

## **AISGW ADVOCACY GUIDELINES**

These Advocacy Guidelines direct AISGW's advocacy efforts on behalf of member schools and articulate the general circumstances under which AISGW will represent the collective interests of member schools, either as a whole or as a significant subgroup.

Attentive and prompt member school involvement in AISGW advocacy efforts is strongly encouraged, particularly with regard to notifying AISGW about regulatory initiatives and public policy concerns, as well as to participating diligently in AISGW's efforts to discern common interests and to formulate and advance appropriate policy positions in the public arena.

Responsibility for monitoring and maintaining all relevant legal requirements at the local, state, and federal levels is not an aspect of AISGW advocacy; each member school must be attentive to those regulations and public policies under which it operates.

### **Focus**

1. Substantive issues that deal with problems that are common to most independent schools and/or which have the potential to affect large numbers of member schools.
2. Local, not federal or state, issues, primarily at the county level or District level.
3. Proactive initiatives: work to frame issues in a way that is most advantageous to area independent schools.
4. Issues and concerns that, if they gain momentum, might spread disadvantages to member schools in other jurisdictions.

### **Methods**

1. Form collaborations with other independent school organizations whenever possible.
2. Join coalitions with organizations, especially other not-for-profit community groups and associations that share our common goals.
3. Utilize the expertise, interest, and information that reside in our member schools.
4. Supplement staff, Board, and member efforts with assistance from legal experts and political and/or public relations experts.

### **Avoid**

1. Issues and situations that, however compelling to individual schools or small groups of schools, do not represent the interests of area independent schools in general.
2. Over-commitment on the number or range of issues that need attention at one time
3. Promoting AISGW as the "expert" on all government-related issues and concerns.
4. "Issue Creep": continued focus on one particular issue or jurisdiction should be monitored to assess its ongoing importance to the Association and its overall membership.

**Oversight**

1. Advocacy efforts are, primarily, the responsibility of the Executive Director.
2. Ongoing input from related AISGW Board Committees and Task Forces.
3. Regular monitoring by AISGW Executive Committee to refine priorities, review methods and expenditures, and scrutinize impact on overall organization goals and purposes.

**Compliance**

1. Where advocacy involves proposed legislation, AISGW ensures that all activities are permissible for a Section 501(c)(3) organization under the tax laws.
2. AISGW has no involvement in public electioneering.