

INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY MATTERS

Advocating for legislation and budget recommendations on behalf your community (or organization) to your state representatives may seem daunting, but it is simple and incredibly important.

Ultimately, Senators and Assemblymembers represent those who live in their districts and want to hear about any issues, concerns or ideas for improvement from their constituents.

In turn, speaking directly to your representative at their district office makes a huge impact. Their job is to represent your interests.

Follow this guide to assist you in connecting with your New York State representative.

The Latino Educational Advocacy Directors (LEAD) coalition consists of leading educational advocacy organizations committed to improving Latino academic outcomes and opportunities in New York State. Created by the Hispanic Federation, the coalition works to highlight and address the educational needs of Latino students in the following ways: identifying and supporting effective practice; public policy advocacy and research; and the advancement of a shared educational agenda.



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CONNECTING
WITH YOUR
NEW YORK STATE
REPRESENTATIVE
A GUIDE TO ADVOCACY



STEP 1: FIND YOUR LEGISLATOR

Simply use the links below and type in your address to find your representatives.

Senate: www.nysenate.gov/find-my-senator

Assembly: www.nyassembly.gov/mem/search/

STEP 2: SCHEDULE MEETING

Schedule a meeting in the legislator's district office with the legislator and/or someone who is responsible for legislation; such as a legislative attorney, legislative assistant, or legislative aid.

1. On your representative's page, go to the contact tab located on the right of all tabs, where you will find their district office telephone number.
2. Call and ask for the name and contact information of the district office's scheduler.

✓ **TIP: Write it down! Typically, you will get the scheduler's email.**

3. Contact (call or email) your representative's scheduler to schedule an appointment.

✓ **TIP 1: When contacting, provide suggested days and time frames for them to choose from.**

✓ **TIP 2: Legislators schedules are typically booked well in advance, so suggest days and times that are a week or two away from the day you call.**

✓ **TIP 3: During session, make sure to suggest off session days as they will be in Albany. Generally, they will be in their district office on off session days.**

Session calendar:
www.nyassembly.gov/leg/calendar/

✓ **TIP 4: If you do not know the scheduler's full name or if they are a Mr., Mrs., or Ms., just address the email to the legislator. Example: Dear Mr. Smith, or Dear Senator Smith.**

✓ **TIP 5: Include your contact information in both the body of the email and in your signature under your name.**

STEP 3: PREPARE FOR MEETING

Prepare talking points for the issue/s you are advocating for.

1. Prepare a story about your life or someone you know who has been affected by and could be helped with what you are advocating for.
2. Research articles, statistics, demographics, and scientific findings to support your assertions.
3. Explore your representative's election platform, committee membership, bill sponsorship/co-sponsorship, and voting record to cater your talking points to be individually persuasive.
4. Collect any information sheets, bills, articles, and organizational literature you plan to give to the legislator and their aids in support of your issue.

STEP 4: CONFIRM MEETING

Two to three days before your scheduled meeting, contact the scheduler to confirm your meeting.

✓ **TIP 1: Find out who and how many people from their office will be in attendance, so if you plan on providing them with printed materials you will have enough for the group.**

✓ **TIP 2: This is a great opportunity to inform them of how many people you plan to have with you and remind them of the purpose of the meeting.**

STEP 5: MEETING DAY

Do any last-minute preparation that needs to be completed.

Print and organize anything you plan to provide to the legislator and their team.

✓ **TIP 1: Practice your talking points so you are prepared and can shake any nerves.**

✓ **TIP 2: Dress to impress! It's recommended to dress business casual or wear a shirt with your organization's logo.**

STEP 6: AFTER MEETING

Follow up with the scheduler.

1. Send a thank you email! This demonstrates your appreciation to the office and passion for what you are advocating for.

✓ **TIP: Include any additional information you looked over or missed.**

2. During the meeting, you may agree to send the legislator or staff member documents or more information about the issue or organization. Include this in your thank you email.

✓ **TIP: Make sure to send the documents and/or information promptly.**