

Participation of Elected Leaders

Elected officials give voice to everyday citizens. Their role is to make sure your concerns and ideas are heard. We need them to listen to us and take our message to the next level!

How many points can you earn?

You receive **500** points for every elected leader who attends your event (debate or service project). There is unlimited opportunity here!

What do you have to submit?

Here's what we need:

Use this checklist!

Elected Leader Submission Checklist

- Picture of elected leader attending event
- Name of elected leader
- Event he or she attended, including date

Who counts as an elected leader?

An elected leader is someone who is chosen by the public community for a position within a local or national government body.

Examples:

- State senators
- State congressmen
- Representatives or magistrates
- Mayors or city leaders
- Town council members
- Diplomats
- Prime ministers
- Members of parliament

How do I convince them to attend my event?

Below are a few significant suggestions to ensure the participation of your elected leader(s).

Make Contact

Do your homework. Make an organized list of the officials you want to target. Gather their phone numbers and mailing addresses. Write a list detailing what you want to say and how you would like to involve them.

When you make contact, you will most likely speak with a staffer (assistant). This is OK. Staffers are often assigned to specific issues, so ask to speak with the staffer responsible for the elected leader's community outreach or student engagement work. When you reach the person, tell him or her you would like to update your leader on [insert your message], and ask for their contact information so that you may send a meeting request later. Be sure to inquire about the best method of follow-up (another phone call, letter, email, etc.) and ensure the staffer takes your name, contact information and event details.

Be Appropriate

Speaking with elected leaders isn't the same as emailing your friend or having an informal chat with an outside group. Make sure you have your elected official's proper title, and when you visit them, speak confidently and dress appropriately. When writing them, be sure your language is concise and that you have formatted your letter (triple-check your spelling



and grammar!). It doesn't hurt to send messages on letterhead and include your actual signature.

Be Specific With Your Request

It is absolutely necessary that you make a specific request of your elected leader. Whether you are writing a letter or making a cold call, know what you want ahead of time. You should also offer to meet with them before the actual event so that they know who you are and you can provide them with in-person details.

In the case of the Global Debates, you want your elected leader to participate at an event, correct? So, when you make the contact, they will need to know the date and time of your event. Moreover though, do you want them to speak, interact with the student body, get physically involved in the actual service project, etc.? Let them know how many people will be in attendance and whether or not there will be media involved. Be sure to give them a clear, visible role.

If you do meet with them in person before the event, be sure to stick to the most important points in your message since you will likely have limited time. Do what you can to be as personal as possible. For example, mention other groups in your community — a church group, labor union, neighborhood association — that share your views.

Follow Up

It's not enough to call just once! You need to follow up, check in and be persuasive. Remember, this is your representative. You have a right to meet with him or her!

Remember!

The job of your elected leader is to be a citizen representative. As a young person, or a school, you play a unique role here. Officials love hearing about students who are making a difference. If you aren't of voting age yet, one day you will be. Elected leaders need your attention! For this reason, when you contact them, make your request and message compelling. That way they will be inclined to get back to you. People call them every day, so it is important that you are unique! Show them you are serious about what you are doing and that their support is necessary.