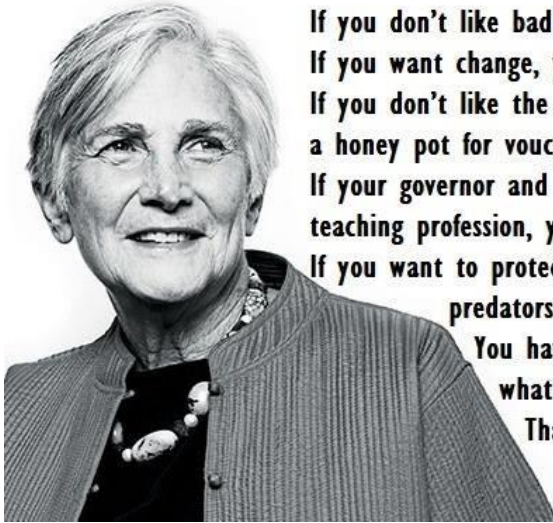


## GET POLITICAL THROUGH PUBLIC ED ADVOCACY



**If you don't like bad policies, you have to become political.**

**If you want change, you have to become political.**

**If you don't like the idea of turning Title I and special education funding into a honey pot for vouchers, charters, and home schooling, you must be political.**

**If your governor and legislature want to privatize education and destroy the teaching profession, you must be political.**

**If you want to protect children, teachers, and public schools from profiteering predators, you must be political.**

**You have to get political, get up, act, raise your voice, fight for what you believe in.**

**That's why I am political.**

**~Diane Ravitch**

*If you don't like bad policies, you have to become political. If you want change, you have to become political. If you don't like the idea of turning Title I and special education funding into a honey pot for vouchers, charters, and home-schooling, you must be political. If your governor and legislature want to privatize education and destroy the teaching profession, you must be political.*

*If you want to protect children, teachers, and public schools from profiteering predators, you must be political. You have to get political, get up, act, raise your voice, fight for what you believe in. That's why I am political.*

*~Diane Ravitch*

## HOW TO BE A GRASSROOTS PUBLIC ED ADVOCATE

Through citizen advocacy, we must make PUBLIC EDUCATION a nonpartisan focus of every election – local, state, and national.

Below are some ideas, including [suggestions from our friends](#) at the Wisconsin Public Education Network.

Start a local school district grassroots advocacy group to focus on supporting students, teachers, and education professionals in your public schools. Counteract those faux grassroots groups being organized and resourced by those who do not support public education.

Establish relationships with people who are already actively engaged, such as people who have worked on school levy campaigns and those who work with foundations or run referenda efforts. Invite them to join you, then brainstorm to identify your shared concerns, goals, and ideas for working together.

Build relationships with the people elected to represent your community and schools. Knowing where candidates stand on issues that impact our public schools is essential to electing strong supporters of our students. Hold our elected officials accountable for votes that benefit our students and public schools once elected.

Connect with local leaders, parent groups, educators, community members, and business owners who support local schools. Assist them in hosting a series of community discussions of education ideology, issues, and policies for the opportunity to talk about what matters to all of

us: making sure that every child in the community can attend an excellent school and knowing that strong schools are the heart of strong communities.

Get involved with your local school board. Attend meetings, and consider sharing your opinions, suggestions, and ideas in the time allotted for public comments. Find out if your school district has joined the [Vouchers Hurt Ohio](#) lawsuit against the state for the private/parochial school voucher program, and if not, strongly encourage its participation.

Know who is running for election to your school board. There is a national strategy, orchestrated and funded by several school-privatization organizations, to recruit and train extreme candidates to take over school boards. One example is the Leadership Institute, which teaches people how to run for their local school board, even if they do not have children enrolled in the public schools, in order "to stop the teaching of CRT before it destroys the fabric of our nation." A group called [How Things Work at the Ohio Statehouse](#) has put together a regularly updated [list of extremist candidates](#) to avoid and a document that explains [how one can identify extremist candidates](#).

Get to know your state school board members, as well as your legislators, and make sure they know you. Write, call, attend listening sessions, and share your concerns, ideas, and values. Decision-makers and lawmakers need to hear from us. Often.

Let [State School Board members](#) know that you support their efforts to block the governor's unconstitutional takeover of the mostly-elected state school board.

Here are a few things you can do to stay informed and in touch with [Ohio Legislators](#):

1. Follow and respond to them on social media
2. Add their office numbers to your phone contacts
3. Call and ask to be added to their mailing lists
4. Watch for announcements of constituent coffees or office hours
5. Invite legislators to community events
6. Use your expertise to testify in-person or send written testimony to give opinions about proposed policies.
7. Write letters to the editor as a fast, free, and effective way to reach your entire community to let them know why you support your local public schools.

Here are some tips for writing LTEs: Effective letters are short (250 words or less) and to the point, and they connect the larger issue or concern to your community's needs. Make it personal by sharing your story or perspective, and appeal to values you share with members of your community. Stay focused, and include a suggested action or information on how to support education advocacy efforts in your letter. If your letter is appropriate across Ohio, feel free to submit it to multiple newspapers.

## **TRUSTED EDU-WRITERS/ORGANIZATIONS TO FOLLOW:**

[Alfie Kohn](#)

[Bust-ED Pencils](#)

[Cloaking Inequity](#)

[Defending the Early Years](#)

[Deutsch29](#)  
[Diane Ravitch](#)  
[Fairtest](#)  
[Gadfly on the Wall](#)  
[Have You Heard](#)  
[In the Public Interest](#)  
[Mr. Fitz](#)  
[Nancy Bailey's Education Website](#)  
[National Education Policy Center \(NEPC\)](#)  
[Network for Public Education \(NPE\)](#)  
Peter Greene- [Curmudgucation](#) and [Forbes](#)  
[Public Schools Advocate at The Progressive](#)  
[Radical Scholarship](#)  
[Teacher in a Strange Land](#)  
[The Jose Vilson](#)  
[The Merrow Report](#)  
[Tultican](#)  
[\\*Complete List with Links](#)

#### **NOTABLE OHIO EDU-WRITERS:**

Sign up for [daily emails from Bill Phillis](#), Ohio Coalition for Equity & Adequacy of School Funding.  
[Jan Resseger posts columns](#) Tuesdays and Thursdays  
[Steve Dyer](#)  
[David Pepper](#)

#### **NOTABLE OHIO EDUCATION ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS:**

OEA, OFT, PEP, Honesty for Ohio Education, Vouchers Hurt Ohio, League of Women Voters, Ohio PTA, and more

As education historian Diane Ravitch says, *"We are many. There is power in our numbers. Together we will save PUBLIC EDUCATION."*

Dr. Ravitch also stated that retired educators have the knowledge and expertise to become the most powerfully effective advocates for public education. I agree. We know what is supposed to be happening in our schools. We have seen the atrocious legislation and mandates negatively affecting public school children and their families. We are mad, and we're not going to take it anymore. Let's get political!

Jeanne Melvin  
Public Education Partners  
<https://www.facebook.com/OhioPEP>  
<https://twitter.com/OhioPEP>  
<https://www.instagram.com/publicedpartners/>  
<https://publiceducationpartners.org/>