

12. Research and Advocacy

- [Advocacy Plan Template](#)
- [Tips for Meeting With Elected Officials](#)
- [Research Tips](#)
- [Sample Advocacy Letter](#)
- [Advocacy Examples](#)

Advocacy Plan Template

(Source: SPRA Advocacy Handbook and Toolbox)

Contact Information: (name – e-mail – phone)

Date of Submission:

Purpose of this Plan

Advocacy is almost always about change (attitudes, values, behaviors, etc.) and is connected to the overall mandate and strategic plans of the organization. This plan is being developed to focus on specific advocacy activities – and is simply an outline of what we are aiming for (what we want to change) and how it will be done.

Advocacy – Moving from what is to what should be. (Note: this is one of several ways to look at advocacy)

Section One: Description

Please provide a brief description of your top 1 to 3 advocacy priorities:

1.

2.

3.

Toolbox - 12. Research and Advocacy

Section Two: Details of the Plan

Please provide a brief (point form) overview of: the priority advocacy items; what action will be taken to address them; who will be responsible for each item; when it will be addressed and an estimated cost.

Priority Advocacy Item	What Change Do We Want To See Happen:	Actions – Key Activities	Who	When – Timeline	Estimated Costs

Section Three: Evaluation

A. Please provide a brief paragraph about how the advocacy plan will be evaluated. (For example, how will you know it has been successful? How will you measure progress and change? Who will do the evaluation and when will it take place?)

B. Complete the chart below to indicate what is hoped for in the advocacy plan:

Priority Item	Desired Outcome	Success Indicators

Additional Comments:

Tips for Meeting With Elected Officials

(Source: SPRA Advocacy handbook and Toolbox)

1. Call for an appointment

Don't just walk in and expect to see an elected official. Make an appointment well in advance and specify what you will be talking about. This lets the official prepare for the meeting or delegate to the appropriate staff person. Don't be upset if you are screened by a staff member first to find out as much as possible about the subject for the desired meeting.

Be forthright with the staff and be prepared to put in writing what the purpose of your meeting with that politician will be. Politicians hate surprises. Remember – if you can't meet with the legislator – spend time with the staff. It can be highly rewarding.

2. Be organized

Have an agenda to keep the meeting from going astray. Remember, the elected officials and their staffers will form an opinion of you, your group and perhaps your cause. Know your subject, don't overstate your case, and maintain a businesslike manner.

3. If you are going as a group, keep it small and have a pre-meeting

Always take time to plan your meeting to ensure a smooth presentation. Decide who will present each topic. Choose a leader to direct the conversation and see that your agenda is followed. This is an instance where there is no strength in numbers so keep it to a minimum but with adequate representation. If there is no "job" for the person during the presentation, then they probably shouldn't be included.

4. Always be a good listener

What the elected official will say will provide insight into strategy for follow-up or suggest who needs to be included in another meeting. Remember, the official needs to have his or her point of view understood as much as you do. Being attentive to his or her concerns and issues does not mean you have to agree or compromise your position. Leave time for questions.

5. Be on time and don't overstay your allotted time

If an elected official asks you to continue, do so. But, remember they run on very tight schedules. If you are well organized, you can cover the critical aspects of your case in a limited time. Time your presentation in advance and if you are using PowerPoint, do not add too much chatting during the presentation of the slides – just do it and get on with the meeting.

6. Don't be afraid to ask for something

Don't merely ask for "support" – ask for something specific. Don't leave without asking to whom else you should be talking. Make sure you see them too and if a referral can be made, so much the better.

7. Don't be awed

Sure, it's an important job, but elected officials are people just like you. It's highly likely they won't understand your issue as well as you do – not because they're dumb or don't care, but because they must be “generalists” on a wide range of issues. Discuss the issue; don't lecture and present it in a way that the official can see the connection to his or her role.

