

TOOL KIT FOR THE ADVOCATE

Thank you for leading your team as the advocate. In your role, you lead your team in identifying the resources, support, and opportunities that help move everyone toward individual and collective goals. You are in charge of researching pathways and processes to access and procure desired or necessary resources. In doing so, you draw on communication skills to conduct outreach to those outside the team, including representing your team at a regular meeting with the teacher and other teams' advocates, navigating the many resources available through the school, and extending your reach beyond the school community.

Your work supports the team while it thinks bigger about what is possible when it engages in advocacy. In doing so, you build relationships and leverage your own power, as well as that of others, in order to make greater change.

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Role Responsibilities and Resources

In this section you get an overview of your responsibilities and the resources in this tool kit. These resources will help you meet the expectations for your role. You might use some of the tools regularly, while using other tools only in certain situations. Some you never need to use at all. You can revise these tools so they work well for you or replace them with tools you make yourself. Use them strategically.

- **Leadership Responsibilities Overview:** Identifying and attempting to acquire desirable or necessary supports, resources, and opportunities; meeting with the teacher and other advocates
- **Leadership Condition:** Belief in self and others
- **Leadership Practice:** Advocacy
- **Tool Kit Topics:** Divided into three topics used for (1) preparing for advocacy, (2) supporting internal advocacy, and (3) supporting external advocacy

You will use most, if not all, of these tools.

- Use the **“Advocacy Tool”** (page 6) to plan a request for resources, opportunities, or supports for your team.
- Use the **“Self-Advocacy Planner”** (page 7) with a team member who needs to advocate for themselves.
- Use **“Co-Constructing Advocacy”** (page 9) with your team to plan your advocacy language or actions.
- Use the **“Outreach Email Directions”** (page 10) to reach out to people whose supports, resources, and opportunities you need for your team.
- Use the **“Outreach Phone Call Script”** (page 11) to plan what you will say to someone in your community when calling to request support or resources.
- The **“Team Core Values and Professional Norms”** (page 12) helps set clear expectations with your whole team as you work with those in your broader community.

Team Meetings

The facilitator calls regular team meetings. Come prepared to provide updates on your advocacy efforts and on what you have learned from your weekly meeting with the teacher and the other advocates.

Additionally, you should have brief one-to-one check-ins with other team members. Use the following questions to keep those check-ins brief and focused.

- *Do you need anything?*
- *Is there anything I can do to help?*
- *Do you know how to do what you have to do?*
- *Is there any outside resource or contact that would help you with your work?*

Finally, as previously stated, the teacher calls a weekly meeting for you and the advocates from the other teams. Prepare for this meeting by gathering any relevant updates about your team’s positivity and productivity. Bring your questions and those from your team as well. Bring a note-taker to capture relevant updates to share with your team at the mid-cycle meeting.

Advocacy Preparation

Before you make any requests on behalf of yourself or others, make sure you are clear about your needs and opportunities. You want to make the request in a way that is as well received as possible. Refer to the “Advocacy Guidance Support Tool” and “Advocacy Sentence Stems” that you received from your teacher during this unit, as well as the “Co-Constructing Advocacy” (page 9) tool you created with your team. Use the “Advocacy Tool” (page 6) to plan your request.

Internal Advocacy

The following figure is an example of “Co-Constructing Advocacy” (page 9) for *actions*. Practice using the tool together with your team by filling in the Not This entries.

Directions: In your group, brainstorm scenarios when it is important for students to advocate for themselves. For each scenario, what should you do? What shouldn't you do?

