

DAY ON THE HILL

Many counselors have asked, “How do I talk with a State Senator or State Representative?” I spoke with my friend, Janet Entzel, who was a State Representative for a number of years and here are her suggestions.

1. Make your appointment ahead of time; ask for at least 15 minutes. Don't space your meetings to close together, your Senator/Representative might want to visit longer.
2. When you enter, introduce yourself and let them know you are there on behalf of school counselors.
3. If you are from their district, make sure you let them know.
4. If we are going for a specific bill, make sure you say, House File# or Senate File#. It is very important to give a sentence or two explaining what the bill is about. (This will be given to you when you arrive at the Capitol)
5. Tell a story about a counseling situation you've experienced. They remember stories.
6. Leave a one page brief on what we are asking. If it's much longer they may not take the time to read it. (Prepared and given to you at the Capitol)
7. Offer to provide them with more information if they are interested and leave something with your name, address and phone number so you can be reached.
8. Thank them for their time and all the hard work they do on behalf of the people.
9. Watch their body language. Sometime things come up from the time you made your appointment and they may feel the need to cut your meeting short. If they start to shuffle papers you can say, I know your time valuable so I'll cut this short.
10. Send a Thank You note for sharing their time and again remind them of you bill#

I hope you find these suggestions useful