

Creating a Passionate and **DATA DRIVEN** Story (elevator speech) to Support the Legislative Recommendations

Objective

Successful and compelling stories use data to articulate a proven/expected outcome for children and youth with exceptionalities and the professionals who work on their behalf. Begin with the impact special education and early intervention has on children and youth with exceptionalities and how your professional role within the system influences the positive outcome. Elevator speeches are brief opportunities –may be one-to-two minutes– to pique the interest of anyone whose ear you’d like to bend about policy.

Top Ten Tips!	
1. A “hook”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Open your pitch by getting the members attention with a statement or a quote.
2. Passion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Passion often inspires action. ■ Deliver with energy and dedication – to stir an emotional reaction and cause your Member of Congress to care.
3. Legislative Recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Start with sharing one of the legislative recommendations.
4. Data Matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Offer “good” and “bad” data from data sheets you have prepared. ■ Knowing your facts helps establish you and your association as a credible resource and a “go to” person for the future.
5. Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Share your connection and how you have worked to develop solutions to the policy issue. ■ Connect on a personal level. ■ Describe how to create solutions together
6. Relevant and Accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tailor a jargon free story to deliver to your Member of Congress ■ Why issue is important to State and District and the Members constituents. ■ Steer away from extreme examples. ■ Advocacy with real life experiences is your most persuasive tool.
7. Necessary Resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point out the perils of the current circumstance followed by the benefits to your Member of Congress and their constituents.
8. Connection to Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ What are the broader implications of your story? Articulate how federal policy can make a difference.
9. Legislative Recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ End your story by circling back to repeat the legislative recommendation on the issue and asking your Member of Congress their position the issue.
10. Commitment from Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask your Member for a commitment regarding how they will help. Ask them what they are currently doing on the issue. ■ Be a good listener. ■ Provide one last example of how they can be a “hero” and how their constituents will care and appreciate their work. ■ Thank your member of Congress. ■ Leave the door open for the future.

Developing and **PRACTICING** Your Story

Let's Practice

Okay, it is your turn now to develop and practice your story. Use the five Issue Briefs along with relevant data from your data sheet.

Issue Brief: Education Appropriations

Issue Brief: Keep Public Funds in Public Education

Issue Brief: Mental Health: Building Positive Climates for Learning

Issue Brief: IDEA Investments in Early Childhood

Issue Brief: Shortages of Special Education Teachers and Early Intervention Providers

PRACTICE!

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