



Advocacy: What is it and why do we need it in our PTA?

Everett PTSA Council encourages you to add to or foster your PTA's advocacy efforts because advocacy is the foundation of PTA.

Advocacy means to speak up, plead a cause, or to make a case for another.

Is there someone who likes to speak up? Is there someone who likes to be on advisory committees? Is there someone who is passionate about a particular issue or cause? If there is, then that would be the type of person you should have a conversation with about being an Advocacy Chair!

What does an Advocacy Chair do? It is very simple.

Here are the Advocacy Chairperson duties per the WSPTA Advocacy Handbook:

Share information.

- Share WSPTA advocacy news so members are aware of what their association is doing and how they can get involved. Check with the local PTA membership chair to make sure all member contact information is in the database so that members can participate in and be informed about advocacy issues.
- Encourage members to sign up for Action Alerts and to read the WSPTA blog.
- If a council is active in school district advocacy, share what it is doing or give members a link to the website.

Distribute the WSPTA issue survey.

- Every fall, the WSPTA advocacy committee and the WSPTA staff compile a survey of proposed platform issues. Voting delegates to the annual legislative assembly in October use the results of this survey to help determine how they will vote on behalf of their local PTA. It is essential that all members be given the opportunity to contribute their opinions.

Every one of us is an advocate. *YOU* are advocating when:

- You *speak up* for your child to his/her teacher
- You *speak up* for changes in the curriculum at your school
- You *speak up* for a cross walk to make it safer for children to cross the street
- You *speak up* to reform the children's welfare system

Remember even if you don't think you're interested in advocacy, it's something that you're doing all the time without even realizing it!

QUESTIONS? Contact Clarissa Phillips, Everett PTSA Council Advocacy Chair, at clarissa.phillips@gmail.com