

Student Advocacy Program

Spring 2018 Report

In 2017-2018 academic year, Campaign for School Equity (CSE) implemented its Student Advocacy Program (SAP) in ten Memphis high schools. The purpose of the program is to educate high school students in effective advocacy and empower them to be civically engaged in their communities.

CSE engages students in a dialogue about the state of education in their community through the lens of their personal experience coupled with data, tools, and resources. Community organizers work with students to identify education causes that matter to all of us. Once an education cause is identified, students are educated, informed, and empowered to confidently have a voice and act upon said education issue by leading an advocacy campaign.

“My favorite part of the student advocacy program is that we are able to advocate [for] important issues and voice our opinions.”

- SAP Student Participant

Students who participate in our program leave as empowered leaders who are civically engaged in their communities and better prepared for success in higher education opportunities.

During this inaugural year, our team worked with 487 students in 153 meetings to build rapport and facilitate the SAP curriculum. Through their advocacy efforts, our student advocates:

- visited Nashville to discuss education issues with state legislators and Commissioner McQueen
- organized and led school walkouts against gun violence
- met with local elected leaders to discuss the state of education in Memphis
- organized their peers to advocate for education causes
- facilitated presentations for school leaders, faculty, and students
- held a candidate forum for local races
- testified at the Shelby County School Board meeting

487 
students involved

153 
SAP Meetings

24 
Campaign Events

“One of my goals for Trezevant High is to build a strong student leadership team that guides the academics, athletics and social areas of the school. I believe that student voice is very important and that all stakeholders need to become a vital part of the educational system. I believe that our students found their voice this year.”

- SAP Partner School

The students’ understanding of advocacy and importance of voicing their ideas has exponentially grown throughout the year. They truly understand the importance of speaking up to make positive change.

100%
of students:



- A. feel more confident in their ability to advocate for issues that are important to them
- B. are interested in advocating for an education cause that they believe in
- C. feel like the skills and knowledge they’ve learned during the SAP can help them in pursuing post-secondary opportunities



Partners Say:

“The students have greatly benefited from their leadership experience and exposure across educational and socio-political areas.”

“I have seen our participants grow as leaders.”

“Teaching our students to be advocates and providing them with the skills and resources to use their voices.”

Students Say:

“We get informed about what’s going on in the world and we advocate for issues that other people have issues with as well.”

“Being able to speak in front of my fellow students and school board leaders about problems in school.”

“Discussing ways to help change the direction of our school and community.”