

Planning a Site Visit

PURPOSE

A *site visit* gives a policymaker and/or their staff the opportunity to see your work firsthand by visiting your program where your work (and the benefits it provides!) is in full action.

BENEFITS

- ✓ Legislator hears directly from families & students who benefit from your program
- ✓ Creates a strong visual reference and reminder for busy legislators
- ✓ Builds a stronger, closer relationship with your legislator

SCHEDULING A VISIT

Find out who represents you. Visit www.gis.lcc.mn.gov/iMaps/districts/ to find out who your legislator is.

Determine when you will invite your legislator to your site. The legislature is in session January-May, so it is crucial to schedule the visit in the summer or fall when they have more availability. Send your invitation letter several weeks in advance of your preferred date for their visit.

Craft your invitation letter. Include why you are inviting them, give an overview of your afterschool program, and propose a date or window of time during which you would like them to visit. Email the letter to both the legislator and their legislative assistant, whose email addresses can be found here: <https://www.leg.mn.gov/>.

PLANNING A VISIT

Create an agenda. An hour long visit is a good standard to follow when creating your agenda. Here is a template:

- Welcome & introduction: 5 minutes
- Tour site and observe activities: 15-25 minutes
- Meet with students and staff: 10-20 minutes
- Closing remarks and thank yous: 5-10 minutes

Think through these additional tips.

- Invite the legislator to participate in an activity they are observing.
- Appoint someone to greet the legislator upon their arrival and serve as a host for the duration of the visit.
- Consider having a welcome banner/sign at the door or in another high-visibility location.
- Appoint someone to take photos.
- Create your talking points around your legislator's level of knowledge with afterschool programming and do not assume that they know anything about your program.
- Following the visit, send your legislator a thank you note, share some photos from the visit on social media (tag your legislator!), and stay connected with your legislator so that their visit to your site remains in their mind once legislative session begins.