

Engaging Your Base

How to Encourage your Charter School
Community to Be Charter School Advocates

What is advocacy?



Have you ever?

- Voted for school boards?
- Written a letter to your representatives?
- Called elected officials?
- Gone to the state capitol to speak to electeds?

Do you know?

- Who represents the district your school is in?

Does your community know?

- Who sits on the school board in your district?
- Who represents your school's district in the legislature?
- How to be an advocate?

Telling Your Story



Advocacy is about storytelling. Get into small groups and grab your worksheets,

You'll need

Small groups (3-5)
Worksheets
Something to write with



Name: _____ Organization: _____

Most of us are here wearing a couple of hats. As leaders within our charter school communities, administrators at a school, and maybe even as a parent of children who attend a charter school as well. We wear several hats at any given time and for this session we will ask you to think about the hats you wear and even to switch hats as you go.

First, why is it important to the organization or school you work with to ensure access to schools of choice? What about equitable school funding? Discuss with your group.



Now, take off your official hat. Why are these issues important to YOU? What other hats do you wear? Are you a parent? Community member? Volunteer? How does your identity impact the importance of these issues to you personally? Discuss with your group



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How does it work?

A look at charter school advocacy in other states

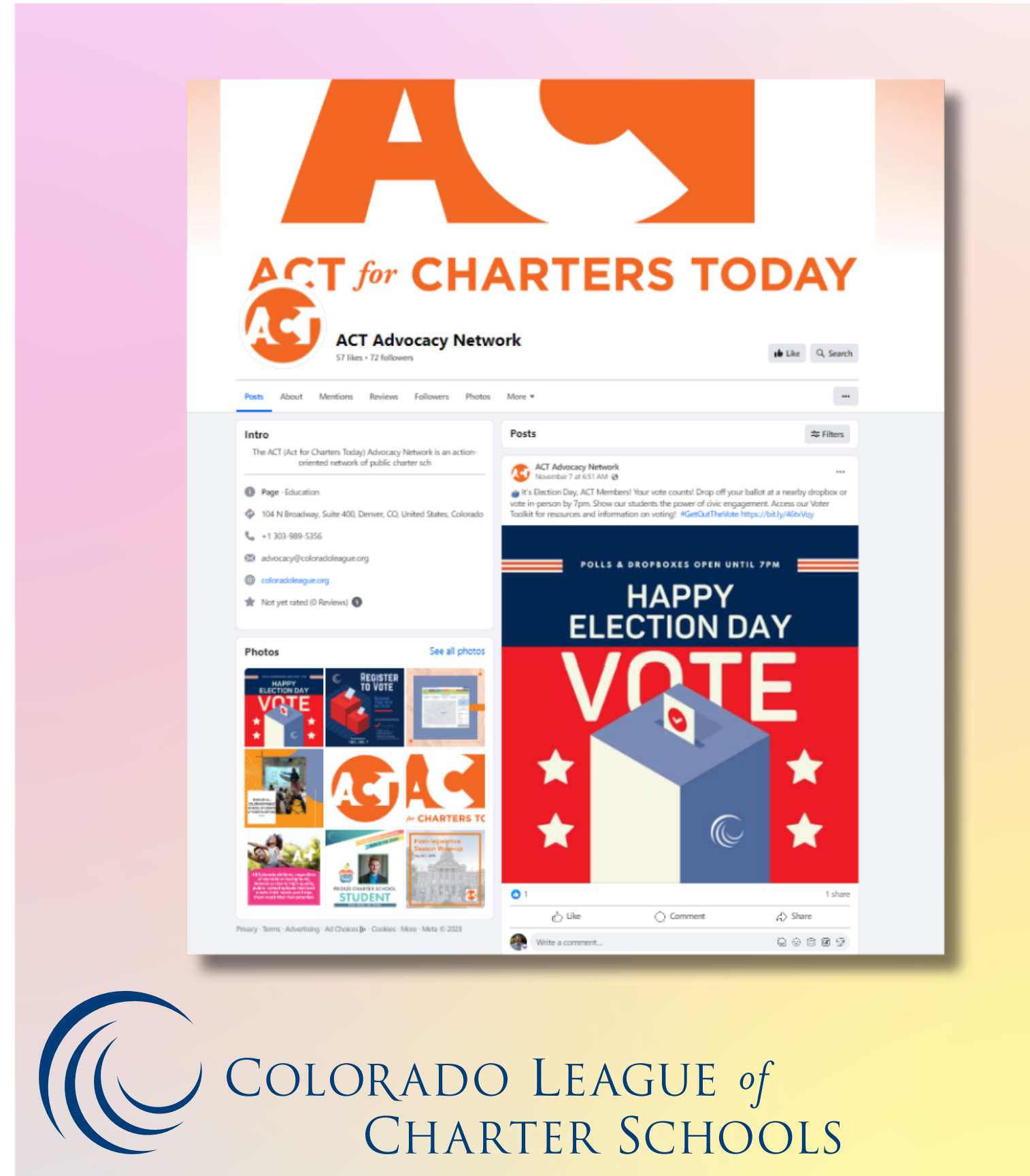
Colorado | Indiana

