Community Health Advocacy 101

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advocacy

: the act or process of supporting a cause or proposal
: the act or process of advocating something

to change “what is” into “what should be”
THE OREGON LEGISLATURE

• Citizen Legislature
  • All legislators have/had other jobs outside of their elected capacity.
  • Lobbyists serve as information agents.

• 90 Person Body
  • 60 Representatives elected for two-year terms
  • 30 Senators elected to serve for four-year terms

• Legislative Session is Annual
  • 35 days in even-numbered years
  • 160 days in odd-numbered years

• The Legislative Assembly is responsible for the state's biennial budget.
  • The power to allocate state monies gives the legislature influence over the executive branch. In deciding where and how much money the state will spend on its agencies and programs, the legislature establishes priorities and sets public policy.
How an Idea Becomes Law
A simple view of the Oregon Legislative Process

1. Concerned citizen, group, or legislator suggests an idea for legislation
2. Legislator or legislative committee sponsors bill
3. Bill is drafted by legislative counsel
4. Bill is introduced and read for first time
5. Speaker or President assigns bill to a committee
6. Committee holds public hearings and takes action
7. 1. Pass 2. Pass with amendments 3. Do not pass
8. 1. Back to 1st Chamber 2. Reprinted and back to 1st Chamber 3. Bill is dead
9. 1. Pass 2. Fail 3. Refer back to committee
10. Bill is passed to 2nd Chamber for first reading
11. 1. Pass 2. Fail 3. Refer back to committee
12. Conference committee appointed legislators from House and Senate iron out differences
13. Conference committee sends bill back to House and Senate for concurrence
14. House and Senate concur; bill is sent to Governor
16. Bill becomes law without Governor’s signature
17. Bill goes back to House and Senate. 2/3 majority vote in both chambers will override veto

By default, Bills take effect on January 1st of the year after the passage of the Bill
CAMPAIGN PLANNING

Plan for what you can, so you have time to handle what you can’t plan for!

- Find out who your partners and your champions are.
  - Are there professional organizations or non-profits who support this same cause?
  - Having a professional lobbyist can be very helpful in navigating the legislative process and getting your campaign through challenging periods.
- Think through your messaging – conduct polling if you have the resources
  - Determine who the best spokespeople are for the topic.
  - Create a communications plan (this doesn’t have to be complicated!)
- Think through your opposition – who will be opposed to what you are proposing?
  - What do you know that opponents will say and what can you do to prepare for those comments?

REMEMBER THAT CHANGE IS HARD
ADVOCACY 101

**Be Prepared** – A favorable impact is what you are trying to achieve.
- Plan with your group ahead of time who is going to talk about what.
- Keep your meeting short, straightforward and on topic
- Don’t assume anything.
- Tailor your message to each individual legislator and try to find common ground

**Introduce Yourself** – Share your story
- Always introduce everyone - have everyone briefly introduce themselves at the start of the meeting.
- Identify yourself as a constituent – share the neighborhood you live and try to make a connection.

**Honesty** – Don’t make claims about the issue that are not realistic
- Don’t exaggerate the merits or problems.
- **Admit when you don’t know the answer and tell them you will get back to them.**
- If legislation affects you personally, tell them your story!
ADVOCACY 101

Respect – Show respect for legislators, as well as their staff
• Show respect for the position and their commitment to public service
• Be courteous. Be punctual. Be a good listener. Make this a conversation and listen to them.
• When you talk to staff, you are talking to a legislator.
• Thank them for their time

Demeanor – Keep your cool.
• Do not demand or threaten.
• Do not get angry.
• Always ask directly for support of your position.

