



Template: Public Schools Week 2019 Op-Ed

This op-ed template is intended to help you use the Public Schools Week 2019 talking points to help in advocating for support from the community and lawmakers. We encourage you to tailor this template to your context, making edits and adding language to highlight issues that are important to your community.

[NAME OF SCHOOL/DISTRICT] is celebrating Public Schools Week 2019 with thousands of other schools and districts across the country. We are #PublicSchoolProud because we offer our students a rich curriculum—including and going beyond basic academics—to make sure each has the tools and skills needed for success, now and in the future.

As a result of our strategic vision and our staff's hard work on [ADD DETAILS ABOUT NEW or ONGOING INITIATIVES], we have made progress in a wide range of areas. [SHARE KEY STATISTICS WITH THE COMMUNITY, making sure to include both basic academic indicators like test scores and graduation rates along with other important measures, like attendance, school climate, technology literacy and family engagement rates.] We are working hard to close the achievement gap, and we are helping each child reach high standards.

In addition to meeting the academic needs of all students, our school offers a wide range of opportunities and services that support the total child, including [ADD SPECIFIC EXAMPLES SUCH AS: social/emotional supports, career and college counseling, arts education and access to physical and mental health resources when needed.]

But we cannot do this alone. To ensure each of our students has the opportunity to learn and achieve, we need support from our community and our lawmakers.

We need our policymakers—at the local, state and national levels—to invest in public education and our students' futures. Public schools serve nine out of 10 students in this country, and we educate every student who walks in our doors regardless of strengths or abilities. We cannot be sidetracked by initiatives such as vouchers, education savings accounts and tax credits that take taxpayers' money from public schools and give it to private schools with little or no accountability.

We need our community to show that we value teachers by supporting efforts to give them the resources they need to help all students succeed, including [INSERT EXAMPLES SUCH AS: time for professional learning; updated textbooks and other materials; and safe, modern school buildings]. Well-prepared, well-supported teachers help all students succeed.

And we need families and the community to help students come to school happy, healthy and ready to learn.

Everyone in our school communities—teachers, principals, parents, counselors, specialists, district administrators, and other staff—plays a critical role in helping all students succeed. These jobs have become more demanding in recent years as schools have moved to higher standards while we are also seeing an increasingly diverse student population, many with special needs we will accommodate.

We need our [NAME the specific target of the op-ed: lawmakers/state legislature/etc.] to support us as we educate all students for their best possible future. This must be a community effort. Schools cannot do it alone.

We want [position—ie, the governor, state representatives or city leaders, etc.] to come see firsthand the work that we're doing and the promise of public education to fully understand what students need.

We are #PublicSchoolProud.