

## Advocacy Tips

1. All politics are local and your parents are the best source of help for you. Do not go it alone. Get the information to them and let them go to the board at the official meetings and also at the coffee shop etc. Contact outside help through the professional organizations of which you belong. IBA, IAAE, IMEA, ICDA, ISTA etc. Make sure that your local Education Association is aware of the proposed cuts.
2. Use all the information you can find that show the impact of the arts on students. Get information from neighboring districts and also from districts your size but since time is always a factor make the facts personal by pointing out specific examples that pertain to your students! Do you have the yearbook editor/top football player etc. in a performing arts group? Did you have a former art student who has gone on in the visual arts? List who would be hurt by these cuts and be specific ... name names!
3. Remember you were hired to be an advocate for your teaching assignment and discipline. Let the Administration and the Board know that you are advocating for their students in their district. Otherwise it is easy to get sidetracked into making it look like you are only interested in preserving your job. Remember (but don't say) that this is an administrative choice to make and you should not get pressured into making that choice for them. Do not allow the divide and conquer technique to be used to the detriment of your students. The administrators are paid (more than you are) to make these hard decisions and you should not let them off the hook by taking any responsibility for making their decisions easier.
4. Campaign, campaign, campaign as much as possible but always turn it toward the needs and benefits of the students in your district.
5. Remain as positive as possible (wear your game face) as this not only makes you appear more professional but also can make your day go a little smoother in the face of adversity.