Follow Up is Critical
• When you say, “I will get back to you,” alert staff so we can follow up.
• Send thank you notes regardless of their position. Remember they took time to meet with you.
OTHER WAYS TO ADVOCATE

• Connect with your local elected officials!
  • Find our who your elected official is – https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/
  • Sign up for their newsletters, follow them on social media
• Track bills – You can sign up for email alerts to stay updated on bills
• Can’t make it to Salem? All public hearings and floor sessions are live streamed on the Oregon Legislature Website.
• Sign-up for action alerts from like minded organizations!
• Follow campaigns on social media
  • Act as a rapid responder and third partner validator – show your support so others know real people care about the issue not just paid staff.
Community Health Advocacy 101
Case Study: The Oregon PE Story

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Overview

- Why PE Matters
- Advocacy efforts to pass HB 3141 / SB 4
- Why Advocacy matters
The Greeks Had It Right!

The body is the source of all energy and initiative.  

*Plato*

Life is movement.  

*Aristotle*
Why PE Matters: The Evidence

- CDC’s Guide to Community Preventive Services
  - Increases levels of physical activity
  - Increases levels of fitness
  - Increases likelihood of becoming active adult

- Highest CDC recommendation as a physical activity intervention

- Minutes of PE instruction: evidence-based
How Did We Get to HB 3141?

• 1990 Property tax limitation measure
• 1992 North Clackamas District PE cuts
• 1993 Formation of original PEAK group
• 1993 Common Curriculum Goal Complaint
• 1995 Oregon Dept. of Education decision, State superintendent and State Board of Ed.
Oregon Legislature
1997

• Introduced bill to create statewide standards
• Opposition from ODE, COSA, OSBA
• Session theme: Gettin’ Whooped
• Glimmer of hope: It’s those PE people!
Oregon Legislature 1999

- PE standards and assessment; CIM
- Oregon Coalition for Promoting PA
- Key role of American Heart Association
- Passage of HB 3306
- Theme: A BIG Win!
Oregon Legislature
2003

• 2001 Implementation of statewide standards
• PE assessment? Not so much
• HB 2744 – Big time backsliding
• Theme: When winning is cutting your losses
PEAK Members

- African American Health Coalition
- American Heart Association
- American Cancer Society
- Kaiser Permanente
- Legacy Health
- Nike
- Northwest Health Foundation
- OHSU
PEAK Members

- Oregon Public Health Institute
- Oregon SHAPE
- Oregon Sports Authority
- Playworks
- Providence Health and Services
- The Street Trust (formerly BTA)
- Upstream Public Health
PE, Fitness, and Academic Performance

- Active, fit kids do better academically.
- Sacrificing PE time does not improve academic performance (5 studies).
- Activity breaks = improved cognitive performance and classroom behavior.
- In some cases, more PE leads to improved grades and standardized test scores.
Oregon Legislature
2005

• Physical Education in Schools Act - SB 228
  – Assessment piece
  – Inventory of PE minutes now taught
    – Minutes: elementary = 150 per week
      middle = 225 per week
• Policy champion Sen. President Peter Courtney
• OCCPA study conclusion
  – “The most disadvantaged students receive the least amount of PE instruction.”
Oregon Legislature
2005

• We have the votes!
• A moment of silence
• Bill killer
• Theme: so painfully close
Fall down seven; stand up eight.

Chinese proverb
Oregon Legislature 2007

• Focus on PE minutes, inventory, grants
• $1 million for grant program and survey
• PEAK Coalition - Strategic bipartisanship
• The painful compromise

• Theme: A BIG win = Passage of HB 3141
On the day of victory no one is tired.

Persian proverb
HB 3141 Implementation
Where are we in 2019?

• Most districts did not take advantage of the 10 year phase in 2007-2017.

• Sen. President Courtney convened task force of advocates, education organizations, and ODE.

• 2017 passage of SB 4 to support implementation.
Lessons Learned

- Ritson rule: Be Nice. Be clear. Be brief. Be gone!
- Follow *your* passion.
- Partner, partner, partner…work with the pros.
- Today’s adversary may be tomorrow’s ally.
- Like physical activity, *any advocacy is a lot better than none.*
One More Lesson

• Persistence

• Persistence

• Persistence