

Heroes for Advocacy:

Tools to Promote Your Mission

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About Community Advocacy

Community Advocacy helps schools **connect** and **engage** with their communities and **empower** others to become advocates.

This can mean:

- Communicating with policymakers
- Raising awareness on important issues
- Advocating for legislative changes





Engaging Your Local Community



Why should you engage your local community?

- 1. Discover what's important:
 - earn trust and
 - give them a voice in improving public schools
- 2. Sharing real stories of successes and challenges often **compels elected officials to act**.





Step 1: Why Community Advocacy Matters for Special Education



As a special education team member, you offer a vital perspective on why meeting the needs of all students matters.

With decades of laws securing services for students with disabilities, you understand these protections — and can help others see why they matter.

Your insight helps build support for special education and encourages others to advocate alongside you.





Step 2: Identify Key Messages



Districts can showcase real stories of success or challenges to demonstrate how your special education team works. Key messaging could include:

- Heart of Our Communities
- Educational Excellence
- Student Success
- Dedicated Staff
- Safe and Supported Schools





Step 2: Identify Key Messages

Heart of Our Communities

Districts play a pivotal role in multiple aspects of community life. Showcase the opportunities your district provides students and their families.





Step 2: Identify Key Messages

Educational Excellence

Share accomplishments from your district, including academic achievements and unique and innovative programs.





Step 2: Identify Key Messages

Student Success

Share stories of students who are excelling in academics or extracurricular activities. You can also share the successes of your district's graduates





Step 2: Identify Key Messages

Dedicated Staff

Emphasize the commitment of your teachers and staff who go above and beyond to support students.





Step 2: Identify Key Messages

Safe and Supportive Schools

The safety and well-being of our students and staff is a top priority. Highlight how your district follows detailed protocols and procedures that work together to create safe schools.





Step 3: Share Within Your Community



Strategically share this information with members of your community, including:

- Engaged Parents and Families
- Key Staff Members
- Connected Community Leaders
- Alumni Network
- State Legislators





Step 3: Share Within Your Community

Reaching your state legislators

- Develop a list of the lawmakers who serve the community.
- Find the right legislator representative at fyi.capitol.texas.gov.
- Invite your community to reach out to state legislators.





Additional Ways to Share

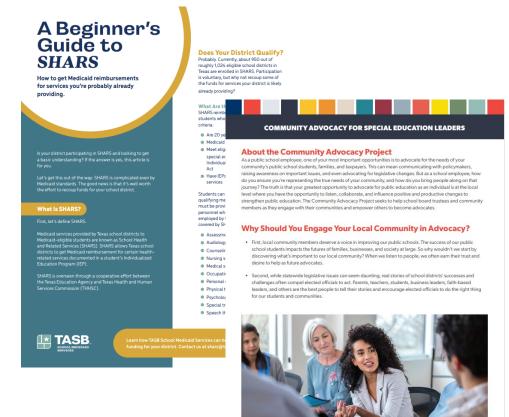


- 1. Social Media
- 2. School Website
- 3. Newsletter
- 4. Community Partnerships
- 5. PTA Participation





Download Resources



Ready to take the next step? Download Community Advocacy for Special Education Leaders.

Sharing with non-special education teams? Download our *Beginner's Guide to SHARS*.

