



16th annual California Afterschool & Summer Challenge

PREPARING FOR YOUR LEGISLATIVE VISITS

As an advocate at the 16th annual CA Afterschool & Summer Challenge, you will be placed in a team with afterschool, summer and school-age care professionals, families, and youth with varying levels of advocacy experience. This will be a great hands-on, skill building opportunity as well as a chance to advocate for afterschool, summer and school-age child care programs statewide.

We attempt to place participants in visits with their legislative representatives. Participants are scheduled to **attend 2-3 legislative visits** and we do our very best so that everyone meets with **at least 1 office from their home or work district**. Most teams will include participants from surrounding legislative districts. ***Always remember that your team is advocating on behalf of ALL afterschool, summer and school-age child care programs across the state!***

Some teams will also participate in **“drop-in” visits**. Drop-in visits are done only when a representative and their staff are unable to schedule a meeting prior to the day of the event. In this case, your team will go to the legislator’s office assigned and ask if the education staffer is available to speak to your group for a few minutes. If you or someone on your team is a constituent of the district, let the staff person know. You can even ask if the legislator is available for a quick photo. **Many times staff, or even the legislator, will meet with a group upon arrival so be prepared!** If no one is available to speak with you, please leave the materials and your business cards (if you have any) for the education staffer.

Legislative Visit Teams

- Each team will have an assigned Team Leader. This individual will help you prepare for your visit using the Legislative Visit Talking Points. You will **gather with your Team Leader at the Plenary on Monday** to meet your legislative visit team. On Tuesday, **teams will meet after the march and rally, from 11:00am-1:00pm**, to prepare for each visit. You will use the Talking Points document to plan your visits.
- Each member of the team should have a role in the visit. Determine who will speak in each visit based on their personal stories. When possible, prioritize personal stories from team members who are constituents from the district.
- After every visit, each team should debrief the experience and reassign team roles to allow everyone an opportunity to speak during a meeting.
- Each team is required to complete a Leg Visit Debrief form for each visit. Forms must be submitted at the Capitol Steps before you depart.

Team Roles

Facilitator

- The facilitator will be the point person in the meeting and will take the group through the agenda from beginning to end, starting with introductions. It is the job of the facilitator to ensure the meeting runs smoothly and efficiently by keeping time and by allowing everyone to speak. The facilitator should also ensure that the member and/or the staff do not dominate the meeting. The facilitator does not have to be the Team Leader.

Note Taker



- One person should be in charge of taking good notes during the visits. It is important to write down any questions or commitments that the member or staff may share. The Note Taker should use the Leg Visit Evaluation form to document the visit. When in doubt, include more information than you think is needed, including: questions asked by the member or staff, statements or comments about the members' commitments or priorities, responses to the asks, etc. The form will help guide the team debrief after each visit.

Testimonial Speakers

- Testimonial speakers provide the personal stories behind the issues. These individuals should be program staff, youth, or parents that are directly impacted by afterschool and school-age child care programs and should share their story with the legislator or staff. These stories bring a face and name to the issues that we are advocating for and personalize them for the member. Personal stories should connect to the Challenge event issue points, such as:

As a program provider, what have you had to cut or reduce as a result of flat funding, OR

As a student, why this program is so important or what would be lost if your school didn't have an ASES program

The Ask

- This person is responsible for recapping the issues and making "the ask." It is their responsibility to provide any other information to support "the ask."

Tips to Keep in Mind

- Use your Talking Points document to write down your story and plan your visits.
- Your experience with afterschool, summer and school-age child care programs is the best story to illustrate the points you would like to make.
- Highlight a fact, data point or issue point that relates to your personal experience.
- DO NOT try to cover all the points in this outline! When in doubt, opt to share a story about your experience instead of getting bogged down with statistics.
- Sometimes legislators or staff will ask why afterschool and school-age care should be more important than education, healthcare, etc. If this happens, you can acknowledge the importance of an array of issues to families and then go back to the talking points that you are there to share with the member or staff. Do not engage in a debate.

Legislative Visit Reminders

- Be polite and a good listener.
- Allow everyone in your group to say a few words.
- Be sure to stay on topic and to manage the time you are allotted properly.
- Many teams will meet with legislative staff. Don't be disappointed! Legislators rely on their staff to educate them on the issues and brief them on the meetings.
- If you don't know the answer to a tough question, offer to get back to the member. CalSAC staff will follow-up with their office. It is important that a notation is made on the Leg Visit Debrief form.