8. Leave fact sheets – short ones

Emphasize the impact of programs or legislation on the elected official's constituents. Make sure your facts can be verified; if you quote numbers, be able to back them up. Offer to provide more information as requested.

9. No politician is able to make a commitment on the spot

The best you can do is say “I hope to hear from you soon.” Try to get a specific commitment of their interest or willingness to help but don't be pushy.

10. Remember to say “thank you” with a small note

(on your organization letterhead, of course!).

Research Tips

(Source: Flo Frank's Toolbox)

Research is a process of investigation or looking for information on a particular topic, person or event. It can be very simple (ask people what they know) or more sophisticated (a formal research quest involving many sources of data and a number of research methods). The following are some tips to help find information when you need it:

1. Be clear about the topic or what you are looking for – be very specific.
2. Start by discussing why you are doing the research and what you hope to get from it.
3. Determine what you are going to do with the information once you have it.
4. Consider what you will do if you can't find any (or too much) information.
5. Make a list of who might know where to look and then make a list of places to look.
6. Use internet to help when that is possible. Word searches can be very wide reaching.
7. Find one or two people who are specialists in the topic area and ask them.
8. Define the scope of the research (how much you need and in what format).
9. For most research just the main points are enough – but keep track of the source you used.
10. Information can be found in libraries, online, in various offices, in people's experience and in books.

Sample Advocacy Letter

(Source: La Ronge *in motion*)



La Ronge *in motion* c/o Box 598
La Ronge, Saskatchewan
S0J 1L0

June 16, 2009

Honourable Ken Krawetz, Minister of Education
Minister's Office, Room 348
Legislative Building 2405
Legislative Drive
Regina, Saskatchewan
S5S 0B3

Mr. Doyle Vermette, MLA
Box 192
La Ronge, Saskatchewan
S0J 1L0

Dear Honourable Krawetz and Mr. Vermette:

I am writing to you on behalf of the La Ronge *in motion* committee, a group of community volunteers working together to support physical activity in the communities of La Ronge, Air Ronge, and Lac la Ronge Indian Band.

We are writing with regards to the Churchill Community High School (CCHS) expansion and renovations. We are extremely pleased that CCHS is getting a much needed expansion, however we are concerned with the decision to eliminate a second gymnasium. We feel it is important to put the facilities in place that are needed by the community now and into the future.

There are numerous reasons for the need for a second gymnasium including hosting athletic/sporting events, intramurals and school sports, special events, community club use such as scouts, karate and gymnastics, fund raisers, and basic physical activity initiatives for community people of all ages. With very little public recreation facilities and as a community school, the schools in the La Ronge area are utilized fully. At any time of day, the school's gymnasiums are being used for school and drop in athletics/sports, fitness classes, dancing, martial arts programs, pre-school/toddler programming, and the list goes on and on.

Toolbox - 12. Research and Advocacy

As you are aware, we are one of the larger communities in Northern Saskatchewan and we have a young population. As the latest Active Healthy Kids Canada Report Card identifies, as a country and province, we are not doing enough to support our children and youth to get the physical activity they need. We know the benefits of physical activity associated with learning and academic performance, mental well-being and self-confidence, and overall health. Community sport, recreation, culture, leadership, and physical activity programming provides positive opportunities for the young people and families in our community. These positive opportunities influence some of the negative consequences that our northern communities are experiencing today – school dropout, suicides, drug and alcohol abuse, crime. Let's provide our children and youth with the assets they require to be responsible, confident, happy and healthy citizens, they deserve our attention and our support.

Thank you for taking the needs of our youth and our community seriously. We look forward to a revised plan for CCHS with two gymnasiums.


Sincerely,

Judy MacLeod Campbell
Chairperson, La Ronge *in motion*

cc: Frank Burnouf, Superintendent of Department of Facilities
NLSD #113, Bag Service #6500, La Ronge, SK S0J 1L0

Advocacy Examples

(Source: Saskatchewan Association of Recreation Professionals)




The saskatchewan association of recreation professionals

the benefits of hiring a ...

