Planning Your State’s Advocacy Action Day

To help advance our shared advocacy goals related to school psychologists’ roles, school safety, and school mental health, NASP is coordinating its second annual state and federal Advocacy Action Day during School Psychology Awareness Week. And we need your help!

The increased attention to school psychology during SPAW makes it an ideal time to motivate your members to get involved in advocacy – and it won’t even require a physical trip to your state capitol!

Advocacy Action Day presents an opportunity for you to have proactive conversations with key members of your state legislature before many states enter their legislative sessions in the spring of next year. On Advocacy Action Day, you will ask your members to:

1. Send a letter to or call the office of their elected state representative
2. Post a message to social media, reinforcing the message
3. Send a letter to the office of their elected federal representative

All of this will not take participants any more than 5 minutes.

NASP’s Advocacy Action Day will take place on Wednesday, November 13, 2019. Below are a set of useful resources that we’ve developed to assist you in your efforts – and, we’ve made these resources adaptable for you to use at any point throughout the year; not just during SPAW! We highly encourage you to utilize NASP’s recently released Policy Playbook, where many of these resources will link to.

Develop and Draft Key Points for your Messaging

- Effective communication and messaging is vital to achieving your advocacy goals. Part I, Section I of NASP’s Policy Playbook identifies tips for effective communication – from identifying your target audience to using effective message structure. Be sure to identify the critical advocacy issues for school psychologists in your state that you would like members to address through their action.
- Use NASP’s key messages and talking points in Section VI of NASP’s Policy Playbook to develop the template letter that you’d like members to use to send letters to legislators. Additional resources for specific topics can be found on NASP’s Critical Policy Issues webpages. A sample email/letter for state legislators can be found here.
- Develop sample social media posts for your members. Part I, Section IV of NASP’s Policy Playbook discusses tips on effective ways to use social media as part of your advocacy efforts. Additionally, NASP has developed sample social media posts that you can adapt for your state’s Advocacy Action Day.

Plan the Nuts and Bolts

- We highly recommend that you utilize NASP’s Advocacy Action Center for your Advocacy Action Day efforts. The Advocacy Action Center allows members to edit and send the template letter that you created to their state representatives. The software additionally
allows NASP to track the total amount of contacts that were made with state legislators, and the data will be shared with you. To use the advocacy software, fill out this Google form. Once the Google form is submitted with your template letter, NASP will create a special link for your state to send out to your members that will take them to a form that will populate with your template letter after they enter their information. It’s that simple! For more information or if you have questions, contact Caden Fabbi at cfabbi@naspweb.org.

- Media and stakeholder outreach could take your Advocacy Action Day to the next level in terms of reach. Be sure to send a press release to your contact at your local newspaper (media guidelines can be found in Section I, Part III of NASP’s Policy Playbook.) Additionally, the President of your Association, a member of your board or another motivated school psychologists can write an op-ed for publishing (here are some examples of successful op-eds). Finally, send a letter to your congressional delegation on behalf of your state association to establish a relationship going into the next Congress, and to highlight issues school psychologists are focused on.

- Pre-plan and schedule posts for your Association’s social media accounts. Consider crafting and designating a hashtag for members in your state to use on social media (in addition to #NASPadvocates). Be sure to track messages on social media and share/retweet any posts from your members and supporters to your Association’s account. Additionally, tag your local representatives through their twitter handle and use your state’s political hashtag whenever possible to highlight the importance of the message to local legislators.

Send the Resources to Your Advocates

- When you initially communicate this event to your membership, outline the value of direct constituent communications in influencing the policymaking process. Advocates need to understand why their direct participation is critical to policy success! This helps drive their motivation and participation. A sample initial email (which should be sent in late October/early November) for your membership can be found here, and on this web page you will find a quick video on how to use the Advocacy Action Center and an Advocacy Action Day infographic.

- Send out a “day-of” email and post on social media with the link to the form/template letter on the morning of your event (November 13, 2019.)