



Inviting Elected Officials to Site Visits

Site visits, such as inviting a Member of Congress and/or their staff to visit a mentoring program, can be an effective tool in showing the positive impact that mentoring has on youth and in your community.

How to Invite a Member of Congress on a Site Visit

1. Use the [Scheduling In-District Meetings Guide](#) to invite your Member of Congress to visit your program. In this letter you should express:
 - a. Several options for dates you would like them to visit during this summer recess.
 - b. Specific information about your program.
 - c. The purpose for a site visit. If you're asking the Member to visit during a special event – maybe a mentor recruitment fair or school mentoring awards program – be very clear about that in your request.
2. Follow-up with the Member's scheduler and assess whether the Member of Congress or district staff will attend. If neither can attend, try to find alternative dates that work. Do not be disappointed if they are not able to immediately schedule a date, just remember to follow-up.
3. Once the visit is scheduled, consider working with the Member of Congress' communications staff on a plan for garnering press for the visit. The communications staff will be able to work with you to determine what level of press they would like for the site visit. Some ideas for possible press include creating a press release or media advisory. (Note: if press wouldn't normally attend your event and/or you don't think it's appropriate, tell the Member's staff that up front.)
4. Inform your staff and any other relevant stakeholders (Board of Directors, volunteers, mentees parents, etc.) that the Member of Congress will be visiting and prepare them to answer questions if appropriate. Be sure to remind all adults who may interact with the Member that it is never appropriate to make partisan remarks or challenge them on a vote or issue not relevant to their visit. Keep the visit educational and respectful. You can always schedule a separate meeting to discuss specific legislative issues.
5. Create materials to send to the Member's staff before the visit. And, most importantly send them a schedule of the site visit. See below for a sample agenda for a site visit:

Sample Agenda for Site Visit

1. CEO and select staff/volunteers greet the Member in the lobby. *(This should be a small group of people who can say hello and introduce themselves. If young people are present, consider inviting one or two to join you to greet the Member.)*
2. Tour the facility. CEO will introduce the Member to a few mentors and their mentees to talk about their relationship and answer questions.
3. 15 minute small-group meeting with Member and select staff and volunteers to discuss their personal experiences and to cover the desired outcome(s) of the program. *(You should prepare what makes the most sense for your program in terms of topics before the Member's arrival.)*
4. Group photo with young people and Member. *(Thank the legislator for visiting and be sure to provide a folder of materials for the Congressional aide.)*

Send a thank you letter to the Member of Congress and their staff for arranging the visit and keep in communication with the office.