



A Union of Professionals

Activists for Congressional Education (ACE) Program

MEETING GUIDANCE

SCHEDULING

- **Contact the legislator's district office:** Well in advance of the scheduled meeting time, call the senator's or representative's district office to set up a meeting; ask to speak to the scheduler. Identify yourself and explain why you would like an appointment (include a list of the issues you want to discuss). Have several dates/times available, including Saturday mornings, to allow for the most flexibility. The best times of the year to meet usually occur around "district work periods" or during congressional recesses. If members of Congress accept online requests, you may also send an email.
- **Choose a location:** If you have a large meeting space, see if the legislator will come to your office. This will allow you to have more people present than if you meet at the congressional district office. Consider hosting a breakfast or lunch.

RECRUITING

- ACE meetings are a great member engagement and development opportunity. While delivering a powerful message to members of Congress is important, it is equally important that we use these meetings to turn activists into leaders, recognize current member activists and recruit new ones.
- **Tips:**
 - Target participation of AFT members who live in the congressional district.
 - Reach out to current member activists and ask them to participate and bring a co-worker(s).
 - Identify a member leader you can prep to lead the ACE meeting.
 - Use LAN and My Campaign to identify new member activists who volunteered during an election, joined a telephone town hall, or completed a patch-through phone call.

PREPARING

- As soon as your meeting is scheduled, go to www.leadernet.aft.org/politics/ace or contact your regional political desk to get updated message information, fact sheets and background materials that can be left with the member of Congress.
- Invite meeting participants. AFT members participating in the ACE Program should be prepared to attend two meetings—a briefing session and the actual meeting with the member of Congress. Follow-up/reminder calls should be made to ACE members as the meeting dates approach.
- Hold a briefing session by bringing the ACE members together a day or two ahead of time to go over the issues that will be raised at the meeting. You should appoint a chair (responsible for coordinating the meeting and reporting the results). It is very important that meeting participants are well-informed on the issues. Emphasize how each issue affects them, other AFT members and your community. Select a spokesperson for the ACE meeting, knowing that others can add to what is being said. Or, divide up the agenda, assigning an issue to each participant.

NEXT STEPS

- Debrief with the ACE meeting participants; ask them how they thought the meeting went and what ideas they have about next steps they could take to advance our issues.
- Ask participants to share about meeting with their locals and co-workers, and on social media.
- Complete the ACE Meeting Tracker: www.leadernet.aft.org/webform/ace-tracking-2017.