



National Coalition For Literacy

Below are 10 basic steps to gaining positive traction during Congressional Recesses.

- 1) Go To <http://capwiz.com/tesol/home/> to find District Office contact information for your legislator.
 - Type in your zip code
 - Under your legislator's photo click 'info'
 - In the 'info' section look for the Main District Office telephone number
 - Many legislators have more than one District Office. If you would like to contact a local district office, in addition to the main district office, click 'more district offices' to find additional contact information
- 2) Legislators' primary district staff work and schedule legislator's out of their Main District Office. Call that office for the greatest chance of getting a staffer to schedule your legislator for a visit. However, if you have closer District Offices, it also makes sense to create relationships with those staffers closer to your home. It is likely those staffers would accompany your legislator on visits, or stand in for your legislator if at some time they must cancel. (Be aware that some members schedule all appointments out of their DC office through their appointment secretary. You can ask about the procedure for your legislator when you call the District Office.)
- 3) When you call your Main District Office request to speak to the staff person who deals with education issues for the legislator.
- 4) Tell the staff member who you are and that you would like to invite the Congressman/woman to your class/program/graduation/etc. Suggest multiple days and times between May 30 and June 3 if possible.
- 5) Let the staffer know whom your program serves, how it helps the community, and that you truly hope the Senator/Congressman/woman would take the time to meet your students.
- 6) If the staffer says they will have to check the schedule, request a time to call back and learn the legislator's travel plans. Be sure to follow up within a few days.
- 7) If the staffer says the schedule is full for the Senator/Congressman/woman request the staffer you are speaking with visit your program instead.

Creating relationships with district staffers now could help prioritize your program as a place to visit the next time the legislator is in town. Often time visits are scheduled as first come first serve, so if you don't get a visit scheduled this time, ask when the legislator would be in town next and schedule a time then.

- 8) If the staffer says no time is available for any trips to your program, request a time to meet in your legislator's district office or at least meet with that staffer. IT IS THE STAFFER'S JOB TO

TALK TO CONSTITUENTS SO DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK! Be sure trips to the legislator's office are done on personal time and not work time.

- 9) Thank the staffer for their time write down their name and if possible get an email address.
- 10) Write a thank you note to that staffer. Keep up communications with that staffer throughout the year. Legislators depend on their staff to prioritize items of interest, and if you have a good relationship with a staffer you have a better chance of convincing them of the need to support adult education