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Colorado: CSL ACT Network

2023 Win: SB23-287

The ACT Network aligns with member schools for the Colorado League of Charter Schools, each of which as a parent ambassador that helps disseminate information from organizers at CLCS through the ACT Network to other parents.



COLORADO LEAGUE *of*
CHARTER SCHOOLS



... Sharing Stories with Legislators

Investing in Advocacy = Investing in Students

While the ACT Network has existed for years, it only started to make waves of change in the last two years, when school leaders began sharing involvement opportunities with parents in newsletters, at parent and family events, and through mailers.

Once parents sign up to get involved, CSL sends them exclusive updates as members of the ACT Network, and start collecting stories to share with legislators.



ACT for CHARTERS TODAY



ACT Advocacy Network

February 2 · 🌐



There's no better time than now to commit to training yourself, your staff & your families on how to be effective advocates for [#CharterSchools](#). Contact our Director of Regional Advocacy, Lauren Freemire, at lffremire@clcsaction.org or 303-989-5356, ext.104, to schedule a FREE training session for your [#school](#) or organization — in-person or virtually!

[#CharterSchool](#) [#colorado](#) [#education](#) [#SchoolChoice](#)

Free, Customized Advocacy Training

Learn how to use your voice
to advocate for school choice.



IMPACT



ACT Advocacy Network

April 4 · 🌐

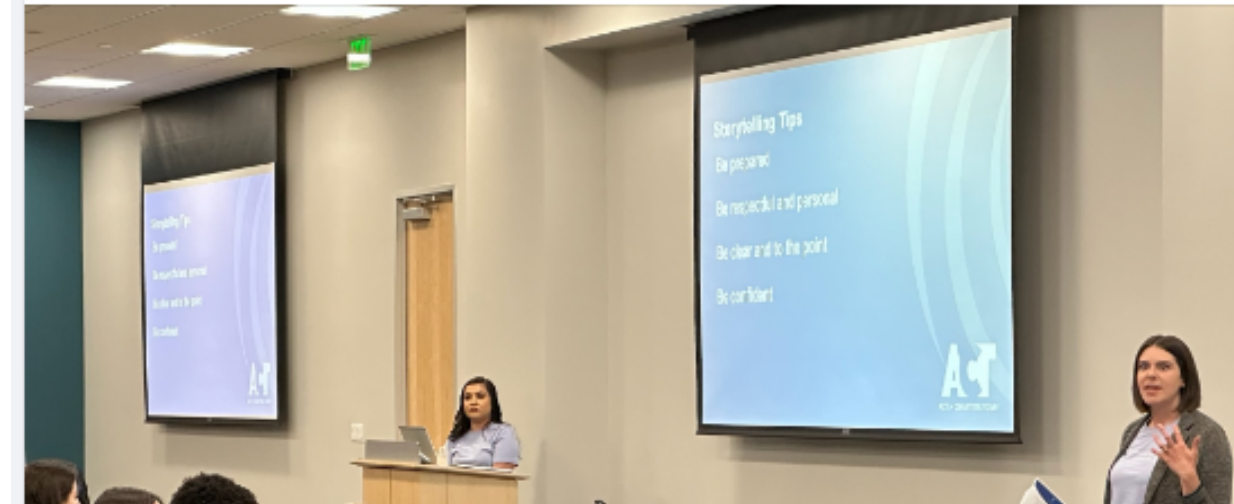


We're off to a great start to Advocacy Day 2023, as students and staff prepare to hear from & speak to legislators.

