

INTRO TO GSA CAMPAIGN ORGANIZING

www.gsanetwork.org



Most GSAs would agree that their schools are not 100% safe and welcoming for ALL students. That's why GSAs work to raise awareness and educate their campuses through workshops, assemblies, and days of action. Sometimes you see a little change. Sometimes you see a lot.

But what are the magic steps that turn your activism from small steps into big impact?

This resource and accompanying tactic guides will help you think through a campaign strategy to win the things you want, like gender-neutral restrooms, restorative justice, or anti-discrimination policies that include sexual orientation and gender identity.



Creating a GSA Campaign Strategy

Before you start your campaign, there are a few key things you should identify. It's easiest to figure out your strategy in conversation -- so we've created a sample text message exchange, where we ask you the questions you need to answer with your GSA. Fill out the worksheet on the next page and, if you have trouble, use the example text exchange on the third page for help.



1. Identify your goal

2. Identify your target

3. Identify your supporters and allies

4. Identify your tactics

(Use our Campaign Tactic Guides to choose and plan your tactics)

5. Start your campaign and...

WIN!



First you need to know what you're trying to change. **Do you have a specific goal or outcome in mind for your campaign?**

Think of something you can achieve. If your broad goal is to eliminate transphobia, for example, your campaign goal might be getting a gender-neutral dress code or restroom.

1. IDENTIFY YOUR GOAL:

Who has the power to change the situation? Are they on your side, against you, or somewhere in-between?

Some groups choose to use a "Power Map" [see Power Mapping Activity] to determine the best target and landscape of their allies and supporters.

2. IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET:

Great, that should be your target! Now, who are your allies? **Who can help support you to get to your outcome?**

Allies and supporters can help you achieve your goal. PEOPLE POWER is a great asset in a campaign: the more people you can get, the more power you have when unified.

3. IDENTIFY YOUR ALLIES:

There are many different ways to pressure your target to achieve your goal, including letter-writing, direct actions, and petitions.

How are you and your allies going to influence your target?

Learn about specific tactics and how to plan them as part of your campaign with GSA Network's Campaign Tactics Guides.

4. IDENTIFY YOUR TACTICS:



Send

What's happening that you want to change?

My GSA wants to get rid of transphobia!

Good start! To build a campaign, you need to narrow that down to a specific goal you can achieve.

Can you think of a **specific goal or outcome** to challenge transphobia at your school?

Well, my school has a gender-specific dress code. Students are required to wear clothes that fit either male or female gender identity. I want to wear clothes that I am comfortable in and fit my identity without getting written up, suspended or expelled.

GOAL: a gender-neutral dress code.

Great! **Who has the power to change the situation and pass a gender-neutral dress code?** Are they on your side, against you, or somewhere in-between?

Principal Bancroft! She is the person who can actually make the change in the school that I want to see. She hasn't said whether or not she would be in favor yet, but she has been supportive of our GSA events in the past.

TARGET: Principal Bancroft.

You've got your goal and your target! Now, **who are your allies and supporters? Who can help you achieve your goal?**

Our student government has been very supportive of our events like Coming Out Day, so I think they'll be on board. Also, the Muslim Student Union has a queer president, and one of our school board members has a trans niece.

ALLIES: Student government, Muslim Student Union, school board member.

Nice! The last step is to figure out how you and your allies are going to influence your target. Check out GSA Network's Campaign Tactics Guides for a bunch of different ways to pressure your target to achieve your goal, including tactics letter-writing, direct actions, and petitions.

What tactics will you use?

I'll start a Beyond the Binary #GSAsUnite petition to gain signatures and show Principal Bancroft how many students at the school and in the community support changing the dress code. I'll also ask my allies to sign and share the petition, and write letters to the school paper.

TACTICS: #GSAsUnite petition and letter-writing



Send