**We need you**

Email blasts, social media and the 24-hour news cycle combined with term limits have created an environment where personal relationships with legislators are more important than ever. Your MSTA Government Relations team works hard to keep legislators informed, but nothing can replace the important face-to-face contact between a legislator and their constituents.

**Contacting legislative offices**

While face-to-face meetings are the most effective, you can also contact your legislator by email, phone or letter. Remember these officials represent thousands of Missouri citizens. If you are a constituent you should receive a response, don’t be surprised if you don’t receive a detailed response to your issue.

- **Email:** Regarded as more informal than a letter, it is important to address it properly and format it as a professional document.
- **Phone calls:** Be brief. Mention your name, where you live, and your position on the issue you called about.
- **Letters:** Still an effective form of communication, just be aware that with the fluid nature of the legislature, issues can evolve between the time you sent it, they received it and when you get a response.

**Keep your legislator involved!**

Invite your legislator to speak to your CTA or even better, ask him or her to observe or read to a class. Remember to give feedback from your interaction with your legislator to MSTA’s Government Relations Department.

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@MSTA #MSTAAadvocate
Preparing for your visit

- Gather input from fellow MSTA members about critical issues and plan your discussion before arriving.
- Contact your legislators’ offices before your visit to schedule a time to meet while you are at the Capitol.

Dress code

While legislators and staff will be in business formal attire, it is perfectly acceptable and responsible to wear business casual while visiting your state Capitol. Expect a lot of walking on marble floors, so wear comfortable shoes.

Get informed

MSTA Action
Keep current on issues by reading the MSTA Action, the legislative bulletin of MSTA, available every Friday during the legislative session.

Rapid Response
Rapid Response is a system designed to help MSTA members learn about legislative issues as they happen, and to mobilize MSTA members to quickly and easily advocate for their profession.

If you aren’t already a member of Rapid Response and would like to join, send an email with your preferred email address, your name, and your school district to rapidresponse@msta.org

At the Capitol
Legislators spend the majority of their day in meetings, visiting with lobbyists, constituents, and bureaucrats. Usually the rest of their time is spent in the legislative chamber or in committee meetings discussing proposed bills or working on the state’s budget.

Please introduce yourself, even if you have met before. Your representative and senator have met a lot of people in their political careers and they will appreciate your courtesy. Identify yourself as a constituent and member of MSTA. Make sure to tell them where and what you teach.

Many legislators will jump at the chance to give you their thoughts and opinions, while some will want to listen to your knowledge and experience on certain issues.

Don’t assume an adversarial stance with a legislator. While you might not agree on some issues, it is important that there is always the possibility for respectful dialogue in the future.

If your legislator is not available, don’t overlook the opportunity to speak with a staff member. Be sure to leave your name and the name of your school district so they know you stopped by. Ask if there would be a better time to catch them during the day.

MSTA staff who work in the Capitol every day will be available to brief MSTA members and answer any questions during your visit.

Parking
Limited public parking in lots 12, 13, 14 (yellow) and pay parking at the city garage (green) 201 Madison St. Jefferson City MO 65101.