

# NAVIGATING POLITICAL ENVIRONMENTS

**“politics  
is more  
difficult  
than  
physics”**

Albert Einstein

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# OBJECTIVES

- Empower one another and reinforce leadership and advocacy skills
- Understand the authority of PH Administrators in ORS
- Understand the Board of Health Role
- Learn about your Role as an Advocate
- Identify strategies for how to effectively communicate with policy makers
- Understand your leadership role in this work
- Draw on your experiences to address the obstacles you face in your work

## READ ORS CHAPTER 431.413 POWERS AND DUTIES OF LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH AUTHORITIES

- (1) A local public health administrator shall administer and enforce ORS 431.001 to 431.550 and 431.990 and any other public health law of this state within the jurisdiction of the local public health authority supervised by the local public health administrator.
- (a) Administer and enforce ORS 431.000 to 431.550 and 431.990 (Penalties);
- (b) Adopt and update as necessary a local public health modernization assessment;

## READ ORS CHAPTER 431.413 POWERS AND DUTIES OF LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH AUTHORITIES

- (c) Plan for applying foundational capabilities established under 431-141;
- (d) Coordinate with CCO's as defined in ORS 414.025 and Early Learning Hubs as defined in ORS 417.827;
- (e) Impose civil penalties adopted under ORS 431.415 and enforce rules under 431.415;
- (f) Perform any other duties imposed on local public health authorities by law.

# BOARD OF HEALTH ROLE

- In collaboration with the local public health administrator appointed under ORS **431.418**, develop public health policies and goals for the local public health authority;
- Adopt ordinances and rules necessary for the local public health authority to administer ORS 431.001 to 431.550 and 431.990;
- Adopt civil penalties for violations of ordinances and rules;

# BOARD OF HEALTH ROLE

- Review and make recommendations on the local public health modernization plan; and
- Monitor the progress of the local public health authority in meeting statewide and local public health goals, including progress in applying the foundational capabilities established under ORS 431.131 (Foundational capabilities) and implementing the foundational programs established under ORS 431.141 (Foundational programs).

# BOARD OF HEALTH

*So what does this mean?*

"It means that the Board of Health has the obligation to provide vision, leadership, and policy to make your community a safe and healthier place to live."

"The success or failure of any government in the final analysis must be measured by the well-being of its citizens. Nothing can be more important to a state than the public health of its people."

*Franklin Delano Roosevelt*



# ADVOCACY



"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

*Margaret Mead*



# WHAT IS ADVOCACY?



- Speaking, writing, or acting in support of a cause
- Using a variety of organized tactics to achieve a public policy goal
- Demanding a change to benefit the lives of many

# WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

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

The American Heritage Dictionary

# ADVOCACY

## Advocacy

Advocacy is a political  
aims to influence public  
media campaigns,  
direct approach is  
speak on behalf of  
also a

- Asks something of others
- Puts the demands of people into systems
- Deal with issues and conflicts
- Involves people
- Creates a space for public discussion
- Finds solutions to problems

# COALITION ADVOCACY



- Builds support
- Combines power & resources
- Reduces competition for funding & support
- More efficient
- Provides support & expertise to smaller groups
- Strength in numbers
- Strength in diversity
- Broadened skills & expertise

# BUILDING SUPPORT



- Use media to communicate views and mobilize others
- Develop support networks
- Build well-organized, committed constituency capable of mobilizing substantial political power

# RESPECT THE PASSION CONSTITUENTS HAVE FOR CHANGE

- Support staff in developing an understanding of the value of constituent participation.
- Provide clear information about your goals and how constituent input and participation fits in.
- Balance membership between constituents and advocates.
- Consider shared leadership - co-chairs

*Democracy is not a spectator sport!*



# SOCIAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY



- Challenging power
- Assuming risks
- Telling stories
- Involving those affected
- Offering alternatives
- Principles vs. compromise
- Balancing the scales of justice and equity
- Holding ourselves accountable



# DISCUSSION

- How would you describe the steps to successful advocacy?
- What are your examples?

just  
another  
example

# STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL ADVOCACY

- Be able to clearly articulate the outcome you want
- Know your stakeholders - allies and opponents
- Craft an effective message
- Practice and improve your ASK
- Follow-up



# TIPS FOR ENGAGING POLICY-MAKERS

- Know your message and your ask(s).
- Know your target.
- Have a clear, achievable goal.
- Personalize your comments - tell a story.
- Be succinct and allow time for questions.
- How can you help them?



# MEETING WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS

- Brief and to the point; Be clear
- Stick to one subject; Accurate and Specific
- Be Confident; Part of a Group
- How will you and others be affected?
- Polite and Positive
- If you don't know the answer, say you will find out the answer for them and always get back
- Practice helps; role play beforehand!
- Be yourself
- Offer Help
- Always a Thank-You

# WHAT IS LEADERSHIP?

"Leadership is a function of knowing yourself, having a vision that is well communicated, building trust among colleagues, and taking effective action to realize your own leadership potential."

Warren Bennis, Chairman of the Leadership  
Institute, Marshall Business School,  
University of Southern California

# DISCUSSION

- Is your definition of leadership in local public health similar or different from the previous definition?
- How would you describe the qualities of an effective leader?

# QUALITIES OF EFFECTIVE LEADERS

- Creativity in action
- Vision with the courage and fortitude to put the vision into reality
- Flexibility with a commitment to change things for the better
- Ability to back off when someone else is the better lead
- Ability to work within the context of the organization without letting the organization defeat us
- Commitment to the community



# CASE EXAMPLES

## CHANGING THE SMOKING ORDINANCE

- What obstacles did you face?
- What options are available?
- What might you do differently?



# PRACTICE IN YOUR DEPARTMENT AND WITH PEERS

- As a group, choose one current issue that requires leadership and advocacy
- Work together to identify the stakeholders and describe the obstacles
- Brainstorm actions to address the obstacles
- Practice, Practice, Practice

**PRACTICE**  
makes  
**PROGRESS,**  
**NOT**  
**PERFECT.**

# QUESTIONS?

"I always wondered  
why somebody doesn't  
do something about  
that. Then I realized  
I was somebody."

~ Lily Tomlin

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