



## **Tips for Writing Effective Letters to the Editor** **By Dawn Seaver**

In the age of the internet, it is much easier to connect and share with others what is going on in the public schools. But sometimes we forget that not everyone uses social media or goes online. This can be true for many older adults. Another way to reach people in your community is to write an op-ed in the local paper. Here are some tips for writing a successful letter to the editor that will educate and inform.

### **DO:**

- Keep it brief. Shoot for 200-400 words. Many papers have a specific word count limit you will want to honor. Streamline your message and stick to one or two main points.
- Lead with a bold, attention grabbing statement. Which intro is more compelling?:  
"Dear editors, I am writing to say we must reject Critical Race Theory (CRT)"  
**OR**  
"Legislators think they know how to raise your children better than you do"?
- Appeal to emotion with facts. Invite the audience to feel the point you are trying to make without coming across as emotionally unhinged. The curriculum examples speak for themselves—just state facts.
- When possible, connect your letter to something recently published in the paper. Your odds at publication increase dramatically if your letter is relevant to recent news.
- Always include a call to action. Give people a specific action step they can take to help—share your letter, share curriculum on social media, encourage family and friends to attend school board meetings, and to contact their legislators
- Make every word count. After drafting your letter, go through and remove every word that is not critically important. "I think" statements aren't necessary.

### **DON'T:**

- Insult everyone and their mother or come across as angry. Fight with truth, not rage.
- Make this about the LGBT community or a Democrat vs. Republican issue. Protecting parental rights is a concern for all parents.
- Forget that the entire objective is to restore parental rights. Remember to bring everything back to the importance of getting schools to stay in their lane.
- Forget to include your sources. List or create a hyperlink to the sources so readers can see the facts for themselves.

If done with thought and intent a letter to the editor can be a powerful tool to inform the community and inspire people to get active and enact change.

