

Leading with

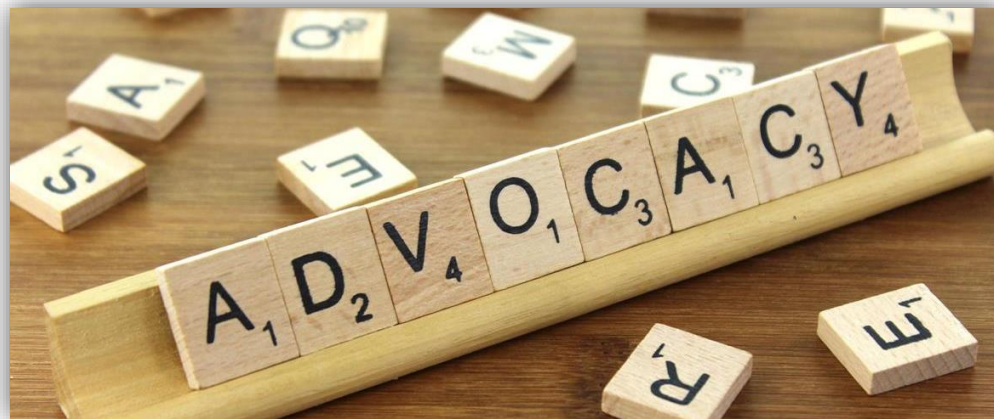
March 22–23

8:30 A.M.–12 P.M.

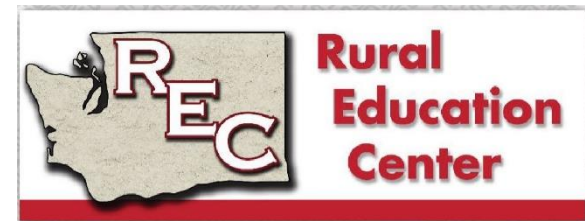
# IMPACT

2021 WASA SPRING CONFERENCE

## Strategies for Advocacy



**Jim Kowalkowski**  
Superintendent – Davenport School District  
&  
Director – Rural Ed. Center



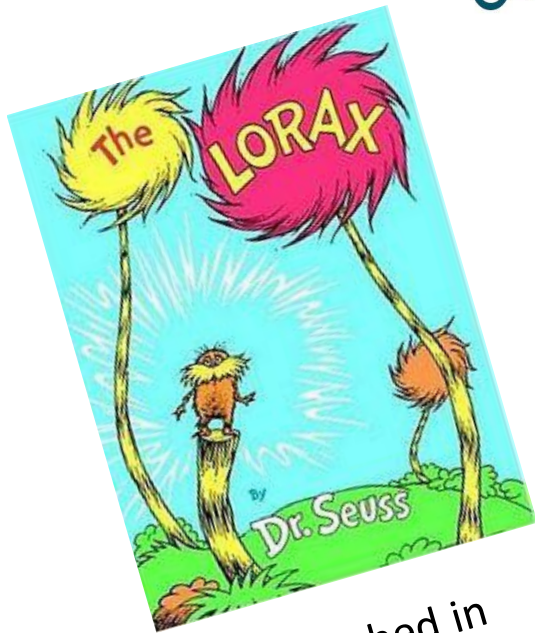
Go Zags!



# Why Advocate?

“Unless someone like you cares  
a whole awful lot, Nothing is  
going to get better. It's not.”

- Dr. Seuss, The Lorax



Published in  
1971



Hey, why do you always talk about our small and rural schools?

Because our small and rural schools are so darn important to our students and to the communities we serve!



# Purpose of this Brief Presentation

- ▶ Provide some insights/suggestions for you to consider
- ▶ Encourage each of you to:
  - Increase your level of legislative advocacy
  - Reflect on how you can make a difference



# It's All About Relationships

- ▶ If there is one thing you take away from this presentation, this is it!



**NEWESD 101** @newesdnews · Jun 15, 2018

...

