

How to Host a Successful Legislative Site Visit



Inviting your legislators to tour your afterschool or summer learning program gives them a firsthand experience of the impact afterschool has on students, families, and communities. Follow these simple steps and you will be well on your way to hosting a successful site visit with your legislator!

THE INVITATION

1. Identify Your Policy Makers.

Your program is represented both at the state and federal level:

Federal Legislators (find yours [HERE](#)) **State Legislators (find yours [HERE](#))**

2 Senators for Georgia

1 State Senator

1 District Representative

1 State Representative

2. Plan ahead.

Policymakers have very busy schedules, so it is important to ask early!

Federal Legislators

Best to invite during “recess” periods, which includes most federal holidays, August, and from October - November during election years.

State Legislators

Did you know the Georgia General Assembly is considered a part-time legislature? Meaning they are only in session about 3-4 month at the beginning of the year!

3. Make the ask.

Invite legislators via **email AND phone** several weeks in advance of your preferred date.

Find contact information for your [federal legislators](#) and [state legislators](#).

Access sample invitation language for [Summer Learning Week](#) and [Lights on After School](#)

4. Stay local.

Lawmakers are most concerned about what is happening in their district. Make sure your program is in their district and **emphasize your local impact!**

5. Be persistent.

Don't be discouraged if you do not get a response right away or the response you were hoping for. **Lawmakers are very busy and receive lots of emails**, so it's appropriate to reach back out reminding them of your invitation and invite any questions they have.

6. Be flexible.

Provide multiple date and time options for site visits, not just one. You are more likely to get a “yes” if you are flexible when scheduling the visit!

THE PREPARATION

1. Celebrate!

If you have scheduled a visit for your legislator(s), that is cause for celebration! Share the exciting news with your program staff, parents, and partners.

2. Plan the visit.

Brainstorm answers to the following questions with your staff and leadership:

<i>What is the objective of your event?</i>	<i>What do you want the legislator to remember about your work?</i>	<i>What message(s) do you want to relay?</i>	<i>What is your ask?</i>
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Plan your visit based on how long the visit will last (here are a few ideas):

- Give a tour of your program (consider having youth lead it!)
- Engage youth voice
- Showcase a variety of activities your program offers
- Share a personal story
- Host a student performance
- Invite parents, partners, and funders

3. Gather materials.

Put together a packet of materials for the legislator and their staff that summarize the impact of your program and the broader landscape of afterschool in Georgia.

[GSAN Fact Sheets about Afterschool](#)

[Afterschool Alliance \(National\) Fact Sheets](#)

4. Invite Press.

Draft a press release and send to local media one week before the visit. Follow-up 2 days before your event to ask if they received your press release and are planning to attend.

Access **sample press release language** for [Summer Learning Week](#) and [Lights on After School](#)

THE VISIT

1. Touch base with your visiting legislator.

Check in with the legislator / their staff about the visit and arrival instructions the day before.

2. Be ready!

Make sure everyone is clear on their roles, print out extra copies of the run of show, and have handout packets ready.

3. Take lots of pictures.

Assign an adult or older teen to take pictures of the visit. Site visits are great photo opportunities for both your legislator and promoting afterschool!

4. Get social.

Be active on social media before, during, and after the visit. Mention or **tag the legislator and GSAN at @afterschoolga**.

THE FOLLOW-UP

1. Send a thank you!

Be sure to follow up with your legislator. **Thank them** and any of their staff who you interacted with for their time and include electronic **copies of any photos you took and materials you gave them.**

2. Let us know!

Please email info@afterschoolga.org to **let us know how your visit went** and share any pictures with us. We would love to promote their visit and help with any questions you have!

DO'S AND DON'TS

DO's...

-  Plan well in advanced with your legislator, site staff, and local leaders
-  Involve your youth, volunteers, and staff in your planning and visit
-  Be flexible on timing and visit agenda based on what your legislator wants
-  Follow up and continue advocating with your legislator post-visit

DON'Ts...

-  Be discouraged if you get a "no" when requesting a visit
-  Assume a legislator's policy priorities or opinions
-  Assume your legislator knows about your funding sources
-  Get frustrated if visits have to be cut short or need rescheduling

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR ADVOCACY

[Levels of Government \(Video\) - GSAN](#)

[Top 10 Tips for Talking to Your Legislator \(Video\) - GSAN](#)

[OST Fact Sheets - GSAN](#)

[Assess Your Advocacy Capacity - Alliance for Justice](#)

[What Nonprofits Need to Know About Lobbying in Georgia - Alliance for Justice](#)

[Site Visit Talking Points - Afterschool Alliance](#)

[General Lobbying Rules for Nonprofit Organizations - Afterschool Alliance](#)

OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME (OST) TALKING POINTS

General OST

9 in 10 parents support funding for Out-of-School Time (OST) Programs

Regular participation in OST programs leads to...

- Reduced absenteeism
- Higher academic performance
- Better behavior

Afterschool

Nearly 4 out of 5 GA children are missing out: 13% are enrolled in afterschool, but 54% would if available

231,342 youth are unsupervised between 3pm and 6pm.

97% of parents report afterschool programs **reduce stress**

100% of parents are satisfied with their afterschool program

40% of families say they have **no local afterschool programs**

58% of families say afterschool costs too much

Summer

Most students **lose 2 month of math skills and 2-3 months of reading skills** over the summer

Summer programs can stem learning loss, promote healthy habits, and foster cooperative learning

Only 1 in 7 students who qualify for free/reduced lunch receive summer meals

FUNDING TALKING POINTS

38 out of 159 counties don't have government funded OST programs

BOOST Grants Program

FY27 State Funding Allocation: **\$15 million** & additional \$5 million from Joseph B. Whitehead Foundation

99 grantees (96 community grantees, 3 statewide grantees)

Anticipated to serve **59,000 youth in afterschool** and **66,000 youth in summer**

FY27 Grantees: **72% provide literacy instruction** & **73% provide numeracy programming**

21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC)

Provide the **equivalent of 45 extra school days**

76% of students demonstrated **increased engagement in learning**

68% of students demonstrated **improved school attendance rate**

Out of School Services (OSS)

22 partner agencies servicing **230 program sites** in **72 Georgia counties**

32,676 youth served & **146,000+ hours** of programming delivered in 2026