Do This	Not This
SCENARIO: A team member wants an extension on an assignment.	
<p>Communicate as early as you can.</p> <p>Ask your teacher what form of communication they prefer: email or check-in before or after class, for example.</p> <p>Demonstrate what you have already done.</p>	
SCENARIO: <i>I would like help from the teacher.</i>	
<p><i>Use your resources. What information should you gather before going to the teacher?</i></p> <p><i>Are there physical resources you can consult: assignment directions and rubric, syllabus, or textbook, for example?</i></p> <p><i>Are there human resources you can consult: peers, librarian, or other community members?</i></p> <p><i>List what you have done and guess what the next step is.</i></p> <p><i>List what you understand and what you do not understand. What specific questions would increase your understanding?</i></p>	
SCENARIO: <i>I am unhappy with my grade.</i>	
<p>Assume best intentions.</p> <p>Try to put yourself in the teacher's shoes. What was their thought process?</p> <p>Prepare to use subjective language.</p> <p>Demonstrate your feelings through your words, not your body language and tone: “I am feeling . . .”</p> <p>Be conscious of your body language and tone. How would you want someone to talk to you?</p>	

REPRODUCIBLE

The following figure is an example of “Co-Constructing Advocacy” for *language*. Again, practice using the tool together with your team by filling in the rest of the “Not This” entries.

<p>Directions: In your group, brainstorm scenarios when it is important for team members to advocate for themselves. For each scenario, what are effective sentence stems? Are there common sentence stems that students should avoid?</p>	
Say This	Not This
<p>SCENARIO: I would like an assignment extension.</p>	
<p>“Is there a time when we could talk about the assignment?”</p> <p>“Could we talk about the assignment deadline?”</p> <p>“I know this might not be possible, but is there a way I could submit the assignment on Monday?”</p> <p>“Here is what I have done on the assignment . . . and here is what I still need to do.”</p> <p>“I want to be sure I do my best work, and an extra two days would really help.”</p>	<p>“I couldn’t do it for today.”</p> <p>“I need more time.”</p> <p>“This wasn’t fair.”</p> <p>“I was really busy last night.”</p>
<p>SCENARIO: I would like help from the teacher.</p>	
<p>“Is there a time when I could ask you a question?”</p> <p>“So far, I have done . . . and I think my next step is . . . Is that right?”</p> <p>“I understand/I have done What am I missing?”</p> <p>“Can I share with you my thinking to see if I am on the right track?”</p> <p>“Could I share with you how I’m feeling?”</p> <p>“I am feeling . . . ”</p> <p>“Could we talk during class tomorrow?”</p>	
<p>SCENARIO: I am unhappy with my grade.</p>	
<p>“Thank you for assessing my work. I appreciate your feedback.”</p> <p>“I reviewed your comments and want to make sure I understand your feedback.”</p> <p>“Do you mind if I ask a question about the assessment?”</p> <p>“I felt disappointed when I saw my grade. Could we talk about it?”</p> <p>“Can I share with you my understanding of what I did well and what I could improve on?”</p> <p>“I’ve been reviewing the assignment to determine how I can improve next time. Is there any advice you have for how to improve my performance?”</p>	

External Advocacy

Use the “Outreach Email Directions” (page 10) and start reaching out for supports, resources, and opportunities outside your team (external advocacy). You can modify scripts for the advocacy you do depending on the format, such as in-person meetings or social media outreach. Here is an email example.

The image shows a stylized email template within a rounded rectangle. At the top is a header bar with three dots and a line. Below this are three horizontal lines for 'To', 'Cc', and 'Subject'. The body of the email contains several paragraphs of text, a signature block, and a logo at the bottom.

To _____

Cc _____

Subject _____

Dear John,

My name is Bonnie, and I am a sophomore at Winter High School. I am completing a group project for my Spanish class. As part of that project, we are proposing a design for the library teen room that is culturally responsive to our community. It's important to my team that we really listen closely to library users as we make our design.

We are reaching out to you as the library's community liaison. Can you share your perspective with the group and offer ideas for how we can gather insights from the community during a quick phone call or video chat?

My whole team is available during our class time, which meets from 12:30–1:20 every day. If that time does not work for you, I am also available to meet during my lunch block from 12:00–12:30 or directly after school at 2:30.

