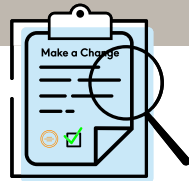


ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE

Conduct and Analyze the Potential for Change



Assess past efforts for change.

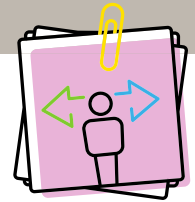
- Has the state or local district ever agreed to changes that support professional staff?
- Have teachers' unions ever successfully advocated for change with the state legislature or other policymakers? What about at the local level?
- Has the state association ever lobbied for a positive change in the state legislature or the state department of education?

Determine the state's current political climate.

- Has the district or state administration ever supported innovative education efforts?
- Will the state or local district support a trial effort?

01

Pinpoint Support and Opposition



Identify key stakeholders and policymakers. Determine their position.

- Who are the key policymakers? How can you gain support from additional stakeholders—teachers, consumers, other service providers, administration, legislators in committees of jurisdiction, and other policymakers?

Develop an active member-support network.

- Do other audiologists or SLPs in the district or state express unified support?
 - Can the group agree regarding the issue? Are group members willing to seek support from additional stakeholders?
- Is the group willing to contact or meet with pivotal policymakers (i.e., special education directors, superintendents, state department of education officials and legislators)?

02

Determine the Decision-Making Cycle

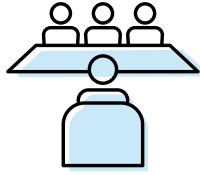


Consider these questions:

- When does the state make decisions (e.g., how long is the legislative session, when are regulations reviewed)?
- What is the process for requesting change? How does the request need to be made?
- What do stakeholders need to know about the legislative process, e.g., what are the bill filing deadlines, how can advocates participate in a hearing on a given bill?

03

Form a Committee and Assign Roles



The first step is to form a group or state committee. Then, the committee appoints individual members to assume specific roles.

These roles include the following:

Group Leader – informs group members and serves as spokesperson; helps identify supportive stakeholders and policymakers; also helps identify potential opposers.

Member Advocacy Coordinator – develops and maintains a list of members willing to contact administrators, legislators, or other policymakers in a timely manner.

Consumer Coordinator – identifies and maintains a list of consumers willing to share personal stories and assist with the group's effort.

Lobbyist or Legislative Liaison – assists with legislative or regulatory effort to enact specific bills; informs members of the bill's progress and the need to testify or follow up with legislators.

04

Make Connections



It's important to gain support from both likely and unlikely sources. Consider these questions:

- Can the committee attract people (e.g., consumers, parents) who are willing to provide support as needed?
- What other individuals or groups might support these efforts?
- Has the committee obtained support from the state association?

05

Develop an Action Plan



Want to achieve success? Produce an action plan. Incorporate the following factors into your plan:

Share data on the effects of instituting the policy. Consider these questions:

- How will this change allow clinicians to better serve students and families?
- How will this change allow audiologists or SLPs to provide higher quality services?
- Have audiologists and SLPs in other states and districts achieved successes?
- Develop talking points for committee members, parents, and consumers.
- Create a communication network and timeline for communicating with policymakers.
- Hold group members responsible for their assigned tasks and actions.

06

Create a Proposal and Fact Sheets



Develop a proposal or presentation outlining the request. Include facts and data; benefits to consumers, students, audiologists, and SLPs for adopting the model; and a cost-benefit analysis.

Create additional fact sheets for legislators and other policymakers. The committee leader works within the established timeframe to deliver the proposal on behalf of the group. They also provide additional testimonials and contact information to policymakers.

07