

RISE UP

Nevada Education

Representing Improvement in Schools & Engagement

ADVOCACY GUIDE



RU  for great schools?
Rise Up with us.

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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

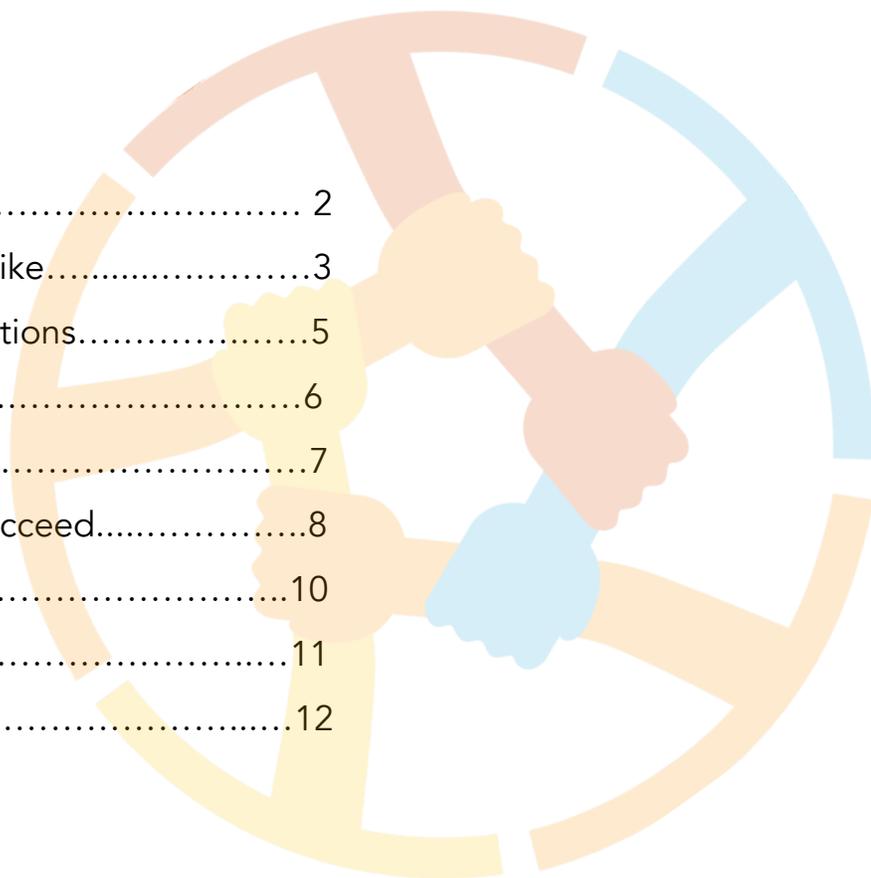
We believe that great things happen when families and schools work together. Rise Up wants to empower parents to engage with schools.

This guide is designed to help create authentic, meaningful and effective partnerships between families and schools to support the success of students.

In this guide, you will find various ways to become more involved in your student's education, including ways to help your student succeed and how to be an effective advocate.

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WHO IS RISE UP?

Rise Up is a diverse group of families who come together to share information and resources, seek answers to important questions, and empower other parents to be active voices for their student's education.



What does Rise Up do?



Share information and resources with fellow parents and community members about school performance.



Seek answers to important questions and empower parents to be an active voice for their student's education.



Collaborate with organizations and community leaders to ensure parent voices are heard.

WHAT DOES EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY LOOK LIKE?



What is an advocate?

By definition, advocacy involves speaking on behalf of a person(s) or yourself to ensure that their rights and needs are recognized. The word "advocacy" comes from Latin and means 'to add a voice'. The purpose of advocacy is to assist in securing the rights of one's self or another.



What do effective advocates know?

- ✓ General and current information about their student's progress in class
- ✓ How to communicate in a way that can bring about desired results
- ✓ The person they can contact to get information
- ✓ Their rights and responsibilities
- ✓ The services and resources available and the policies that govern those services



When should I advocate for my student?

1. When you have concerns about your student's education that have not been addressed
2. When you recognize gaps in services that may hinder your student's ability to learn



How do I know when I need partnership support?

- ✓ When you are unsure about roles and responsibilities
- ✓ When there are gaps in your understanding of policies or procedures
- ✓ When you do not feel that you have been understood

3 STEPS TO EFFECTIVELY ADVOCATE FOR YOUR STUDENT

When advocating for your student, consider using this three-step approach and asking questions to help reach a resolution and positive outcome:

Ask Yourself These Questions

Is this the right person to help me in this situation?

