

**TENNESSEE RETIRED TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**  
**Tips for Conducting Effective Meetings**  
**with Elected Officials**

**Setting up the meetings**

**DO** target your face to face meeting by determining why you want the meeting with this individual to occur... chair an important committee? Are you a constituent of this individual? Etc.

**DO** find out from the officials office scheduler the preferred method of scheduling the meeting...email? be sure to include dates and times you are available, purpose of the meeting and names of those attending

**DO** schedule the meeting well in advance of your preferred meeting date to facilitate the official's busy schedule

**DO** limit the number of attendees

**DO** try to bring a constituent of the elected official with you

**DO** allow yourself some time between meetings if you are scheduling multiple meetings for the same day

**Before the meetings**

**DO** provide the official's office with a fact sheet about your organization and your issue

**DO** prepare for the meeting by doing your homework which includes the officials's position on your issues and related policies, what committee is the official on? Voting pattern on issue? Supporting

documents for your position? Identify the staff person who works on this issue that you want to discuss

**Do** prepare for the meeting by preparing and practicing your message and stay on message

**Do** have and know your talking points and “elevator message”

**DO ASK!** Be clear and specific about what actions you want the official to take. Consider a fallback position such as asking for an additional meeting to discuss the issue or ask the official to meet with your members at your meeting place!

### **During the meeting**

**DO** mention your power! (How many members, teachers in the community, potential voters, etc

**DO** be polite and do not be intimidated

**DO** always give accurate information

**DO TRY TO GET AN ANSWER FOR YOUR ‘ASK’**

**DO** have materials to leave behind for the official or staff

### **After the meeting**

**DO** follow up with any promised information

**DO** keep the pressure on...if the official is uncommitted after your meeting, use letter writing and phone calls to keep up the pressure