

... Let's get political

Trustees as local politicians

- Heather Welwood
- Maureen Kubinec

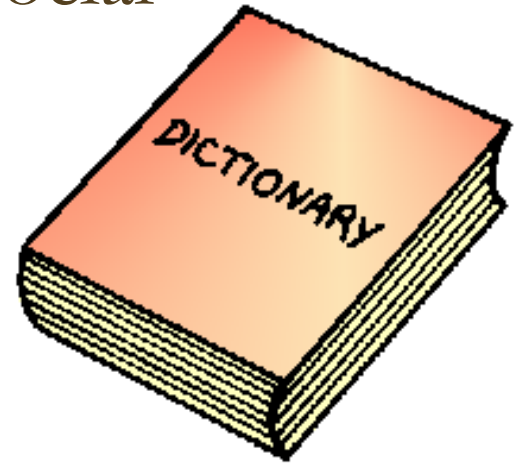
Warm-up

Write on the two paper slips provided the first word that comes to mind for:

- **Politician**
- **Diplomat**

Advocacy

...is a **political** process by an individual or group which aims to influence decisions within **political**, economic, social systems and institutions.



<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advocacy>

Advocacy

The act of pleading or arguing in favor of something, such as a cause, idea, or policy; or showing active support.



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Advocacy

Advocacy is educating and creating awareness among legislators *and the general public* of issues facing the community and the importance of aligning public policy to address the needs.



Politician

Your definitions (from papers/notes collected)





Politics

- (from [Greek](#): definition “of, for, or relating to citizens”) **is the practice and theory of influencing other people.**
- More narrowly, it refers to achieving and exercising positions of [governance](#) — organized control over a human community, state or organization.

Politics

Politics is the study or practice of the distribution of power and resources within a given community as well as the interrelationship(s) between communities



Politician

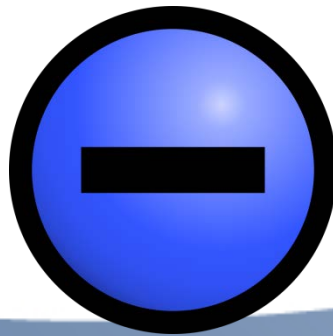
1. One who is actively involved or skilled in politics, especially one who holds a political office.



Uh-oh

2. One who deceives or outmaneuvers others for personal gain; e.g., “distrusted him as the office politician”.

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Political ADVOCACY

- Advocacy done by politicians



School board trustees

- Elected to hold political office
- Exercise the positions of governance



Politician

Let's get political!

- Let's get connected/plugged in to our communities
- Let's be known as the “go to” people for information on education
- Let's be prepared to speak up to influence public policy and the allocation of resources



Getting in the door

What's your plan?

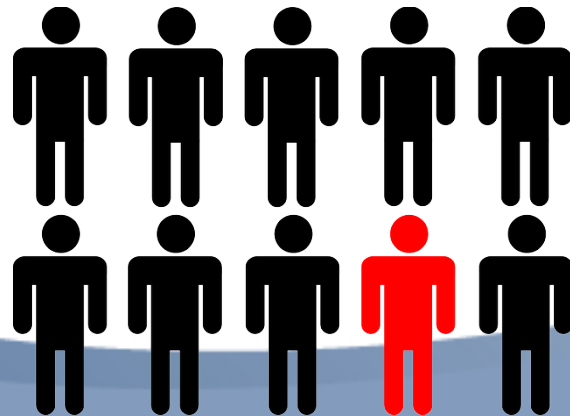
- Is it intentional?
- Is it doable?
- Is it in your Board Work Plan or personal calendar?



Building relationships

Who is initiating? Who is asking for the date?

- Individual trustees as politicians building relationships ?
- School boards as a political organizations building relationships?



