



# ADVOCATING AN ISSUE: PLANNING

Planning your approach to your advocacy campaign is like mapping directions to a new vacation destination. You need to figure out what a successful campaign will look like, what steps to take to get there, what resources you have or will need, what obstacles and opposition you might run into along the way, and what other groups might be able to help. These things make up your advocacy campaign strategy, or the map of your advocacy campaign.

One of the best tools to map out your campaign strategy is the Strategy Chart. A strategy is your overall plan, while tactics are the steps you take to achieve that plan's goals. A strategy chart consists of five columns:

1. **Goals** are what your advocacy campaign will achieve, as well as smaller goals along the way.
2. **Organizational considerations** are the resources your PTA can bring to the campaign including the people who do the work, the time to do each step, the creation of written materials, finances to cover expenses, and what the PTA has to gain from advocating.
3. **Constituents, Allies, and Opponents:** Constituents are the people who will be affected by the change you are advocating for and who might join your advocacy efforts. Allies are those people and organizations outside your PTA who are already involved in advocacy on your issue or who may be persuaded to join your efforts. Opponents are those who will push back against your advocacy efforts.
4. **Targets (decision makers)** are always people and not an institution or elected body. Each person needs a separate strategy chart. Primary targets are those people who can directly give you what your advocacy campaign is asking for. Secondary targets have influence or power over your primary targets.
5. **Tactics** are the actions you are going to take to implement your advocacy strategy to persuade each of your primary targets to take the action you want to implement the changes you desire. Each tactic should be directed at a specific target, backed with a form of power such as "I am a voter in your district," and make sense to your members. Examples of advocacy tactics are letter/email campaigns, social media campaigns, letters to the editor and op-ed pieces, meetings with decision makers, media events, press releases, public hearings, non-partisan voter registration and education campaigns, and non-partisan candidate forums.

## ADVOCACY STRATEGY CHART

<b>GOALS</b> What do you want to achieve?	<b>ORGANIZATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS</b> Resources, skills, gains & needs	<b>CONSTITUENTS, ALLIES &amp; OPPONENTS</b> Who in PTA cares? Outside organizations? Who will fight you?	<b>TARGETS</b> Who can make the change you want? Who can influence them? (Always a person)	<b>TACTICS</b> Applied to your targets to get them to make decisions that will allow you to reach your goal.