Will my approach motivate and encourage the person to cooperate?

1 Approach the right person in a professional manner.

Who can I contact to help come up with effective solutions?

Who will enforce the solution if an agreement is made?

What approach will help motivate and encourage the person to cooperate?

Ask Yourself These Questions

What do I want the person to do for my student or me?

What would help my student improve?

2 Clearly identify what you need.

What does my student need that he/she is not getting?

What do I want the person to do for my student?

What am I willing to do to support my student's success?

Ask Yourself This Question

What can I do to partner with staff to help my student?

3 Be prepared to discuss options to help you come to a mutually agreeable resolution.

How can we address concerns about my student's performance in the future?

What can we do as partners to raise my student's performance?

What resources and policies are in place to help me resolve my concerns?

START THE CONVERSATION

with Questions

Ask Schools:

1. How is this school performing?
 2. How do you ensure that all students succeed at this school?
 3. What is this school's approach to student safety?
 4. What are some of the biggest challenges this school faces?
-

Ask Teachers:

1. How do you define success? What are some things you have found effective in helping students succeed?
 2. Is there technology you'd recommend to support my student in self-directed learning?
 3. How can I help?
 4. How exactly is learning personalized in your classroom?
-

Ask Students:

1. What would you like to be learning more about?
2. Can you show me what you have been working on in class?
3. If you were the teacher tomorrow, what would you do differently?
4. What was challenging about your day?

Once your student starts talking, follow up with questions to keep the conversation going:

- Oh, really?
- Tell me more.
- Then what happened?
- Why was that?
- What else?
- How'd that make you feel?

See how long you can keep the conversation going rather than stopping it with judgments or opinions, or letting them stop it with one-word answers.

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

My student's school is performing great.

1. Support your student and their school
 2. Participate in school-based activities to improve your student's learning
 3. Help other parents and students by being an active and engaged member of your community
-

My student's school is performing poorly.

- Ask questions to learn more about why
 - Attend parent-teacher meetings
 - Advocate for major changes at your school
 - Join your School Organization Team (SOT) or PTA
 - Select a different school that meets the needs of your student
 - Attend and provide testimony at state board or CCSD Trustee meetings
 - Check out the Parent Petition process at www.doe.nv.gov/ASD/Parent_Petition
-

I am not sure how my student's school is performing.

- Access school performance snapshots on Opportunity 180's data portal, www.greatschoolsallkids.org
-

Consider these additional ways to get involved:

- Attend student-led conferences and parent-teacher conferences
- Take educational tours at museums, parks, aquariums, etc.
- Participate in school sponsored family education nights or gatherings
- Attend parent and school administration meetings
- Participate in your School Organizational Team meetings
- Attend PTA, PTO or other parent meetings at your school
- Sign up Rise Up workshops
- Check out CCSD FACES for meetings and events
- Find community events geared towards kids to connect with other local groups
- Check out social media for parent groups to join, such a CCSD Parents
- Check out the Library or Community Centers for events that might interest your student

WHAT IS AN SOT?

SCHOOL ORGANIZATION TEAM



Each school has a team of parents, teachers, support staff, students, and/or community members who inform important decisions at the school.



The team is responsible for developing the school's Strategic Budget and Plan of Operation. Using data to guide key decisions focused on student achievement, they also have the ability to weigh in on the hiring of a new principal, when required.



Who serves on an SOT?

The SOT is comprised of voting and non-voting members.

Voting Members:

- **Parents**— three to six members selected by voting process of school's parent organization and representing 50% of the voting members (if no parent organization exists, principal will lead selection process)
- **Licensed Staff**— two to four selected by staff in a process developed by the association
- **Non-Licensed Staff**— one to two selected by staff in a process developed by the association

Non-Voting Members:

- School Principal
- Student Representative (secondary schools only)
- Community Member (optional)



How often do SOTs meet?

By law, School Organizational Teams are required to meet monthly, while school is in session.

To find more information for the SOT at your school, please visit <http://ccsd.net/schools/websites> to select a specific school and be redirected to the school's Web page. Or, visit: <http://reorg.ccsd.net/sots/>

10 WAYS TO HELP YOUR STUDENT SUCCEED

1. Start Early

The sooner your student gets familiar with learning, the faster their potential can be recognized.

Check out CCSD Early Childhood Learning: <http://ssd.ccsd.net/early-childhood-department/>

3. Make Decisions

Play some type of leadership role in your student's school whenever possible. Your presence and availability can encourage decision makers to make the types of decisions that will benefit all students.

Learn about SOTs on pg. 7.

