



Strategies for Effective Parent Advocacy in Support of Public Education

A "How To" guide for organizing your own local public school advocacy effort.

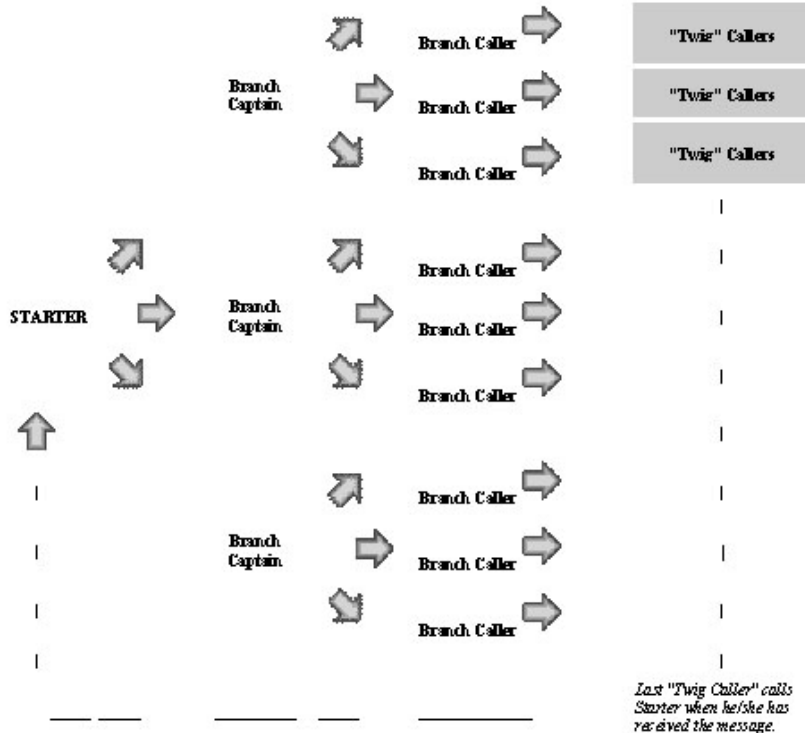
TELEPHONE TREES MADE SIMPLE

Legislative telephone trees are an excellent way to react quickly and effectively to a need for legislative pressure. When events at the Capitol are moving quickly, it's essential to call immediately. That's when a telephone tree is priceless.

- Recruit callers from your school parent groups, site council and staff. Also identify those who will telephone legislators, write letters, testify or visit legislators.
- Decide who will be the telephone tree "starter." Designate alternate callers in case a caller is unavailable. The first wave of phone calls must move quickly.
- To activate the tree, prepare a short, written message of the action that is needed. Messages must be given exactly as they are received. Callers are responsible to pass on information even when they disagree with a specific position.

- If neither caller nor alternate is available when the telephone tree is activated, the starter should continue the first round of calls. Then complete the second round of calls to the tree branch where the caller and alternate were not available.
- Callers should attempt to reach each person on their list at least twice.
- Provide everyone with a copy of the entire tree so they can see the overall picture and the importance of their role in making it work. Keep each tree participant updated on your issue throughout the legislative session.
- Develop a system to check how well your telephone tree works. The last "twig" on the telephone tree must call a designated person, such as the starter, to report that the alert is complete.

Each caller is responsible to make the next round of calls AND make the legislative contact designated by the Starter



Parents United for Public Schools

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