Morning sessions included training on how to be an effective advocate & how to best tell their [#CharterSchool](#) story! 🏡 📺

Next stop - the Capitol! 🏛️

[#...](#) See more



ACT Advocacy Network

April 4 · 🌐



Thank you to our [#Colorado](#) legislators who took the time to meet with their state's [#CharterSchool](#) students, teachers & supporters this (snowy) Advocacy Day! 🌨️ ❄️

[#SchoolChoice](#) is an important topic in the charter community and we value all those who step up to both speak & listen. 🙌

[#Advocacy](#) [#ACT](#) [#education](#) [#k12](#)

[S...](#) See more



Lessons from Colorado



In 2023, the ACT Network held regional advocacy trainings for charter communities by request, worked specifically with parents and teachers to work on storytelling, and recruited their largest group of students, parents, and teachers to their Advocacy Day to speak with elected officials about SB23-287.

SB23-287 passed successfully largely because of this effort and increased funding for state-authorized charter schools with a commitment for continued equity funding in years to come. Lauren Freemire, the head of the organizing team for the ACT Network, cites the involvement of parents and teachers as a huge driver behind the success of the effort.

Community Advocacy Trainings

Advocacy is not just for school leaders and local trainings help get the community involved.

Advocacy Day at the Capitol

Numbers count and showing up with a crowd helps show support for the cause.

Voices of Parents and Teachers

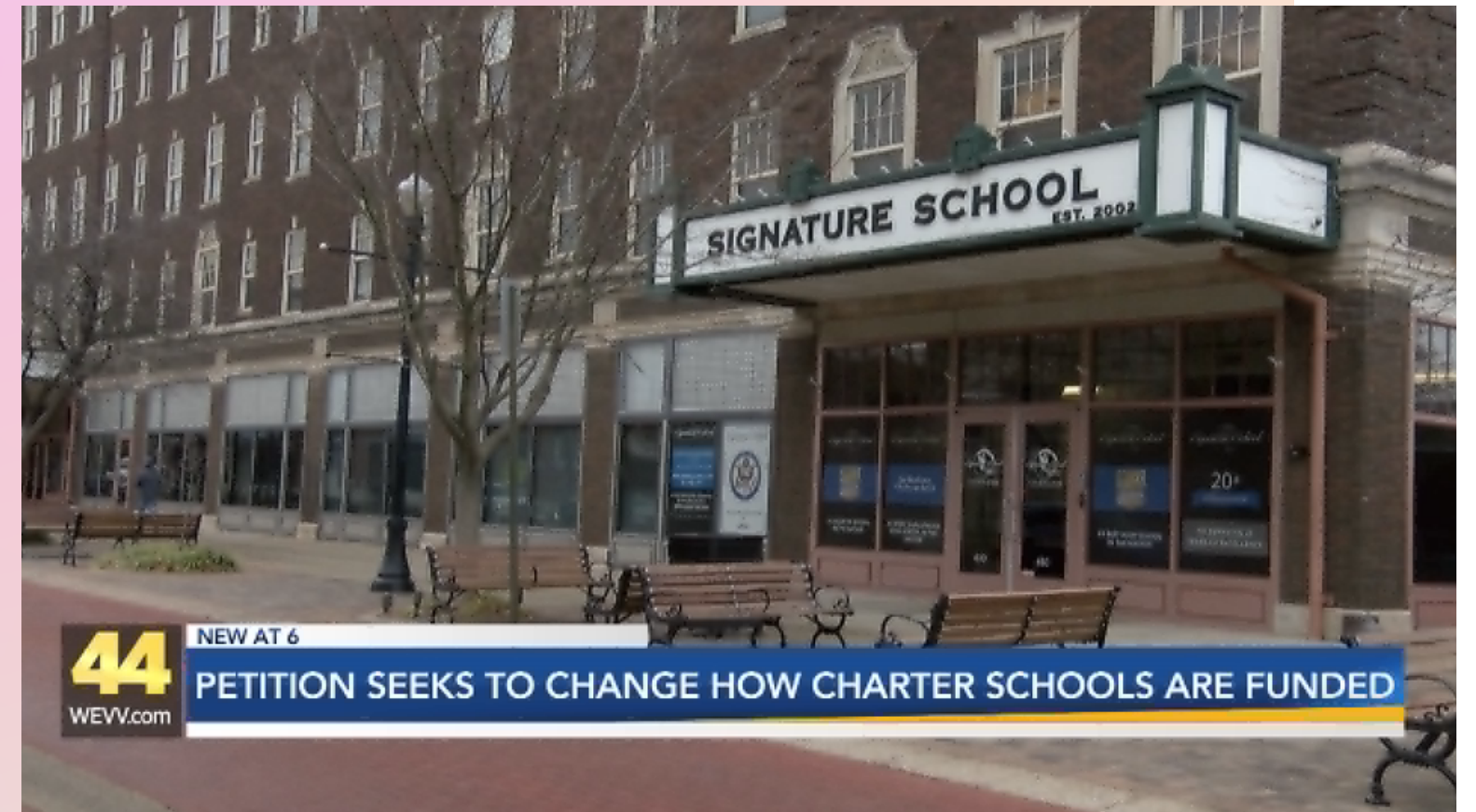
Legislators and staff reported that the most persuading factor was hearing from teachers specifically. Parents were also an important voice when discussing the impact of the bill with legislators.

