

## Advocacy Day Cheat Sheet

### Introduction (30 seconds):

As an African American born in Columbus, Ohio, my aspiration to be an educator is driven by a deep-rooted history that resonates with our community's struggles and triumphs. Growing up on the South Side of this city, I reflect on the historical context that has shaped our present—especially the growth of the African American population in Columbus between 1870 and 1880, where we saw an increase of over 1,000 citizens, representing only 6% of the total population at the time.

Our advocacy tradition in Columbus is rich and significant. From community organizations to political mobilization, the efforts of African Americans here have tackled poverty, which still looms large as a barrier to opportunity today. While our challenges aren't identical to those in the 1800s, the core issues—educational barriers, economic hardships, and social disparities—remain hauntingly similar.

As we look at the persistence of poverty in 2025, we must acknowledge that the methods of protest and the tools of advocacy have evolved. In the past, we utilized newspaper advertisements and public meetings; today, we see full protests and, tragically, instances of excessive force. This shift reflects not just changing times but a growing public call for justice, which we must answer.

Addressing poverty means breaking generational cycles—cycles of addiction, mental health challenges, and financial struggles. Engaging in open communication and seeking therapy are crucial steps, yet, for many, these conversations remain taboo. We have programs aimed at assisting “needy” families, but the stigma surrounding poverty often dissuades those in need from seeking help.

My journey as a single mother of two highlights the importance of access to quality childcare and education. The lack of daycare in low-income neighborhoods is a formidable barrier. Early childhood education must be recognized as a necessity, not a luxury. To further support working parents with young children, we must advocate for the implementation of a refundable Child Tax Credit. This financial support would alleviate the burden many families face and ensure that children have access to vital resources. We must ensure that children like my son, Isaiah, who struggles with ADHD, receive the appropriate resources from the start. His experience underscores the troubling gaps in special education support and the significant delays in assessing children's needs.

Furthermore, we must focus on enhancing the well-being of educators. They are not just teachers; they are role models and advocates for our children. Investing in early childhood educators by improving payment practices is essential to ensure they are compensated fairly for their critical roles. By prioritizing their mental health and increasing funding for our schools, we can create an environment where both students and educators thrive.

Lastly, the rise in crime, particularly gun violence, demands comprehensive policy reform that prioritizes the safety of our communities.

As we move forward, let us commit to breaking down barriers, ensuring access to quality education, and advocating for the well-being of our children and educators. Together, we can create a supportive environment where everyone has an opportunity to rise.

Key Issues (1 minute):

1. **Generational Curses and Poverty:** Generational cycles of poverty perpetuate negative patterns. We need policies that foster open communication and support systems to break these cycles.

2. **Support for Single Mothers:** Single parents face significant challenges, particularly regarding access to quality childcare and systemic barriers. Empowering these families requires collaborative advocacy for fair policies.
3. **Early Childhood Education:** Delayed diagnosis and support for behavioral challenges in children must be addressed earlier in education. We need dedicated centers linked to public education resources to ensure every child has the support they need from the start.
4. **Educator Well-Being:** The mental health of educators is vital for a positive learning environment. We advocate for policies that prioritize educator support through self-care, counseling, and community development.

Specific Asks (30 seconds):

- **Increased Funding:** Advocate for increased funding for affordable childcare access for families earning up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.
- **Child Tax Credit:** Support the implementation of a refundable child tax credit for working parents with young children to alleviate financial burdens.
- **Better Compensation for Educators:** Invest in early childhood educators by improving payment practices to ensure they are compensated fairly for their essential roles.

**Closing (30 seconds):**

- **Thank you for your attention. Together, we can create a supportive environment for families and children. I'd love to follow up with more details on these issues and discuss how we can work together for change.**

- **Here's my fact sheet with more information and my contact details:**

Dweck, C. S. (2006). "Mindset: The New Psychology of Success." This book explores the concept of growth mindset and its implications for education.

Maslach, C., & Leiter, M. P. (2016). "Burnout: A Guide to Identifying Burnout and Pathways to Recovery." This book provides insights into the causes of burnout and offers strategies for recovery.

National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness. (2024, November 13). Understanding and eliminating expulsion in early childhood programs. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/publication/understanding-eliminating-expulsion-early-childhood-programs>

Sauer, D. (n.d.). A history of Columbus schools: 1812-1912. Retrieved October 2023, from [https://www.teachingcolumbus.org/a-history-of-columbus-schools-1812-1912.html?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAR2zF7BXah8RTgZzSjHrUMNtDPREPy506coRgb9vRKKC0TMtw5sBKzcML8Q\\_aem\\_3yRAYovXx-mkuJ9Ekb-n\\_w](https://www.teachingcolumbus.org/a-history-of-columbus-schools-1812-1912.html?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAR2zF7BXah8RTgZzSjHrUMNtDPREPy506coRgb9vRKKC0TMtw5sBKzcML8Q_aem_3yRAYovXx-mkuJ9Ekb-n_w)

Tebben, S. (2024, March 15). Ohio study finds disproportionate rates of school discipline. <https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/2024/03/15/ohio-study-finds-disproportionate-rates-of-school-discipline/>

The Center for the Developing Child (2020). "The Science of Resilience." This resource discusses the importance of resilience in both educators and children and offers strategies for fostering it.

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. (n.d.). 45 CFR Chapter XIII: 1302.17 Suspension and expulsion.<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/policy/45-cfr-chap-xiii/1302-17-suspension-expulsion>

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