5. Know Your Student

Identify their favorite subjects and find a way to use that subject to encourage their interest in the other subjects.

Encourage your student to discuss school lessons with you everyday. Students are encouraged to learn when they believe that their parents are interested in what they know.

Check out questions to ask your student on pg. 5.

2. Build Relationships

Initiate a positive relationship with your student's teacher and school staff throughout the school year. Share information with your student's teacher about your student, such as favorite subjects and special interests.

See Ways to Start the Conversation on pg. 5.

4. Get Help

Check into free educational services designed to support student learning through homework help and tutoring.

Check with your student's school to see if they offer homework help.

The Las Vegas-Clark County Library District offers homework help to local K-12 students. A library card is required to access some services. Check with your school at <https://lvccld.org/browse/homework/>

6. Make Homework a Habit

Identify the type of environment your student performs best in (lighting, location, time of day, etc.) and whenever possible, create a spot in your home that supports the preferred environment during homework time.

Consider making a homework station in your home. Keep it stocked with all the things your student needs for homework.

10 WAYS TO HELP YOUR STUDENT SUCCEED (CONTINUED)

7. Read

Look for ways to increase the number of books available to your student and encourage your student to talk to you about what they are reading. Research shows that vocabulary and test scores can improve with the number of books a child reads.

Visit lvccld.org for more information on the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District.

9. Follow Up

Check to make sure your student is actually completing their homework and turning in class assignments on time.

One great tool is [Infinite Campus](#). For more information, visit: <https://ccsd.net/parents/infinite-campus-choice.php>



8. Make It Fun

Help your student associate learning with rewards and fun. Think of fun and simple ways to help them see the value of getting an education and putting forth effort as a learner.

Try rewards coupons or a treasure box!

10. Get Your Student To School Ready To Learn

When possible, a warm breakfast low in sugar helps children perform better in school, but any breakfast is better than none at all. Encourage perfect school attendance and promptness whenever possible. Make sure your student leaves the house with everything they need for the day (homework, lunch, school supplies, etc.)

Some schools offer free breakfast for all students ([Breakfast After the Bell](#)).

To see if your school offers this, check: <https://www.ccsd.net/departments/food-service/breakfast-after-the-bell>

YOUR INVOLVEMENT PLAN

Use the ideas, suggestions, and tips in this guide to help create your involvement plan. Share your plan with others who can support your student's success.

My student's academic strengths, talents, and interests are:

The long-term education goal for my student is: (high school diploma, college, etc.)

Things I can do to help my student succeed: (see Ways to Help Your Student Succeed, page 8)

Questions I can ask my student to make sure he/she is doing well at school: (ex: "Will you show me some of the work you've done?" See more examples of questions on Start the Conversation, page 5)

What I expect from my school/teacher to ensure that my student succeeds: (See Start the Conversation)

Things I can do to support my student's school (See Ways to Get Involved on page 6)

NAVIGATION LADDER

WHO TO TALK TO

As you look for information about supporting your student's educational success, follow this optional order of contacts. If the written information doesn't answer your questions, it's usually best to contact the teacher, counselor, or staff member closest to your student's situation, followed by the school's principal.



LOCAL RESOURCES

<p>Clark County School District (CCSD) www.ccsd.net/ 702-799-CCSD</p>	<p>Nevada Department of Education www.doe.nv.gov/</p>
<p>CCSD Board of Trustees 702-799-1072 ccsd.net/trustees/</p>	<p>Nevada Legislature www.leg.state.nv.us/</p>
<p>FACES 702-799-0303 faces.ccsd.net/</p>	<p>NV PEP 702-388-8899 www.nvpep.org/</p>
<p>CCSD Police 702-799-5411 ccsd.net/departments/police-services</p>	<p>HOPE for Nevada www.hopefornevada.org/</p>
<p>Safe Voice 1-833-216-SAFE (7233) safevoicenv.org/</p>	<p>Communities in schools https://www.cisnevada.org</p>
<p>CCSD Student Services Division 702-799-5471 ssd.ccsd.net/</p>	<p>Head Start/ Early Childhood http://www.doe.nv.gov/HeadStart/</p>
<p>Special Education Department ssd.ccsd.net/special-education-resources/</p>	<p>AmeriCorps www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps</p>
<p>English Language Learners Newcomer Support Services Ouiza Weber: 702-799-2137 ext 5544 Newcomer Message Line: 702-799-0800</p>	<p>Three Square Food Bank 702-644 3663 www.threesquare.org/</p>



**Opportunity 180's
 School Performance Data Portal**
greatschoolsallkids.org