RECREATION PROFESSIONAL

Community Recreation



Employers identify that Recreation Professionals who have a degree or diploma in Leisure Studies have the following skills, knowledge and abilities:

1 Programming Skills

A Recreation Professional

- ❖ Designs and develops programs based on needs assessment information for current and future participants
- ❖ Establishes desired program outcomes and provides ongoing evaluation to ensure program quality is met
- ❖ Provides programming contributing to the development of a vibrant community that will draw businesses, organizations and families

3 Strong Philosophical Base

A Recreation Professional

- ❖ Has an understanding of what benefits are being delivered to the community and it's residents, and why they are delivering them

6 Problem Solving Skills

A Recreation Professional

- ❖ Has the ability to identify problems and work with the community to solve them

2 Budgeting & Accounting Skills

A Recreation Professional

- ❖ Has the skills to analyze cost and time factors required for identifying breakeven points and fee structures
- ❖ Understands accounting processes necessary for projections, reporting and evaluation

4 Written Communication Skills

A Recreation Professional

- ❖ Has the skills necessary for writing proposals for funding, job and program descriptions, reports and effective marketing materials

7 Oral Communication Skills

A Recreation Professional

- ❖ Is able to communicate effectively with other staff, volunteers, the community and board members which is essential to a positive and efficient working environment


5 Leadership Skills

A Recreation Professional


- ❖ Has leadership skills that empower others, influence behaviors and outcomes, and have a positive impact on staff and volunteer management

8 And Many More Benefits in ...

- ❖ Marketing and Advertising
- ❖ Organizational Development
- ❖ Grant Structure and Proposal Writing
- ❖ Management and Administration



The Saskatchewan Association of Recreation Professionals is a volunteer driven organization committed to the ongoing development of leadership excellence of Recreation Professionals from the diverse leisure services field.
 2205 Victoria Ave., Regina Saskatchewan S4P 0S4
 Phone: 1-800-667-7780 or (306) 780-9267
 Fax: (306) 525-4009
 Email: sarp.sk@sk.sympatico.ca

Financial assistance received from:




The saskatchewan association of recreation professionals

the benefits of ...

RECREATION

Community Recreation



1 Recreation and active living are essential to personal health.

- ❖ Enhances overall health and well being
- ❖ Prevents site specific cancers (e.g. breast cancer) and significantly reduces the risk of coronary heart disease and stroke

4 Recreation reduces self-destructive and anti-social behavior.

- ❖ Provides an antidote to smoking, substance abuse, suicide and depression in youth
- ❖ Reduces loneliness, isolation and alienation

6 Pay now or pay more later. Recreation reduces health care, social service and police/justice costs.

- ❖ Fitness and well-being reduce the incidence and severity of illness and disability – thereby lowering health care costs
- ❖ Recreation reduces crime and social dysfunction – reducing police, justice and incarceration costs

2 Recreation is a key to balanced human development.

- ❖ Aids in developing social skills, motor skills, creativity and intellectual capacities in our children and youth
- ❖ Provides life-long learning opportunities for adults

5 Recreation and parks build strong families and healthy communities.

- ❖ Recreation, sport and culture produce leaders who serve their communities in many ways
- ❖ Recreation sports and arts/culture build social skills and stimulate participation in community life

7 Recreation and parks are significant economic generators in your community.

Recreation, parks and arts/culture:

- ❖ Attract businesses and tourism to the community
- ❖ Are employment generators
- ❖ Improve work performance, increase productivity and decrease absenteeism

3 Recreation and parks are essential to quality of life.

- ❖ They build self-esteem and a positive self-image
- ❖ They enhance life satisfaction levels



8 Parks, open spaces and natural areas are essential to ecological survival.

- ❖ Outdoor recreation is one of the best approaches to environmental education

 **SARP** Project partner
Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association Inc

Source: *The Benefits Catalogue, 1997, Used with permission from the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association*