



Competencies and Outcomes

Module 8: Contacting Elected Representatives

Description: Let's engage decisionmakers! Democracy is not a spectator sport. Elected officials work for us, and there's no need to keep them up on a pedestal. They seek and need our input to successfully do the people's business! Voting is critical, but it's what happens between elections that impacts our lives every day. Step up and speak up and influence the ways public education is administered! This module will provide you with the skills, tools and mindset to actively engage legislators and decisionmakers.

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Competencies

This module aligns with the following NEA Leadership Competencies:

Advocacy

- Utilizes best practices in advocacy and political efforts
- Engages and builds mutually beneficial relationships to advance advocacy and political goals
- Interprets and acts on racial and social justice initiatives
- Leads public education policy reform
- Acts as a political advocate

Communication

- Develops individual communication approach and style to fit appropriate audience
- Acts as an effective speaker
- Effectively uses current media (print, broadcast, online, social media) to communicate
- Identifies and utilizes appropriate messages in acting as a compelling advocate for the organization

Governance and Leadership

- Effectively executes governance and leadership responsibilities
- Establishes and maintains collaborative and effective relationships

Leading our Professions

- Supports professional excellence and builds capacity for continual improvement and learning to ensure the success of all students
- Analyzes and applies research to determine the potential impact on our professions and the learning of all students

Organizing

- Utilizes best practices, technologies, and methods that through experience and research have led to successful organizing outcomes
- Builds and maintains meaningful community partnerships

Social and Emotional Intelligence

Understands one's emotions, thoughts and values and how they influence behavior across contexts

Manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations

Understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts

Strategy and Fiscal Health

Acts strategically to align the organization's work with stakeholder needs

Earning Criteria

Earning this badge indicates that the learner completed Module 8: Contacting Elected Representatives of The Worthy Educator EDInfluencer Advocacy Microcredential and is certified to have the understandings, skills and dispositions to successfully serve as an advocate for the education profession.

Evidence

The learner was assessed on advocacy core competencies through self-assessment and reflection on thirteen activities verifying the role of the educator as an influencer and advocate for what is best for children and for the profession in a democratic society.

Earning Criteria

Recipients must complete the earning criteria to earn this badge:

1. Send written communication to an elected official, documenting confirmation of its receipt.
2. Calling the office of an elected official to share education advocacy priorities and write up a summary of the call.
3. Schedule a visit to the local office of an elected official and provide a summary of the visit and follow-up next steps.
4. Use 5Calls, ResistBot or a digital database tool to gain experience in creating an advocacy communications campaign for future reference, and share the experience with colleagues.

Evidence is verified and approved by authorized leaders of The Worthy Educator to ensure the integrity and quality of these requirements are met.

Alignment

This badge is aligned with the [Leadership Competencies](#) of the [National Education Association](#).

Skills

Recipients of this badge demonstrate these skills:

Using written and spoken communication to advocate for their priorities

Plan, schedule and participate in digital and in-person discussions advocating for their education priorities

Utilize digital tools to amplify advocacy communication efforts

Pathways

This module supports these educator advocacy pathways:

Professional Development and Skill-Building

Direct Instruction: learning education policy and advocacy can equip educators with the knowledge and skills to effectively advocate for change.

Advocacy Training: learning about the legislative process, how to communicate their message effectively, and how to build relationships with policymakers.

Building Relationships and Coalitions

Stakeholder Communication: effective communication with parents, community members, and other stakeholders to build support for advocacy efforts.

Networking: joining and forming coalitions with other educators, parents, and community members to amplify their voices and increase their influence.

Amplifying Voices and Sharing Stories

Personal Narratives: sharing stories to help decision-makers understand the impact of policies and practices on students and educators.

Highlighting Best Practices: citing examples of successful experience can inspire others and demonstrate the potential for positive change.

Direct Engagement with Decision-Makers

Legislators: contact state and federal representatives to express their views on education-related legislation.

Local Government: engaging with local government officials on issues like funding, resources, and community partnerships can also be impactful.

Focusing on Specific Issues

Identify Key Issues: adopt positions on specific issues to advocate for policies and practices that support optimal outcomes for public education and the students it serves.

Develop a Clear Message: crafting concise messaging that resonates with stakeholders and influences decisionmakers.
Advocate for Change: make direct communication with decision-makers, create public awareness, and engage the community in support for what is best for children.

Resources

ACLU Maryland: LOBBYING: Tips on Contacting, Writing, and Meeting With Your Elected Officials <https://www.aclu-md.org/news-page/lobbying-tips-contacting-writing-and-meeting-your-elected-officials> June 19, 2018

American Psychological Association: Four Steps for Effectively Emailing Your Members of Congress [VIDEO 3:20]
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9MWvpvh8c2M> March 5, 2020

Becker, Samuel: Easily Write Elected Officials Using ResistBot [VIDEO 3:08] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gBF_YaM42qw June 23, 2017

Briggs, Dean: Legislative Letter-Writing Campaign Builds a Community <https://indivisible-ma.org/legislative-letter-writing-campaign-builds-a-community/> Accessed September 17, 2025

Carolina Farm Stewardship Assn: How to Call Representatives [VIDEO 1:42] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jVS4M9-e4fs> January 9, 2015

Cecil, Anna: Public School Teachers, Parents and Students Bring their Worries to the Statehouse https://www.thestatehousefile.com/politics/public-school-teachers-parents-and-students-bring-their-worries-to-the-statehouse/article_c1241134-ee31-11ef-b120-9f7d99220a9a.html February 18, 2025

Citizen's Climate Lobby: Never Say Never: A Lobbying Success Story <https://citizensclimatelobby.org/blog/democracy/never-say-never-a-lobbying-success-story/> August 7, 2023

