

Let's Lobby 2015

Why meet with your legislator:

- Grassroots lobbying is critical because all politics is still local for the most part
- Constituents have more influence than most lobbyists
- Contact the legislator of your school district if it is in a different district than your home

How to meet with your legislator

- Bills are often prefiled and are available at <http://leg1.state.va.us>
- Read the bills and be able to relate the consequences of passage or failure based on your own experiences and observations – make it personal and local
- Make it all about the students
- Learn as much as possible about the legislator you are contacting and if you have ever had any contact with him or her, remind them
- Express your views on one or two (at the most) bills or issues
- Call the legislator at their home office before the Session begins and/or
- Contact your legislator at his/her office in Richmond after the session begins
 - Ask to speak with their legislative aide (LA) and identify yourself as a constituent and a _____ at _____ (name of school)
- Become the LA's "friend" because they have the legislator's ear more than anyone else (always call them by their name)
- While speaking with the LA, make sure to ask for a follow up response to any questions you might have and ask when you will receive a response
- Ask when the bill you are referencing will be coming up for a vote in subcommittee or full committee
- Don't be shy – email or call the LA if you have not hear from them in a reasonable amount of time
- If you are able to schedule a meeting with the legislator or aide:
 - Be sure to praise the legislator's leadership on education issues
 - Be respectful if the legislator is from a different political party than you. Bipartisanship is key!
 - Communicate the relevance of ed tech to student achievement/global competitiveness/college and career readiness
 - Use this opportunity to educate/inform the legislator and aide about the issues
- After the meeting:
 - Write a thank you email or letter
 - Provide the legislator or staffer with regular updates on the issues you discussed
 - Extend an invitation to visit your school or library to see education technology in action

Adapted from ISTE's Advocacy Toolkit: <http://www.iste.org/docs/pdfs/iste-advocacy-toolkit---how-to-organize-and-hold-a-meeting.pdf>

From VASCD advocacy meeting with Beth Neill and Lilla Wise on November 19, 2014