



Grassroots, Advocacy, Activism? Why? How?

“Montessori education is no longer going to be an option.” This was the opinion recently shared by a fellow Montessori educator now working in the world of educational policy.

A pretty dire prediction but it might just be true. Early Childhood Licensing rules and regulations Professional Registry/Career Ladders, state Department of Education requirements for K-12 and Early, requirements for student assessments, and school and teacher evaluation policies- and almost none of it accurately measures or even recognizes alternative pedagogies.

As people committed to high quality Montessori education, what can we do? Do we just give in? Do we accept less than we know we have to offer?

There is an alternative. Together we CAN work for change.

How?

**Grassroots-** (gras-roots) noun. A movement driven by the “politics” of a community. Its creation is natural, spontaneous, and organic. It is at a local level. It is common or ordinary people rather than the leadership of a social organization. It is managed by volunteers to support local issues that can lead to helping national issues.

**Advocacy-** (ad-vo-ca-cy) noun. Public support for a particular cause with a group process that aims to influence social systems or institutions (like a state agency). Advocacy can represent a series of actions taken with issues highlighted to change the “what is” into “what should be.”

Advocacy is a process that: 1. questions the implementation of policy

2. raises issues of significance

3. is inclusive and engaging- providing opportunity for public conversation

4. proposes solutions

**Activism-** (ac-tiv-ism) noun. The action of using a vigorous campaign, or collaborative efforts, to bring about change.

Activists try to persuade people to change behavior, or impacts, through various means including:

1. community building

2. cooperative movement

3. voluntary simplicity

4. social media

5. direct action

Everyone one of us can contribute. The time is now. Will you join the grassroots advocacy activism in support of Montessori education?

As a founding board member of the South East Montessori Collective, Christine is delighted to share her experience as a consultant to AMS, MPPI, MACTE, and founder of Montessori Forward, and Montessori-Now with the Montessori community. She can be reached at [christine@montessori-now.com](mailto:christine@montessori-now.com)