

It's that time again! Time to visit your state legislators! As a member of Texas PTA you are the voice for children in your community. Please consider visiting both your state senator and your state representative this year. It's easy and it makes a difference!! If at all possible, visits should be conducted prior to mid-January 2011.

Below you will find some tips for conducting a visit with your legislators. Get to it; it's the American Way!!  
Tips for a Successful Legislator Visit

- Arrive on time or a few minutes early- but be prepared to wait. Determine the office location prior to the visit.
- If you are taking a group to the meeting, a leader should be identified in advance and persons who will speak on each issue. The leader should make sure that introductions are made, and then begin the meeting by thanking the legislator for their time and past support, if applicable.
- If you are aware of a connection the legislator has to the organization, it should be noted in opening remarks.
- The leader should state the purpose of the meeting, describe Texas PTA, and share PTA's priorities. If you have a group, a different person in the delegation should handle each priority. Texas PTA's priorities are found on the website, [www.txpta.org](http://www.txpta.org). Print these position papers and give a copy to the legislator at the end of your meeting.
- The meeting will likely last no more than 20 minutes, so plan ahead to be sure you can cover all the issues. Be clear, concise, and to the point. Be a good listener and observer. It is acceptable to refer to notes. Allow the legislator to ask questions, offer their viewpoint and voting record.
- Be specific about the action that you would like them to take. Get a commitment of support for Texas PTA priorities from the legislator if you can.
- If the legislator is "on board" with our issues, you might wish to solicit his/her suggestions as to actions Texas PTA may take to advance our issues.
- NOTE: Be prepared to meet with an aide if the legislator is not available. Make your presentation to the aide as you would with the legislator. Aides, especially senior staff, have a great deal of responsibility to research issues and brief the legislator. They are often able to influence the legislator's positions, priorities and, ultimately, votes. Be sure to get the names of the staff members with whom you meet.
- Stick to the agenda, and remember that you are representing the views of the entire organization. No personal business should be discussed during these meetings.
- If you cannot answer questions, commit to finding the answer and either follow up yourself or notify the state office of Texas PTA so that someone can follow up.
- Avoid argument. Just state TX PTA's positions. You may have to agree to disagree. Always be cordial and courteous - **no exceptions**. You are there to provide a viewpoint from their constituency.
- The delegation leader should wrap up the meeting with sincere thanks for their time, restatement of the legislator's position, and offer to be of assistance. When applicable, the delegation leader should present position papers at this time.
- Follow up with a personal thank-you note when you return home.
- Please let us know how the meeting goes and if there is any follow up required by emailing Texas PTA or [ellen@arnoldpublicaffairs.com](mailto:ellen@arnoldpublicaffairs.com).

To find out who your state senator or state representative is visit the Texas PTA webpage, [www.txpta.org](http://www.txpta.org), and choose the legislative button. In the middle of the Legislative page is a link to locate your state senator and state representative.

Again, thank you for helping Texas PTA to be the best that it can be. With your support and team work we can accomplish our goals for the children of Texas!