

Setting Goals



A critical step in planning your advocacy campaign is setting goals. These goals should inform all of your work on your advocacy campaign. Here are some questions to discuss with your advocacy team to decide what your goals are:

- What is it that we want as a result of our advocacy?
- Who are the decision makers to make that happen, and what do we want them to do specifically?
- How will we measure our success? What counts as a victory?
- What steps are there on the way to that success that can be identified and celebrated?

Once you've answered those questions, you'll have a good idea of what your advocacy goals will be. Even if your desired outcome is a fairly simple change, there can still be steps along the way to celebrate. Always know how you will measure your success for each goal you set so you will know when you achieve it.

Long-Term Goals

When setting goals, it's often easiest to work backwards from where you want to end up. Long-term goals should reflect your overall objectives from your advocacy efforts. For example, if your elementary school currently has classroom teachers teaching art once a week, a long-term advocacy goal might be to have a full-time art teacher with their own classroom and students having art class three times per week.

Intermediate Goals

Intermediate goals should reflect victories that indicate you are on the path to achieving your long-term goals. These goals are important to set because they can help to re-energize your advocacy team and bring in new supporters by showing that you are making progress on your long-term goals. Using our art teacher example from above, intermediate goals might be the district hiring a full-time art teacher to provide "art on a cart" that travels from classroom to classroom for art class or students getting art class twice per week instead of just once.

Short-Term Goals

Your short-term goals should be those steps you need to take to reach your intermediate goals. These are often very easily achieved goals that can give your advocacy team some quick wins to generate positive momentum towards your long-term goals. They can also help bring on some of those who were originally reluctant to get involved by demonstrating that you are making progress.

With our art teacher example from above, some short-term goals might be:

- Producing a document showing how other elementary schools in your district provide art compared to yours (or if all are lacking an art teacher, how neighboring districts provide art).
- Sharing your findings on disparities with the school board.
- Having a letter to the editor or op-ed piece in the local newspaper.