Three Washington legislators, including State Senator Lisa Wellman, right in photo, visited NEWESD 101 Thursday for a roundtable discussion with regional superintendents. At left is Davenport School District Superintendent Jim Kowalkowski. More: [goo.gl/ZHZLer](https://goo.gl/ZHZLer)



# Text Exchange Feb. 11, 2021

(Senator Lisa Wellman)

Lisa,

So good to see that SB5128 is on the way to Rules! Your leadership on this has been amazing! Thanks for all you are doing to provide Hope to our school districts.

Her reply: It was so good to see you even though I couldn't say hello. Yeah at least it's something stable and soon. That makes a difference. But there's lots more good stuff coming. Thank you for all you do every day.

## It's All About Relationships

# Advocacy Tips

- ▶ Get to **know** your local state legislators
- ▶ Get them **into your schools**
  - Virtually now until June
  - In-person when you can

**It's All About Relationships**



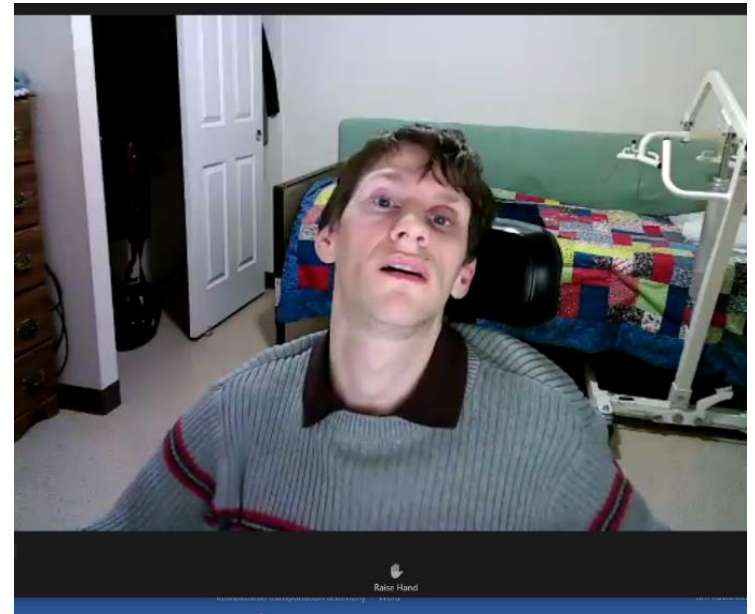
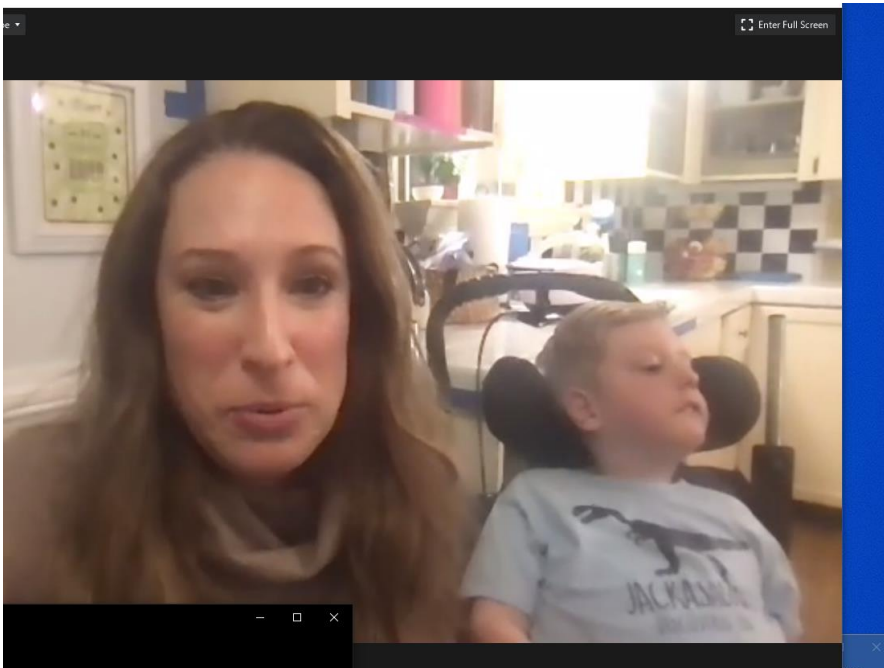
# Advocacy Tips

- ▶ Tell **your** story...
- ▶ Sprinkle in some facts/ details with **memorable** stories about your students, your staff, your district, and your community...

