**ADVOCACY Strategies**



* Have “low-tech” and “high-tech” options for parents to receive and provide information – in language needed:
	+ LOW-TECH
		- Weekly folders for notices, memos, progress notes, schoolwork, and other two-way communications
		- School signs
	+ HIGH-TECH
		- Internet video, Audiotapes / Podcasts, Website pages, Teacher Blogs, text messages, Electronic newsletters

\*\* What are their accessibility needs?

* Use Parent Quick Guides provided by SSTR1
* Information to help families:
	+ Understand school programs
	+ Student progress
	+ State tests
	+ District and Student report cards / assessment reports
	+ Contact district administrators
	+ Contact building staff
	+ Contact transportation office
	+ Understand school board activities
	+ Understand school / state policies on dispute resolution
	+ School policies, programs, reforms, and student transitions
	+ Choosing schools (open enrollment), selecting courses, joining extra-curricular activities
	+ Special services
	+ Post-graduation transition options (college, employment, independent living)
	+ Parent Mentors
	+ Community Resources
* Help develop a parent-to-parent network
* Organize and maintain an active parent organization(s)
* Offer parent and student training in advocacy and collaboration
* Offer draft of IEP for parents to review in order to help prevent problems at IEP meeting
* Monthly breakfasts with administrators / school board to hear current information and time for questions and discussions
* Obtain ideas from families to help solve problems specific to their child and/or district issues.
* Use a formal problem-solving process to facilitate meeting focus
	+ Write down possible solutions, chosen solution, and team members’ responsibilities as decided at meeting
	+ Choose a team manager to keep everyone accountable
	+ Use student data
	+ Do not allow the “blame game” regarding a student’s problems
* Encourage parent(s) to invite someone to support them at meetings
* Be honest when you don’t have an answer / solution – ask for other resources to come in and help
* Attend a community resource meeting to learn more about them and the services provided – or ask them to present to all staff / parents
* Be sure to have an administrator at a meeting when team members may not be in agreement / alliance

*RESOURCES:*

*Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide to Family-School-Partnerships,* by Henderson, A.T. et al. . (2007). The New Press.

*School, Family, and Community Partnerships, Third Edition*, by J.L. Epstein et al.. (2009). Corwin Press.