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Indiana: Indiana Student Funding Alliance & Hoosiers for Quality Education

2023 Win: SB391 & HB1001

Indiana Student Funding Alliance circulated a petition in 2022 to allow for charter schools to get a share of the public tax dollars that are designated for public schools. This effort was started by students at Signature School of Evansville in Indiana.



Sign The Petition!
Add Your Name

First name Last name

Email address Zip code



Viewpoint: It's time to bring fairness to public school funding

Larry Garatoni

Published 7:03 a.m. ET March 4, 2023



Let's imagine a pair of next-door neighbors, each family making the choice to send their child to a different public school that means their unique needs. Each child receives a high-quality education that prepares them for whatever they want to do after they graduate.



Charter Communities Leading in Advocacy

Advocacy in Action

The effort to make changes in Indiana was primarily led by school communities who formed an advocacy group called the Indiana Student Funding Alliance. When the 2023 session started, Indiana was set to increase public school funding significantly, but charter schools would see little to none of that money. The alliance got support from Hoosiers for Quality Education , a PAC in support of school choice.

Letters from Community Members

Opinion pieces and letters to the editor were turned out in droves by parents, school leaders, and local community leaders.

Digital Advocacy Campaign

Advocates were able to connect with legislators on social media, through digital tools and share articles, videos and other graphics easily.

Video Storytelling

Using the stories of two fictional students, Andy and Anna, the advocates drew a picture of what resources went to charter schools vs. district public schools and drew a direct line to the state funding model. The video was persuasive and effective using simple storytelling methods and relatable characters.



Indiana Student Funding Alliance
April 5
All Indiana public school students deserve EQUAL funding—regardless of what public school they choose to attend.
We need your help to CLOSE the funding gap—Contact your legislator NOW and tell them to PASS SB 391 and HB 1001! [TakeActionIN.org](#)

Tell your legislator to pass
SB 391 & HB 1001!

EQUAL FUNDING

FOR ALL PUBLIC SCHOOLS!

ANDY ANNA

INDIANA STUDENT FUNDING ALLIANCE

Indiana Student Funding Alliance Community [Learn more](#)

Wins in Indiana



In 2023, Indiana lawmakers enacted several changes and charter schools scored one of their biggest wins since they started in Indiana over 20 years ago: a modified state funding system that gives them more money. The changes, combined with a nearly universal voucher system lawmakers passed this year, mark a critical milestone for an Indiana education landscape that favors school choice now more than ever.

Share in Revenue Increases

The new laws require school districts in certain counties to proportionally share revenue increases from rising property valuations beginning in 2025. That will mean \$9.3 million in 2025 and \$12.5 million in 2026 goes to charter schools

Share Revenues from Referendums

The new laws require districts in certain counties to proportionally share additional property tax revenues from any operating or school safety referendum passed by voters after May 10 with charter schools that enroll a student living in that district.

Increase the Annual Grant

New legislation will increase the annual charter school grant amount from \$1,250 per student to \$1,400 per student Statewide, the funding is set at \$52.6 million in fiscal 2024 and 2025.

Funding for Facilities

A new allocation of \$25 million in fiscal 2024 statewide to charter schools for facility needs.



It works!

Storytelling methods, community advocacy, and more can help bring more charter-friendly policies to our state.

....Now what?



PARENT ALLIANCE

Become a parent advocate for Oregon charter schools as part of the ORC3S Parent Alliance. Help us to build momentum, advocate for charter school-friendly policies, and give our kids the education that's right for them!

**Sign up to
join today!**

