



CAPITOL DAYS

Community College League of California

Top Ten List: Legislator Meetings

1. **Schedule Appointment** – Make an appointment with your Legislator in advance. Write or call your legislator to request a meeting. If more than one person from the college is participating, coordinate the visit through the college president's office or the district chancellor's office. Provide names of those attending the meeting and reason for the meeting. Limit the size of the meeting ---do not walk-in with an army. Reconfirm your appointment.
2. **Be on time, flexible, courteous and patient** –Arrive on time or early. Be willing to wait for delayed appointments. Take the opportunity to familiarize yourself with the legislator's staff. Meetings with staff can be productive. Be patient --- legislators' schedule is very full and often changes at the last minute.
3. **Be prepared and informed** – Know the facts and both sides of the issue. Be prepared to discuss the impact of the issue on your college and students. Bring a student ---students can tell the community college story the best. Know your college and community. Know your legislator – research their background, committee assignments and major concerns, whether they or family members attended your college or a community college, and if they have a connection to the college.
4. **Take an expert with you** – Bring a local expert, program manager, faculty member, and community or business leader concerned with the issue. Compile facts and figures about the college, student profiles, data, and program offerings. Prepare written information or talking points to leave with your legislator and staff. Explain the impact of budget cuts on your college, students, and community.
5. **Pick a spokesperson** – When meeting as a group, select one person to start the meeting and lead discussion. Spokesperson will introduce members of the groups, summarize purpose for the meeting, and organize the meeting. Before the meeting, decide the key points to be covered, and who will raise and lead the discussion on an each point.
6. **Be positive, friendly, and brief** – Introduce yourself. Note your purpose and objective for the meeting. Do not become argumentative. Make a personal connection with the legislator. Ask about the legislator's priorities. Stick to the issues, facts, and don't overstay your visit.
7. **Don't be afraid to tell the legislator that you can't answer a question** – Promise to obtain the requested information and get back to the legislator as soon as possible.
8. **Offer your assistance and follow-up** – Legislators and staff will have questions throughout the year. Become a resource on community colleges, students, and higher education. Continue this relationship in the local community. Visit with legislator and staff in their local district offices on a regular basis.
9. **Thank your legislator and staff** – After meeting with a legislator and their staff; send a formal written thank you for the meeting. Reinforce community college issues discussed as a reminder of the meeting. Use the visit as a positive opportunity to continue communications with your legislator. Consider your visit only one part of an ongoing relationship.
10. **Stay involved in community college advocacy** – Keep informed about League legislative activities and community college issues. Respond to League Alerts and requests for action. Provide feedback to League staff on legislative contacts and visits. Invite legislators and staff to your college to meet students, staff, board members, and learn about college programs. Invite League staff to your college.