

Advocacy “201” -- Getting Prepared

NM Association for the Gifted

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Advocacy “To Do” List

- Educate Yourself
- Collect Information for advocacy message
- Practice ways to describe benefits of GT
- Look for VIPs to help influence the public and legislators
- Communicate with legislators
- Work with the media
- Other ideas arise from friends, colleagues, and community resources
- What will you commit to doing?

Educate Yourself

- NM state law/policy
- Basic state statistics about GT (spending, #s of children, ID process)
- Related policies affecting GT (acceleration policies, dual enrollment, graduation credit)
- Your state representatives



Collecting Information to Support GT Services

- What data can you collect?
 - From the school / district
 - From a local parent group?
- Stories / examples?
- GT student successes?



Advocacy Message: How do *You* Frame the Subject?

- What questions about GT are you asked most frequently ?
- What are the hot button topics being discussed in NM?



- What's the most powerful statistic about GT that you've ever cited?
- In your experience, what state/local policy is most effective to support GT students? Why?
- How would you describe gifted education in 8 words or less?



VIP Assessment & Action

- Whose views on education are important in NM?
- Are there other statewide leaders who are generally influential?
- What associations / organizations do you belong to?
- Do you or your friends / relatives have access to elected officials?

Communications w/ Legislators

- Writing letters to elected officials
- Electronic communications
 - Visit <http://legis.state.nm.us>
- Meetings
- Public forums



Working with the Media

- Letters to Editor
 - Timely, brief
 - Submit online
 - “hook” GT arguments to point made in article
- Tracking education writers
 - Look for GT angle in general education stories
 - Let reporters know about GT activities

What Else Can You Do?

- Volunteer to help N MAG with its legislative advocacy
- Work with / establish your district gifted advisory committee
- Reach out to a local group in which you're active
- Other?



Sample Personal Action Plan

When I get back to my district, I plan to:

- Brief my district GT advisory cmttee; gather info on the orgs they belong to, VIPs they may know
- Volunteer to help a colleague who is active in the NM math teachers org on GT concerns
- Gather basic GT information from my district; look for successes & willing spokespeople
- Start an email list of those I know are willing to be involved
- Look for ltr-to-editor opportunities

