Keeping Your Advocacy Network Engaged
March 2017

We know it is a busy task to keep your advocacy networks thriving! CEC Policy and Advocacy staff want to help you keep your networks engaged and informed, especially when CEC calls for legislative action! Use the following tips to help you when it comes to keeping your advocacy networks engaged:

1.) Double Check Your Strategy.
How are you keeping your network engaged currently? Are you passing along CAN Alerts to your grassroots advocacy network in a timely manner? Are you receiving your Unit/Division updated member lists? Are you keeping your network well informed on CEC’s activities through the Policy Insider Blog? Think of your network member profile - who they are comprised of, what is the best way for them to be contacted, and who is most responsive and genuinely interested in learning more? Think about new strategies you can employ as CAN Coordinator. What legislation has your member of Congress introduced or co-sponsored? You can find out if your member of Congress has co-sponsored any of the bills CEC is tracking through the Legislative Action Center’s webpage, CEC’s Position on Current Bills!

2.) Add Personal Touches.
How often do you check-in with your grassroots advocacy network and let them know you are there to be of assistance to them? Personal emails and follow ups are important when keeping your network engaged. We encourage you to email your membership regularly to continue to build the relationship. Make an effort to get to know who is included in your network, and how they might be able to provide information you can find useful in your advocacy efforts.

3.) Reach Out Regularly, but Appropriately.
It is important to not send your network too many emails, but also continue to send emails regularly. You need to show your network you are making a strong attempt at keeping them informed, without overloading them with asks and information. Try to send information monthly. When there is a lot to share at the same time, include it all in one big email.

4.) Finding Out What Works Best for Your Network.
Although communication is important, it also poses challenges when deciding what your network needs most. Try distributing a survey to your network to find out what they want and what they appreciate. Results may provide you with an idea of what you can do serve as a strong grassroots leader! Some sample questions you can ask are: What can I do to improve my communication? How often would you like to receive emails from me? What topics do you find the most interesting? Am I providing enough information in my emails? What other types of information should I include in emails? Questions are not limited to these, think of others!
5.) **Social Media Presence Matters.**
Facebook and Twitter are great platforms to utilize when you are attempting to disperse information. CEC has a Facebook page and several twitter platforms for various topical areas. Facebook and Twitter are two primary avenues CEC uses to share messages quickly and effectively. Reach out to your network and find out what platforms they use. Using social media is a strategic way to communicate that is also fun!

6.) **Be Open to Meeting in Person.**
For those members of your network who may be local, reach out and set up a time to meet with them in person, especially if they have expertise in a subject that relates to your current advocacy goals! Suggest to meet for coffee or invite them to a local event that relates to their career field. It is always nice to put a face to the name or become reacquainted with a colleague you may have not connected with in a long time.

**Questions?**
Contact Katie Grady: [katieg@cec.sped.org](mailto:katieg@cec.sped.org) or 703-264-9498