

I'm just one member.

What can I do to combat attacks on public education?

Be informed.

Read your local newspapers, *KEA News*, the Advocate and Education Week; watch the national news; track education issues online; and talk with your peers, so you **know what is happening in your profession.**

Listen carefully.

In the states where public education has come under attack, the electorate chose candidates who – subtly or directly – foreshadowed their plans to undercut collective bargaining, tenure and public employee rights. **When politicians say they want “smaller government,” that means fewer public employees, including teachers and education support professionals. “Lower taxes” means the same thing.** Politicians who make disparaging remarks about “organized labor” are talking about you and your fellow KEA members. Think carefully about who you support for elected office.

Vote carefully.

If you are a public school employee, know the candidates' views on charter schools, vouchers, standardized testing, collective bargaining, accountability, tax reform and public pensions. Those issues are at the center of your professional life. **Remember to be an education voter!**

Get involved.

KEA isn't a stand-alone entity; it's YOU. Know what is happening in your local association; if nothing is happening, be an agent for change. Encourage KEA membership among your colleagues. There is power in numbers. When KEA members speak, legislators and others listen. **What can you do?**

- **Know your state senator and representative.** Get your local association to set up a meeting with them and go! Talk to legislators about education issues. For the most part, they aren't educators and aren't experts, so they need your help.
- **Do something fun!** Organize a Read Across America event for your school district and apply to KEA for a grant to support it. The kids will love it and you will love how it makes you feel.
- **Get involved with your county KEPAC group.** **Work for KEPAC endorsed candidates** in the next election.
- **Attend the local Democrat or Republican precinct meetings.**
- **Go to the next school board meeting** in the district where you work.
- **Participate in the 2013 TELL survey** and encourage others. Work in your school to make improvements based on the results.
- **Follow KEA and your fellow educators on Facebook.**
- **Write a letter to the editor** on an education issue that is important to your community.
- **Run for office** in your local or district association.
- **Run for public office!**

Speak Out.

When you hear someone unfairly attack public school employees, defend yourself! You know how hard you work and all you give to your students. Public educators do exceptional things every day. Don't let unfounded criticism go unanswered. Be aware of the good things that are happening in your school, your district and your community because of public educators and **be ready to tell anyone who will listen about all the good work you do every day!**

