

Arranging Meetings with Legislators

In the Home District:

- Contact the representative/senator at the number provided on the legislative website (www.leg.state.mn.us, using “Legislators” tab along top of page).
- Best to have a constituent make the call, but also identify your institution as located within her/his district.
- Ask about her/his preference for timing and location; meeting on campus can be a great option, but be open to other possibilities. Be sure to arrange for parking and provide good directions if the meeting will be on campus.
- Request 30 minutes with an indication that you are willing to make the meeting shorter or longer as needed. One hour should be the maximum.
- Work to ensure a variety of participants (e.g., students, faculty, staff/administrators); student voices can be especially powerful. If you think it would be helpful to making your case, invite local P-12 educators and/or students’ parents as well.
- Have coffee, tea, water and/or soft drinks available and, if you wish, a simple snack item; keep costs to a minimum in order to not compromise limitations on expenditures for legislators.
- Have printed materials available to share that describe programs, highlight student accomplishments, and identify any special opportunities, grants, or other recognitions.
- Craft a short program to provide information (don’t read what you’ve provided in writing), but reserve ample time for questions and conversation. It can be more helpful to hear what your legislator is interested in and/or concerned about than to assume what he/she wants to know.
- Help all participants be prepared to be strong advocates for your programs.

At the Capitol:

- Essentially, follow the same steps as above if you would like to bring a small group to the Capitol. Be aware that appointments will likely only be scheduled if there will be constituents in the group and will have to fit around committee hearings and floor sessions. Staff will guide you here.
- With Capitol renovations underway, it is a particularly challenging year to visit the Capitol, so be prepared by visiting the legislative website where you can find updates on the status of the project, available access to the Capitol, parking, etc. (“Visiting the Capitol during construction” link is on the right side of the home page).
- Education committees in both bodies meet primarily on Tuesday and Thursday mornings (the Senate E-12 committee sometimes meets on Wednesday mornings as well), so visits on those days will allow your group to also sit in on a hearing as desired.
- Let me know if you plan to visit the Capitol so that I can arrange to join you if that would be helpful to you (cyndy.crist@gmail.com).