerbarrels as you can.

Making your voice heard

- Being credible is the key to good grassroots lobbying. Once we lose our believability we lose votes.
- Effective grassroots lobbying means we must establish trust with lawmakers. Trust is only gained with strong relationships.

Writing Your Legislators

- Best to write as an entire board
 - Have policy in place
 - Can be as individual, as long as you have the authority
- Focus on one issue – include bill number
- Express your point of view
- Factual info on impact of legislation
- As for response, include contact info
- Letterhead

Writing Your Legislators

Best to write as an entire board, but what do I say?

- Use the LAN Alert language to help craft a message.
- Consult with your board and superintendent.

Faxing and E-mailing

- Letters outside of session are useful, but not as effective during session
- Content can be the same
- E-mail
 - Include important info in subject line
 - EX: Support SB 120 – Anytown School Board

Calling Your Legislators

- Quick way to reach – can be difficult to reach
- Talking to them is the only way to MAKE SURE they received your message
- Ask for position on the bill
- If someone takes a message, briefly state your position
 - EX: I'm calling to ask Sam Sample to oppose HB 1124

Meeting Face-to-Face

- Most effective
- Crackerbarrells
- Easy access outside of session
- Tips
 - Hold a pre-meeting
 - Focus your meeting
 - Speak from personal experience
 - Ask for their support
 - Provide one-page fact sheet
 - Follow up – let ASBSD know

Using the Media

- Power of the press
 - Legislators use media during session
- Writing op-eds and letters to the editor
 - Have policy in place
 - Even if it doesn't get published, the editor sees it
 - Stay focused
 - Refer to recent article
 - Clip and send

Meeting with Editorial Boards

- Meet with newspaper officials to influence their opinion
- An editorial from the local paper is powerful – they influence the community.
- Tips
 - Request the meeting, explain the issue
 - Go prepared
 - If they can't meet, send the supporting materials
 - Include local implications, but also talk broad
 - Keep the relationship going

Board Development



Effective Grassroots Lobbying

Critical Decision #3

Activity #3 Taking Action – The LAN Alert

- You get a LAN Alert from Tyler Pickner at ASBSD. HB 1001 is up in House Education Committee in two days. The bill is detrimental to education, especially your district. ASBSD will oppose in testimony, but needs grassroots help.
- What will you do?

Year-Round Advocacy

- Successful advocacy is year round
 - Suggestions for month-by-month activities
 - Page 13
- ASBSD Advocacy Resources
 - Staff
 - ASBSD.org
 - Open Forum blog
 - ASBSD Bill Tracker
 - ASBSD Testimony
 - LAN Network (LAN Dispatch, Alert)

What to expect this session

- Strategic discussion on funding
- Use of one time dollars will change over time.
- Common Core fireworks
- Other revenue bill
- Capital Outlay bill
- Possible Pledge bill

Contacts



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Open Forum



What was the most important thing you took away from today's discussion?