**It's All About Relationships**

# Advocacy Tips


- ▶ Tell **your** story...
- ▶ Sprinkle in some facts/ details with **memorable** stories about your students, your staff, your district, and your community...



# Advocacy Tips

One strategy:

Provide legislators with facts:



**Davenport School District**  
 "Home of the Gorillas"

**About the Davenport School District**

The Davenport School District is located in Lincoln County and is 38 miles west of Spokane. We serve approximately 544 students in three buildings: Davenport Elementary School (Grades K-5), Davenport Middle School (grades 6, 7, & 8) and Davenport High School (grades 9-12). We receive tremendous community support and we are very proud of our accomplishments!

**Our Students**

K-12 Students Served: 545

Special Ed. 12.65%

**Our Offerings**

- Comprehensive high school with College in the High School, AP, CTE, STEM, Music, Drama, & extensive co-curricular and extra-curricular programs
- All-day, every day Pre School Programs

**By the Numbers...**

**Our Staff**

Number of Certificated Staff	42
Number of Support Staff:	
Instructional paras	17
Bus Drivers	8
Kitchen	3
Maint/Custodial	5
Secretaries	4
Business Manager	1
Principals	2
Transportation Director/Mechanic	1
Superintendent	1
Director of Plan Operations	1

**Our District**

Our Free/Reduced Rate is **54.5%**

**Our Community**

- Lincoln County Seat
- City Population: 1600

**Technology**

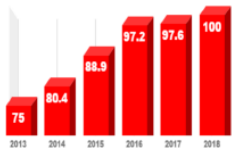
Number of Windows computers: 514

Number of Chromebooks: 565

Number of Mobile Labs:

- 2 iPad Mobile Labs
- 15 Chromebook Mobile Labs

**Davenport Graduation Rate: On-Time**



**Enrichment Levy**

2018 Levy: \$1,087,000

2019 Levy: \$445,000

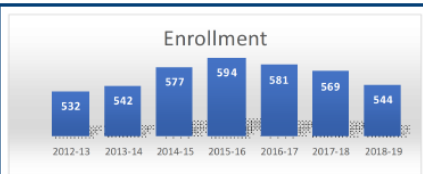
Levy Passage Rate: 64.73%

Loss in Levy Funds: \$642,000

**Assessment Data**

Area	State Avg.	Davenport
Grad Rate	80.9%	100%
Math	49.4%	68.2%
ELA	59.4%	72.8%

**Enrollment**



**Teacher Info—Experience**

State Avg.	Davenport
12.9 years	16.2 years

Another strategy:

Tell a story that will be remembered, that will resonate with legislators and that is compelling...

- Our district serves many students with diverse talents and needs. I'd like to tell you about Evelyn, a "small but mighty" 3<sup>rd</sup> grader at Davenport Elementary...



# Advocacy Tips

One strategy:

Provide legislators with facts:



## About the Davenport School District

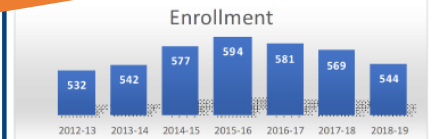
The Davenport School District is located in Lincoln County and is 38 miles long. We serve approximately 544 students in three buildings: Davenport Elementary (Grades K-5), Davenport Middle School (Grades 6-8), and Davenport High School (grades 9-12).

**Most powerful: use a combination of details and memorable stories!**

49.4%	68.2%	
ELA	59.4%	72.8%

### Teacher Info—Experience

State Avg.	Davenport
12.9 years	16.2 years



Another strategy:

Tell a story that will be remembered, that will resonate with legislators...

