

Educational Policy Development at the American Psychological Association

The slide features several decorative circles in shades of blue. There are two solid blue circles in the lower-left and lower-middle areas, and three hollow blue circles in the upper-middle and lower-right areas. The text is overlaid on these circles.

Examples of Policy Efforts
Targeting Different Audiences

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Example #1: *Presidential Task Force on the Contributions of Psychology to Mathematics and Science Education*

- APA 2007 Presidential Initiative in collaboration with SRCD
- Greeted at first with some skepticism – so much out there already – although not necessarily *branded* as psychology.
- Outstanding 9 member task force selected willing to do the work to show there was more to say on the topic.

Targeted Policy Audiences

- Federal Agencies (program officers joined us at first meeting)
- Foundations (Carnegie Corporation)
- Congressional (Hearing in the House)
- Higher education (*American Psychologist*)
- Public education (Missing link)

Outlets for the Work

- Conferences (APA, SRCD)
- Publications (*American Psychologist*)
- Communications experts promote to news and organizations working on math/science education
- Hill hearings (synthesis into policy brief).

Results: Wonderful reception (well cited) for *American Psychologist* article, not much policy influence.

Example #2:

Teaching Skills Definition

- Derivation: GRO office looking to have APA be a player
- Target: Federal legislation
- Strategy: Looking for missing link.
- 1998 Content knowledge and Teaching skills
- Specific elements from expert members
- 2008 Teaching skills

Outcome: Slightly modified language in HEA reauthorization. Likely to be included in ESEA as well.

Example #3: *Task Force on Psychology as a STEM Discipline*

- Derivation: APA President
 - Targets: (1) Federal agencies + (2) APA internal governance.
 - Strategy: For (1) raise awareness of how human behavior is instrumental to solving problems. For (2) how we need to demonstrate scientific basis for practice and training.
 - Task force report reviewed by federal agencies and higher ed administration
- Outcomes to be determined ...



Implications

Rely for strategy on people with expertise in dealing with your target audience.

Example # 2: GRO made up of people who have Hill or agency experience.

Rely on content by people who have expertise but also allowed strategy people to advise them on materials for policy makers.

Impact rather than academic ideals are the standard of effectiveness in policy.