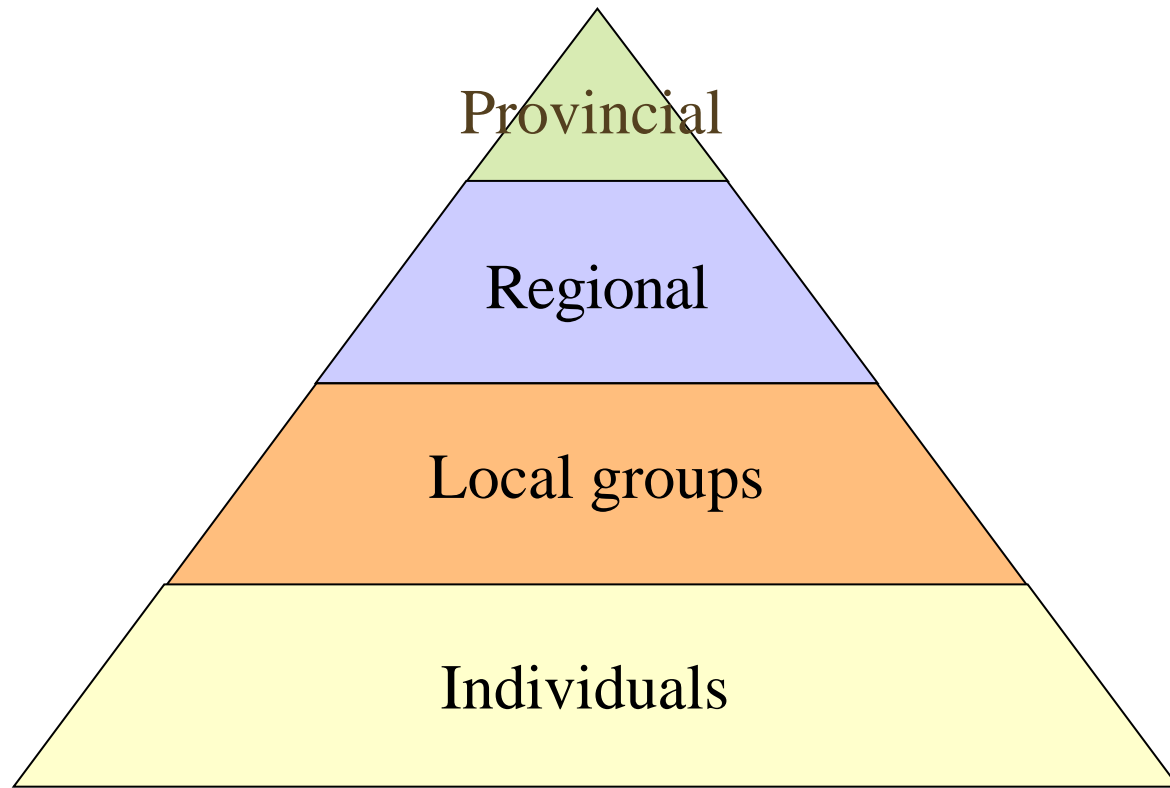
Building relationships

Who is the receiver? Who are you asking on the date?

- Individuals
- Groups or organizations
- Political or community members
- Local or provincial

Build a base – like a financial pyramid of advocacy

Building relationships: Local to provincial



Spokesperson

- Use your policy to determine
- Plan: know who will be speaking and be prepared
- Be consistent – don't be the “uh-oh” politician



Maureen Kubinec

- Real life experience
 - ▶ Trustee
 - ▶ ASBA President
 - ▶ M.D. Councillor
 - ▶ MLA

TIPS



Politicians as diplomats

- Your definitions of a diplomat



Diplomat:

- *A person who deals with people tactfully or skillfully*



Diplomacy

- Diplomacy is earned
- Talk and meet with your local government and MLA(s)
- Get to know them outside of “ask” situations



It's all about the relationships

- Take the time



- Take the lead



It's all about the relationships

New government(s) = new relationships



“Make new friends but keep the old”

It's all about the relationships

When meeting to advocate:

Present

- *reasonable solutions*
- *workable solutions*
- *paint a picture*



It's all about the relationships

- Don't embarrass your MLA publicly
(or anyone to whom you are advocating)
- Make your case productively
- Disagree tactfully



Courtesy and thanks

Use common courtesy by:

- Giving truthful information
- Respecting time frames
- Saying “Thank you!”
- If appropriate, follow up with a note or letter



Final words of wisdom



Our *Let's get political* “Top Ten”

1. Mothers all want their sons to grow up to be President, but they don't want them to become politicians in the process.

- John Fitzgerald Kennedy

2. If you don't accept the invitation to be at the discussion table, you may be on the menu.

3. Choose which hills you wish to die on – you can't go to war on everything.

4. Be bright, be brief, be gone – respect others' time.

5. When meeting with others, give away something of value – the knowledge you possess. It gives others a reason to return to you when they need advice.

Our *Let's get political* “Top Ten”

6. Don't shoot the messenger.
7. Don't make promises you can't keep.
8. You are the politician – do your own media and social media. Listen, engage, and participate.
9. Work as a team with your superintendent/staff.
10. “Always steer clear of personal insults – I learned long ago, never to wrestle with a pig. You get dirty, and besides, the pig likes it.”
- *George Bernard Shaw*