If you are interested in talking, please respond with a good time or book a time using my calendar link below.

Thank you so much for your time. We are very grateful for your work.

Best,

Bonnie
Team Advocate
[Calendar Link](#)



If you have to make a call, it's a good idea to write a script beforehand in case you need to leave a voicemail. Use “Outreach Phone Call Script” (page 11) to draft your script.

At times, your team may interact with professional members of the community. Use the “Team Core Values and Professional Norms” (page 12) to set clear expectations for professionalism for your team that align to your core values. How will you all stay true to yourselves while also adapting for a professional setting?

Advocacy Tool

Use this tool when advocating for a resource, opportunity, or support. Use the sentence stems on the “Advocacy Guidance Support Tool”, which you received during the unit, to guide your responses.

Goal What do you want?	Resistance What do you need to get what you want?	Opportunity Where do those things exist?	Access Who can give you what you need?	Action How can you request access from that person?

Self-Advocacy Planner

You are planning to advocate for yourself. Advocacy conversations can be uncomfortable at times. They can also be meaningful and productive. To ensure that it feels meaningful and productive, reflect on the following questions.

What are your goals for this conversation?	
What emotions do you anticipate arising?	
What potential challenges might you face?	
What potential rewards might you experience?	
If a friend were preparing for this conversation, what advice would you give them?	

<p>When should this conversation occur?</p>	
<p>What is <i>one</i> way you could ensure that this conversation does occur?</p> <p>What steps do you need to take to ensure that it happens?</p> <p>Does the conversation require communication or scheduling ahead of time?</p> <p>Do you have an accountability partner who will help make sure that you stick to your commitment of engaging in this conversation?</p>	
<p>What is <i>another</i> way you could ensure that this conversation does occur?</p> <p>What steps do you need to take to ensure that it happens?</p> <p>Does the conversation require communication or scheduling ahead of time?</p> <p>Do you have an accountability partner who will help make sure that you stick to your commitment of engaging in this conversation?</p>	
<p>What will be your first sentence?</p>	

Co-Constructing Advocacy

In your group, plan ahead before engaging in advocacy. Each time you encounter a scenario that requires advocacy, add it to this list and brainstorm actions *and* language that you should use and should not use.

Do or Say This	Not This
SCENARIO:	
SCENARIO:	
SCENARIO:	
SCENARIO:	

Outreach Email Directions

Follow these directions to write an outreach email.

1. Greet the recipient.
2. Introduce yourself. Then say where you go to school and what your project is. Provide an emotional rationale for your project by saying why your project is important to you and others.
3. In a new paragraph, explain why you are reaching out to this person. Specifically name the relevant role or area of expertise they have. Give your call to action. Be direct about what you seek.
4. Describe the logistics and expectations that meeting your call to action would involve for this person.
5. In another paragraph, provide a clear step that helps them commit to responding to you. For example, that might mean booking a time to talk or completing a digital form.
6. Express gratitude.
7. Sign your name and reiterate your contact information, title, and team logo in your email signature.

Outreach Phone Call Script

Use this script when making calls to members of the community. Replace any italicized text in brackets with the information that applies to your call, like your specific name, grade level, goal, and so on.

Hi [*the name of the person you're calling*]. My name is [*your name*], and I am a [*grade level*] student at [*school*]. My number is [*phone number*].

I am calling to see if you are willing to help us with [*goal*] by [*completing call to action*]. If so, please [*action, likely call back*] by [*date*]. Thank you so much.

Once again, this is [*name*] and I can be reached at [*phone number*].

Team Core Values and Professional Norms

Use this tool to create professional norms that guide how your team will change its behaviors (for example, tone of voice) when in more formal settings. Those settings include meetings with outside professionals or presentations. Consider how your team can stay authentic to its core values while adapting to the professional context.

Our Team Core Values	Our Professional Norms