



Advocacy Tool: Parent Testimony Worksheet

“Parent Testimony” refers to any opportunity to share your experience as a parent to persuade an agency, group, administrator, or elected official to do something. For example, when you speak to a school board member, city council member, or a legislator – or at a hearing or meeting where public comment is invited – about an issue that affects you or your community, that is a type of testimony. You can use this sheet, along with the Manifesto 2.0: The Parent Edition, to organize any brief advocacy presentation.

Topic	Sample script	Your presentation notes
Context and Introduction	Ask the person who invited you to introduce you and explain why you have been asked to share about the Manifesto 2.0: Parent Edition. For example, if you are presenting to a school-based parent group the person who invited you can talk about how the Manifesto can be a tool to push the school to be better partners with the parent group this upcoming school year.	
Thank you	Begin by addressing your audience and expressing gratitude for the opportunity to speak.	
My “credentials”	<p>Introduce yourself and explain why your voice matters, or your “credentials” as a speaker. This can include your:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Name, community, and ages of your children• Role in community or parent organizations• Number of years affected by the issue <p>It’s always good to remind your audience that you are an expert on your children and what they need to thrive.</p>	



<p>My issue Read the “5 Advocacy Actions” in each Commitment of the Manifesto for ideas!</p>	<p>Your issue can be anything you are concerned about that your audience can take action on. An example of this is the issue of parent representation: “Nothing About Us Without Us.” For example, if you are speaking to a committee or staff of an agency that offers early childhood programs but has no parents participating in the design of these programs, you can say: “I’m here to tell you why it is important that parents have input on the design of [this program]”.</p>	
<p>My story</p>	<p>Your story is a personal example of how you have been affected by the issue. It should be brief and specific. For example, if you or your child had a bad experience in a program designed without parent input, you can share about the experience and the impact it had. Alternatively, you can talk about a positive experience you had with a program that included parents in its development.</p>	



<p>My “ask”</p> <p>This is where you can use the Manifesto 2.0: The Parent Edition!</p>	<p>Your “ask” is what you want to see changed, and how it would positively impact not only you, but also others in similar situations. You can make your “ask” stronger by referencing the Manifesto 2.0. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “The issue I am asking you to take action on is supported by the Parent Edition of the Manifesto for Race Equity and Parent Leadership in Early Childhood.• This blueprint for change was created by parents for parents with the support of the national organization, the Center for the Study of Social Policy.• It calls for early childhood systems to be more responsive to families so that all children thrive.• For example, Commitment 2 of the Manifesto states that parents should be “participating at All Levels: Planning and implementing ideas, programs and policies; making decisions, including how funds are spent; gaining career opportunities; and influencing policy and organizing in their communities.” <p>Make sure your “ask” is specific and has a deadline. For example: “I am asking for ABC agency to, within the next 6 months, create a Parent Advisory Council to provide feedback and ideas on the programs offered.”</p>	
<p>Thank you</p>	<p>Thank your audience and express your sincere hope that the decision-makers will take action on your request. Be sure to include contact information and ways for them to download the Manifesto and get in contact with you or the organization you are connected to,</p>	
<p>More information</p>	<p>Include the link to Manifesto 2.0: The Parent Edition, as well as any data or information relevant to your issue or the group you represent.</p>	