

Introduction: Checklists for Advocates

When people connected with a French program learn that it is being considered for reduction or elimination, they may wonder how to get an advocacy campaign in motion and what kinds of efforts can be undertaken. The documents in this section, in checklist format, suggest strategies for **enlisting help**, **organizing a campaign**, and **making the case** for retention of a French program.

The three documents target three audiences. **Teachers** are the natural starting point for advocacy in support of a program. However, getting other people involved in the effort to preserve a French program is absolutely crucial: The Success Stories you'll find in the Resource Bank highlight the importance of **parents** and **students** in their campaigns. Thus, documents that seek to assist teachers, parents, and students in the advocacy effort are all included in the **Checklists for Advocates** section.

- The **Teacher Checklist** walks the concerned teacher through the process of mounting a campaign process and counsels him or her to become informed about the situation, seek support from a variety of sources, and marshal information to make the case for the French program. Furthermore, it outlines ways teachers can organize communication with other advocates such as parents, allies, and students. Finally, it reminds teachers to target their arguments and advocacy strategies to take into account local situations and administrative structures, and to remain positive, polite, and hopeful.
- Parents and students are often the most effective advocates for a French program, since administrators and school boards are in place to serve students and the community. Thus, the **Parent Checklist** can be given to a parent willing to take on a major role in an advocacy campaign—and perhaps to lead that campaign. The Checklist suggests ways that parents can enlist others to help, and lists strategies that parents can effectively use, such as letter-writing campaigns to newspapers and/or school board members, webpage creation, and circulation of petitions. It also stresses the importance of working in constructive ways as the advocacy process is carried out.
- Finally, when students can be involved, what they have to say is often the most powerful statement in favor of a French program. The **Student Checklist** suggests how students can effectively voice their concerns and talk about why they feel the French program is valuable. It gives some tips to help students know what to do—"write a letter to the editor, use technology to spread the word," etc., — and has practical advice about how to speak up ("write down the points you want to make...") and how to remain passionate yet positive.