UNITING OUR MEMBERS AND THE NATION
Empowering leaders, educating students, strengthening communities

360 Degrees:
Taking Federal Advocacy to the Next Level

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COMPETENCY: ADVOCACY

• Level 1: Foundational
  – Identifies and discusses fundamentals of advocacy practice and theory
  – Utilizes best practices in advocacy and political efforts
  – Acts as a political advocate
Indicate the NEA Strategic Goal and NEA Organizational Priority your session addresses:

• NEA Strategic Goal
  – 1: Strong Affiliates for Educator Voice and Empowerment

• NEA Organizational Priority
  – Advancing NEA’s legislative agenda
What is organizing?
• Collective action by a group of individuals who work as one to achieve a common goal.
Organizing Wins

- Protects our profession
- We have the strength
- Organizing wins
When is the best time to organize...

• As soon as issues are identified.
• Early in the decision-making process.
• Shortly before decisions are made.
• Immediately after decisions have been made.
• All the Time!!!
Exercise: Organizing Wins

• Discuss with your colleagues some major, recent wins.
• Identify one issue or cause.
Keep in mind why you’re lobbying

- You’re the expert!
- Know your limits
- Play to your strengths
Exercise: Why are you lobbying?

- Think about some issues facing your local, your worksite, your district, and your state.
- Identify one issue or cause around which you would like to organize a lobbying campaign.
Know Your Audience

- Narrow the scope
- Executive decision makers
- Decision chains
Build Relationships

- Give it time, share experiences
- Building trust with staff and members may take several visits / meetings / calls
- Become someone trusted to provide honest feedback and accurate information on bills, proposals, ideas
Know Your Ask

- Be sure to request *something* — the ask varies with the circumstances
- Explain your views, listen to theirs
Provide Local Perspective

- Share your own story
- Emphasize your ties to the district and the state
- Use local examples and stories to make your point, as well as facts and figures
Use your Tools

- Good manners — send thank you notes, follow up
- Keep in touch — check in, share information
- Be proactive — invite Members to events, attend theirs
- Websites and apps — Facebook, Twitter, state websites, etc.
Stories are your most powerful tool

- Like a superhero, you’ve got a superpower: stories
- Sharing stories and experiences helps members understand your point of view
- Never give up on a Member!
Don’t get too political / partisan

• Some of our biggest wins are bipartisan
• Issues first – be credible, objective
• Members want information
• Stress students first, always
• No permanent friends, no permanent enemies
Be Yourself

- Honesty and authenticity speak volumes, build relationships
- All elected officials (and appointed too) are human beings — just like you
- Relax!
Mock Congressional Meeting

Congress voting on school vouchers next week

Scenario A:

• You are meeting with a conservative GOPer who supports vouchers
  – What do you say to persuade? What is your ask?

Scenario B:

• You are meeting with a moderate GOPer who opposes vouchers
  – What is your ask of them to help defeat this?
Session Outcomes

The content from this session can be used in the following ways in your current position/role:

– Become a better advocate for your profession/association
– Learn how to ask a question and get the right answer
Closing

• Please complete the evaluation for this breakout session by using the **NEA Summit Mobile APP**! – *Please remember to build in 5 minutes at the end of your session to allow time for the attendees to complete the evaluation for your session.*

• Please visit the Leadership Development Resources website at [www.nea.org/leadershipdevelopment](http://www.nea.org/leadershipdevelopment)