

ADVOCACY: OFHSA Members Make a Difference

ADVOCACY IS:

THE ACT OR PROCESS OF
SUPPORTING A CAUSE,
POLICY OR PROPOSAL

Tips and Advice for Home & School Members:

- Be patient and understanding
- Discuss matters of concern with Administration and Teachers
- Seek to understand: issues are temporary; solutions are found in commitment
- Facilitate a meeting between parents, staff at your school and invite community members
- Fundraise to provide enhanced programs for your students and families
- Attend local H&S Council Meetings and share H&S Association member concerns
- Attend the OFHSA Annual Meeting and lend a voice to Policy Resolutions

OFHSA is:

- ✓ An independent voice of parents actively supporting public education at the school, school board, and provincial level.
- ✓ An organization of volunteers committed to ensuring that the education, health, safety and social well-being of children and youth are a priority for all.
- ✓ A network of members providing support, training, resources and advice developed over a long history of involvement.

THE BEST FOR EACH STUDENT

Advocacy is as simple as an active citizen helping to support and improve the education, health, safety and well-being of all students and families in their school community!

To get the exact results you want, consider:

- What are the needs of parents and students, at home and in the community?
- How do I get my voice heard? What are the questions that are repeatedly asked by parents? (e.g. understanding report cards or homework, EQAO results, available school programs/activities, help supporting my child with nutrition, sleeping, academics)
- Where do I go for help? - Finding resources available to students and their families, in the school and in the community
- Are parents being welcomed into the school and classroom?
- How to support and maintain a positive relationship between parents, school staff and community groups.
- Elections – Do you know your district school board Trustees, Municipal Councilors and Members of Provincial Parliament?

Home & School is MORE than Fundraising:

- Support public education in your community
- Find a better sense of community within your school and make your school the social hub of the community
- Learn to be an advocate for your child's education
- A place for your voice to be heard
- Enhance student and family activities through fundraising initiatives
- A place to collaborate with other concerned parents and community
- Participate in building accountability, responsibility and ownership of decisions that improve the community

Get Involved:

- Attend H&S and School Council meetings
- Offer classroom support
- Organize and run a school club
- Coach a school team
- Serve on a school or board committee
- Volunteer for school activities like hot lunch or fun fair
- Lend a hand with breakfast club committee
- Offer school library support
- Provide team transportation

Members and local advocacy:

- Facilitate information meetings for parents and staff at the school
- Organize the H&S membership drive
- Set-up an information table about H&S
- Work collaboratively with the School Council
- Share your concerns at H&S meetings
- Write an article about Association activities for OFHSA distribution
- Prepare an Ad for Association events for the school newflash/media
- Prepare school issue related informational materials to share with home
- Organize parents to focus attention on a school-related issue like playground safety, school growth
- Speak at a board meeting about a school-related issue
- Write an article about your Association for OFHSA distribution
- Represent your Association at the OFHSA Annual Meeting
- Help organize Teacher/Staff (TSAW) Appreciation Week
- Prepare and present a resolution at the OFHSA Annual Meeting
- Participate in a media interview about education
- Participate in a panel discussion about education issues
- Serve on OFHSA's Advocacy Workgroup

OFHSA advocates on behalf of members:

- Correspond with government ministries and provincial partner organizations to advocate for change
- Raise issues of concern from members with government and education leaders
- Prepare briefs and responses based on the input of members and the OFHSA Policy Document
- Provide advice on behalf of members to all agencies on health, safety, education and social issues affecting children and youth
- Arrange representation for all meetings with provincial partners to recommend new policy and legislation (e.g. EQAO, Young Worker Health & Safety, Curriculum Implementation, School Bus Safety Panel, Ontario College of Teachers)
- Keep members informed about changes to legislation and new initiatives
- Bring issues of national concern to the Canadian Home and School Federation for action