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# Advocacy Tips

- ▶ Reflect on this: What influences you the most when you are dealing with a challenging local issue?

Scenario #1: A parent call you with a concern. She **yells** at you, **blames you** for being a part of the problem and **demands** you take immediate steps to fix this issue NOW!



# Advocacy Tips

## ▶ Reflect on this:

What influences you the most when you are dealing with a challenging local issue?

**Scenario #2:** A parent has a concern. She **takes the time to schedule** an appointment with you. Ahead of you meeting, she sends you a detailed email describing her concerns but also **points out some positives** about the school district that she is impressed with.

She also offers some possible suggestions to help address the problem. When you meet with her, she is **respectful** and has done her homework. She provides you with some time to address the concern and she **continues stay in touch**. **She provides consistent influence on you and describes the struggles her child is having and offers help and assistance to help resolve the issue.**



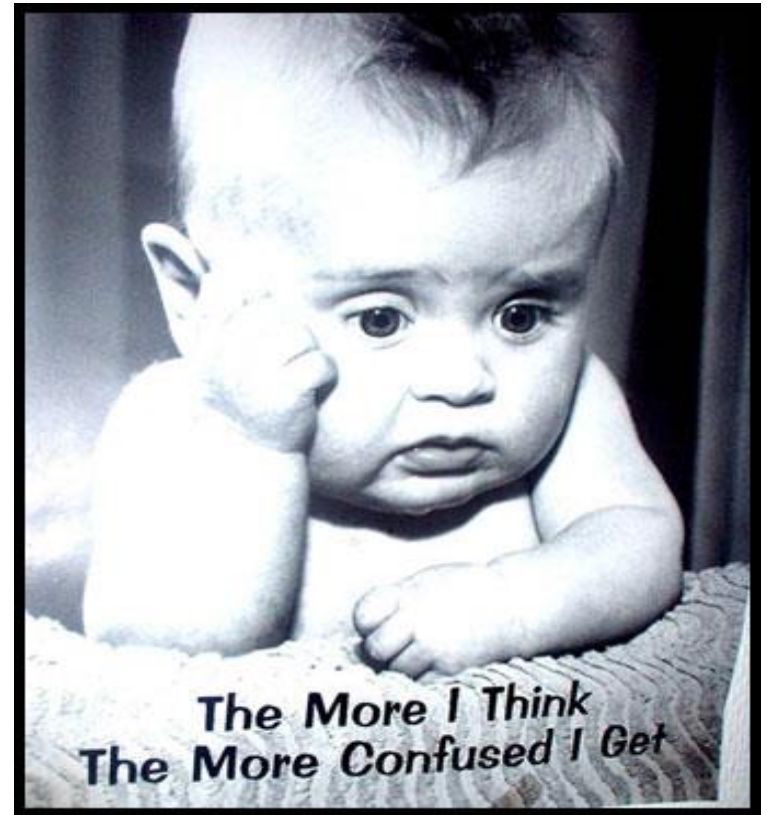
# Let's review!

- ▶ Tell **your** story...
- ▶ Sprinkle in some facts/ details with **memorable** stories about your students, your staff, your district, and your community...

**It's All About Relationships**

## Key Messages to Legislators:

- ❖ We are not asking for a ton of additional or new dollars...we are asking that you keep our school districts “whole”.
- ❖ If you don't take appropriate action during this legislative session & let the “fully funded formulas” determine school funding, school districts are going to see significant losses in revenue.
- ❖ The current k-12 funding formulas need to be addressed...i.e. allocation for nurses, need for additional counselors, etc.





# Tell Your Story!

- Connect with your local state representatives and senator(s)
- Tell your story...how your district is being impacted...talk about your successes and your struggles
- Don't hesitate to offer remote testimony
- **If we don't advocate for our small & rural districts, who will?**



## Get & Stay Engaged...

- Remote testimony is easy! – do it!
- Weighing in on specific bills is easy – do it!
- Reaching out to your respective state legislators is easy – do it!
- Developing relationships with your state legislators takes time. Building trust takes time – but it can be done!

