

FSBA Advocacy Subcommittee 2015-2016 Annual Report

Chair: Jane Goodwin
Vice Chair: Christine Moore

Members:

Jane Crawford	Patty Hightower
Jeanie Daniels	Linda Kobert
Erika Donalds	Pam LaRiviere
Rene Flowers	Tina McSoley
Kathleen Gordon	Shirley Owens
Pam Gould	Susan Roberts
April Griffin	Nora Rupert
Sally Harris	

Dates of meetings and activities:

September 23, 2015 – Via GoToMeeting
October 29, 2015 – Via GoToMeeting
November 13, 2015 – Via Conference Call
December 1, 2015 – In conjunction with the Joint Conference
January 22, 2016 – Via GoToMeeting
February 3, 2016 – In conjunction with the Day in the Legislature Conference
March 25, 2016 – Via GoToMeeting
April 29, 2016 – Via GoToMeeting

Main actions taken/accomplishments during the year:

The Advocacy Subcommittee met in September to review the Subcommittee's Plan of Work, to begin planning of breakout sessions to be offered during the Annual Joint Conference in December, and to discuss how the Subcommittee can assist board members in their advocacy efforts.

The Subcommittee met in October to continue planning for the breakout sessions to be offered at the Annual Joint Conference. In addition, the Subcommittee discussed FSBA's new Resource Room that has been launched on the FSBA website. It was suggested that the Advocacy Subcommittee work with the Ad Hoc Public Education Issues Committee to help "flesh out" and add to the five topics available in the Resource Room at the time of the launch.

In November, those Subcommittee members who had agreed to work on the Joint Conference Breakout Session met to further refine plans for the breakout sessions. When offered at the Joint Conference, the breakout sessions focused on providing ideas and information about the groundwork that can and should be laid throughout the year to ensure that our legislators and other community partners will make informed decisions when they consider and vote on education related legislation, budgets, and local referenda.

During the Legislative Committee meeting held during this Joint Conference, the FSBA Legislative Committee, Subcommittees, and Ad Hoc Public Education Issues Committee were offered a tour of the FSBA website, focusing on exploring and expanding the Resource Room.

The Subcommittee met in January to discuss and develop an FSBA advocacy plan for 2016, review the FSBA Resource Room, and set a calendar of future meetings of the Subcommittee.

The Subcommittee met in March to discuss plans for following up after the legislative session ends, particularly with regard to establishing and maintaining a year-round advocacy program with each district's legislative delegation as well as other legislative leaders. In addition, the Subcommittee began planning for Advocacy Breakout Sessions to be offered during the Summer Conference.

The Subcommittee met in April to discuss the creation of a video production for FSBA that can be use by all districts. These videos are intended to promote public education and spotlight positive news and information in our public schools. The videos would be modeled after those produced for Stand Up 4 Public Schools (see <http://fsba.org/stand-up-4-public-schools/>). There was also further planning for the Breakout sessions to provide a panel discussion of strategies for engaging with policy makers, parents, community members, and others through on-site visits to school facilities and events as well as an overview of strategies and tools for successfully educating and engaging your community, business partners, and teachers in the passage of a voter approved ballot referendum.

In addition to these scheduled meetings, the Subcommittee was well represented at the various FSBA Strategic Planning meetings to offer advice on elements of the Strategic Plan that relate to advocacy. The Subcommittee has prepared a recommendation for revisions to the FSBA Bylaws and Policies to reflect an expanded role of the Subcommittee to include the development of a comprehensive public relations and communications plan.

Unfinished business and recommendations:

1. Conduct a survey of the FSBA membership designed to gauge the current level of engagement in district advocacy efforts, identify best/successful practices, and identify needs for support from FSBA members and staff.
2. Develop a means for collecting information about board members, including information about any special skills, interests, or resources that members may bring to their work on any particular FSBA committee. This might be accomplished by requesting such information on the FSBA Committee Sign-Up form and/or Legislative Committee selection form.
3. Pursue production of videos promoting public education.
4. Develop and publish a a year-round recommended advocacy calendar of events that each district may use as a guide in working with their district's legislative delegation.