The Civic Toolbox: How to Call Congress in 5 Minutes with 5calls [VIDEO 4:39] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gJSqBwN5Q8A> March 8, 2025

County Office Law: How Can Citizens Contact Their Members of Congress? [VIDEO 4:33]
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CgmnvUgWul8> February 12, 2025

Elangovan, Priya: Effective Strategies for Meeting with Elected Officials and Influencing Policy <https://aitogether.org/strategies-for-meeting-elected-officials> September 17, 2024

Hummerhauser, Kelly, National Trust for Historic Preservation Making Your Voice Heard: Site Visits with Elected Officials [VIDEO 11:40] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tvLvZdUF9YE> June 17, 2025

National Volunteer Fire Council: Guide to Communicating with Elected Officials <https://www.nvfc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/ElectedGuide.pdf> October 19, 2018

Polk State College: Polk State Student Leaders Visit Tallahassee to Meet Elected Officials, Advocate for College <https://www.polk.edu/news/polk-state-student-leaders-visit-tallahassee-to-meet-elected-officials-advocate-for-college/> February 20, 2025

Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

The following are submitted to the module discussion board for engagement and evaluation:

- I. Using resources from Module 8, compose and send a written communication (email or snail mail) to one of your elected officials.

Be sure to include:

- Your contact information
- The reason you are writing
- Your advocacy priorities
- The desired outcome you seek, and
- How you would like the official to act on your behalf

Once sent, share your communication and the response you receive in the EDInfluencer Advocacy Microcredential Incubator discussion group.

- II. Using resources from Module 8, create a script and then call one of your elected officials.

Be sure to include:

- Your identity as a constituent
- The reason for your call
- Your advocacy priorities
- The desired outcome you seek, and
- How you would like the official to act on your behalf

Take notes from your call and share your experience in the EDInfluencer Advocacy Microcredential Incubator discussion group.

III. Select an elected official with whom you would like to meet, and identify the location of their nearest local office.

Call the office and ask to speak to the scheduler.

Schedule a day and time to meet with the official at their office.

In meeting with the official and their staff:

- Introduce yourself as an educator and a constituent
- Share your advocacy priorities
- Ask their stand on the issues you present
- Indicate the desired outcome you seek, and
- Agree on follow up items to continue to work together

Write a summary of your meeting and share it in the EDInfluencer Advocacy Microcredential Incubator discussion group.

IV. Using technology tools deepens and extends your communications efforts beyond an individual contact, email or call. Select one of the strategies from this module's learning and use it in preparation for your advocacy efforts moving forward.

Option 1: Utilize 5 Calls

- Enter your location
 - Choose an issue
 - Make and log your calls
 - Subscribe for updates

Option 2: Employ ResistBot

- Text the commend "Resist" to 50409
 - Provide your contact information to find your officials
 - Draft your message
 - Follow the prompts

Optional: share your message so others can also send it

Option 3: Build Your Communications Database

Using the tool of your choice, build a list of important phone numbers, email addresses and mailing addresses consisting of:

- Your local, state and federal elected officials
 - Your local and state news and media outlets
 - Your local and state education agencies and associations

Without revealing personally identifiable information, share the results of your option of choice to our EDInfluencer Advocacy Microcredential Incubator to share it with likeminded Worthy Educators!

Rubric

Worthy Educator EDInfluencer Advocacy Microcredential Rubric

Criteria	3 Outstanding	2 Adequate	1 Needs Improvement
Voice	A compelling introduction Grabs the reader's attention Relates personal perspective Appeals to stakeholder perspective Offers personal experience and expertise Utilizes an inclusive, professional tone Elevates the narrative on education Confident expression of ideas	A clear introduction Addresses the reader directly Present educator credentials Maintains a consistent tone Avoids blame and polarizing statements Smooth use of syntax and semantics	Uses first-person voice Succinctly states ideas Relates personal opinion Leaves the reader wanting more elaboration
Persuasiveness	Clarity of the purpose of the piece Shows awareness of audience Evidences expertise and credibility Presents solid data and evidence Uses logic and reason Appeals to emotion and experience Makes the case effectively Influences the reader to take action	Directly states premise Shows audience awareness Logical flow of ideas Cites professional experience Espouses personal priorities Makes clear closing statement	Speaks on own behalf Straightforward presentation of ideas Unconvincing presentation Didactic tone
Organization	Begins with clear thesis statement Effective use of language Ideas are logically sequenced Builds to a call to action Creates a satisfying conclusion Documents references cited Adherence to technical conventions Clean formatting	Clear introduction Clear expression of ideas Well-developed structure Documents references cited Technically consistent Clean formatting	Underdeveloped thesis States thoughts in isolation Meets minimum requirements of assignment Technical errors
Substance	High interest topic Relevant to current issues in education Viable treatment of the topic References reliable sources Indicates desired course of action Enlists the support of stakeholders Outlines next steps Describes desired outcome	Knowledgeable on the topic References current events Appeals to popular sentiment Cites personal aspirations Outlines options for action Brings discussion to satisfying conclusion	Surface-level treatment of ideas Uses lists rather than sentences Promotes personal agenda Lacks connection to future
Vision	Makes the case for future needs Universally relevant message Explains what is at stake Outlines consequences of inaction Paints a credible picture Provides clarity and detail Builds a bridge from the present Invites others to help build out the vision	Makes the case for change Connects with the reader Speaks in the present tense Describes possibilities Inspires hope and aspiration Invites others to join in the vision	Describes current circumstances Asks questions without providing answers Reactive rather than proactive Unclear next steps