Effectively contacting your legislator

Who represents you?

- Every Minnesotan has one representative and one senator who represents the area in which they live.
- Find your legislator with the Minnesota Legislature's tool: "Who Represents Me?"

General Tips

- Contact your own legislators, they should prioritize the issues and needs of their own constituents.
- There also may be times when contacting other legislators is important (ex: committee members).
- Start early to build relationships.
- Remember you're an education expert, provide your knowledge and experience.

Written Contact

- State if you are a constituent in the subject line and/or opening. Share your name and address.
    - *Ex. Support health insurance solutions for schools – constituent email*
- Identify the issue at the beginning.
- Be succinct and direct. Reference a bill number whenever possible.
- Clearly ask for legislators' support and give examples of the impact on you and your community.
    - *Ex. What would it mean to your family if you had affordable health insurance?*
- If you want a reply, ask for one in the closing
    - *Ex: "Will you support bill #xxx?" or "Please share your thoughts with me on this proposal."*

Requesting a meeting

- Contact your legislator's assistant (listed on their House or Senate webpage) and share:
    - Your name, address, and phone number
    - The topic that you'd like to talk about
    - At least three available dates/times, at least a week or so out, typically 15-30 min. long
    - Whether you prefer virtually, in-person, and whether in your home area or in St. Paul.

In-person/Virtual/Phone Contact

- Identify if you are a constituent and an Education Minnesota member, tell them about your work and the students you serve.
- Plan out your remarks (not a script) and be succinct.
- State what legislation/issues you are supporting or opposing. Reference a bill number when possible.
- Share your position, your story, and why you are asking them to vote for that position.
- Share accurate, specific statements, and information.
- Give them a chance to share their perspective on your issue, listen and ask questions.
- Be respectful and remember legislators may disagree with you.
- Ask for concrete action and solicit support from your legislator – "Will you vote yes?"
- Thank them for their time and let them know you plan to stay in touch.
- Let them know you and Education Minnesota can be a resource to them.
- Follow up with a thank you note/email and let them know you'll stay in touch.