



Creating an Advocacy Plan in Your Community

1. What do you want?
What is your goal? What do you wish to accomplish?
2. Who can make it happen?
Legislators
Parents
Community Members
Local Reporters
3. Who are your most effective messengers?
Current Parents/ Students
Alumni
Teachers
School Leaders
Church Leaders
4. What is the message?
5. How will the message be delivered?
Phone Calls
Letters
Social Media Campaigns
Action Center
Thank You Cards
6. What is the ideal time frame?
During Legislative Session
Summer
Start of the School Year
When Tax Credits Are Exhausted



Advocating for School Choice: Talking Points

- √ Every child deserves a quality education.
- √ No child deserves an underperforming school, or one that doesn't meet their individual needs.
- √ Parents know best. An address should determine where a child must attend school.
- √ School choice empowers parents to choose the school that is best for their child.
- √ Indiana has the largest and fastest growing voucher program in the country. That is proof that parents want choices when it comes to their child's education.
- √ Schools are not entitled to our kids; kids are entitled to great schools. Every child deserves a fair chance to succeed.
- √ Wealthier families shouldn't have more options than other families.
- √ The quality of education is more important than the type of school.
- √ School vouchers make a private school education more affordable and level the playing field for working-class families. Without them, only certain families have access to these schools and that's not fair.
- √ In reality, the voucher program allows traditional public schools to receive more money for educating fewer kids. When a child leaves his assigned school, that school loses the per-pupil funding but they keep the property taxes paid by the family to live in that area.



Social Media: The Basics

Twitter Handles

A Twitter handle is like someone's username. Handles always start with the "@" symbol.

For example, Institute for Quality Education uses the handle @I4QED.

Handles allow you to search Twitter for other users, send messages directly to the attention of another user, and see when users are mentioned.

For example, you could tweet this:

Please support all Hoosier kids by supporting school choice.

The only people who would see that tweet would be those people who are following you, or those people who go to your Twitter feed (or 'wall') to read your tweets.

But, if you tweet this:

Please support all Hoosier kids by supporting school choice.

@TruittTicker @BrandtHershman

Now all your followers, anyone who visits your Twitter feed, anyone who searches Representative Truitt and Senator Hershman, as well as the legislators themselves will see your tweet.

*Note: If you start a tweet with a handle, you must put a period before it.
For example:

.@BrandtHershman Please support all Hoosier kids by supporting school choice

Without the period at the beginning, this tweet would only be seen by users who follow you AND Senator Hershman. Since that is probably a smaller number of users, including the period will allow more people to see the tweet.

Who to Follow

Legislators:

All Indiana legislators may be found by visiting <http://www.h4qed.org/find-legislators>.

In addition to local legislators, you should follow all your local media reporters- and engage with them often! Liking, retweeting and responding to their tweets is a great way to get their attention. Here are some suggestions of some local and national organizations who support school choice and/or work in education policy:

@i4qed Institute for Quality Education
@ChalkbeatIN Chalkbeat Indiana (statewide education policy news)
@StateImpactIN State Impact Indiana (statewide education policy news)
@INSBOE Official account of the Indiana State Board of Education
@IndianaStand Stand for Children Indiana
@INPEA_Voice Indiana Non-Public Education Association
@IndGOP Indiana Republican Party
@INHouseGOP Indiana House Republican Caucus
@INSenateGOP Indiana Senate Republican Caucus
@INDems Indiana Democratic Party
@INHseDems Indiana House Democratic Caucus
@INSenDems Indiana Senate Democratic Caucus
@edchoice EdChoice
@The74 The Seventy Four
@SchoolChoiceNow American Federation for Children

Twitter Hashtags

Twitter hashtags allow you to expand the reach of your tweet even further. A hashtag is created by using the “#” symbol. For example, a popular hashtag during the legislative session is #INLegis.

Hashtags allow you to tag your tweet so other people can easily search for it, or allow you to join a conversation with people who have similar interests.

For example, you could tweet this:

Please support all Hoosier kids by supporting #schoolchoice.

@RepKlinker #INLegis

The hashtag #schoolchoice is very popular and used by people all over the world. Anyone interested in reading about school choice on Twitter can search this hashtag and read what others are sharing. On the other hand, #INLegis is a hashtag used to share information pertaining to the Indiana legislative session. Reporters, legislators, lobbyists, advocacy groups, citizens, and others use this hashtag to share information about bills, hearings, and other current happenings. Hashtags can be very helpful in reaching your target audience.

These are examples of tweets using the hashtag #INLegis during the last legislative session:

Rep. Dave Ober liked



Indiana House GOP @INHouseGOP · 4h

Speaker Bosma announces leadership and committee changes: bit.ly/1S6CnPT
#INLegis

← ↻ 3 ❤️ 1 ⋮



IN House Democrats @inhsedems · 5h

Harris resumes effort to attract NFL franchise, other teams to NW Indiana:
bit.ly/1PPENmv #IHDC **#INLegis** @DonnaJHarrisD2

← ↻ 2 ❤️ ⋮



ISTA @ISTAMembers · Nov 17

ICYMI: Pence and **#INLegis** ignore calls for fix to help teachers and schools.
buff.ly/1QsW7PY



← ↻ 9 ❤️ 4 ⋮

Hashtag Cheat Sheet

These hashtags are often used in the education policy discussion on Twitter. Feel free to use these, search them to see what others are sharing, or start your own hashtag! *Note: It is always a good idea to search a

hashtag before you start using it. You want to be sure that a large number of other users are not already using the hashtag for something unrelated.

#INLegis Updates on the Indiana Legislative Session

#INEdChat Everything related to education in Indiana. Topics shared here vary greatly.

#SchoolChoice Everything related to school choice across the county.

#EdReform Everything related to education reform across the country.

#TruthAboutVouchers Used to share factual information about Indiana school vouchers.

#INSBOE Updates on Indiana State Board of Education meetings.

You're ready to tweet!

Just remember:

- Tweets can only be 140 characters. Spaces, symbols, handles, hashtags- all of these things count toward the 140 characters.
- Don't be afraid to start your own hashtags, just search them first.
- Retweeting is a great way to start slowly. Retweeting what others have shared is like copy/pasting it in your own account for your followers to see.
- Just like Facebook, Twitter has a "like" button. Use it to support others who share your views!
- Some things are better said in a private message. Twitter will allow you to private message another user, this ensures that only the two of you will see the content. You might use this when sharing your cell phone number with a reporter for an interview, for example.