



# What You Can Do to Support Your School

Here is an easy way to support your school and the statewide movement: **contact your legislator**. Invite them to various events being held at your school, or make known your position on particular legislation that is either detrimental or beneficial to charter schools.

If a harmful charter school bill is introduced in the Legislature, it is important to let your representatives know why they should vote against the bill. Also, if a charter school bill is introduced that would make it easier to create more schools, or would make operating schools easier, your legislator should know why he or she should support that bill. Contacting your state Senator or Assembly-member is one way to remind them of your support for the school and of the charter school movement, and why they too should support charter schools.

## WRITE A LETTER

- Address the legislator as Honorable Assembly-member, or Honorable Senator.
- Your legislator's mailing address at the District, or at the Capitol can be found:
  - In the "Directory of New York Legislature"
  - At [www.assembly.state.ny.us](http://www.assembly.state.ny.us)
  - At [www.senate.state.ny.us](http://www.senate.state.ny.us)
- Be sure to mention that you are a constituent – legislators are elected to respond to the needs of their constituents.
- If you are inviting the legislator to an event at your school, send the letter to the District office address; otherwise send correspondence to the Capitol address.
- If you are asking the legislator to support your position on a piece of legislation, identify the bill number and give specific facts to support your arguments.
- Include personal statements – "I feel strongly about this because..."
- Keep letter to one page - be very clear and concise.
- Remember to include your name and a phone number where you can be reached.

## EMAIL

- Your legislator's email address can be found in:
  - In the "Directory of New York Legislature"
  - At [www.assembly.state.ny.us](http://www.assembly.state.ny.us)
  - At [www.senate.state.ny.us](http://www.senate.state.ny.us)
- Address the legislator as Honorable Assemblymember, or Honorable Senator.
- In your email message, be sure to include your name, address, and phone number.
- The same tips for writing a letter can be applied to writing an email.

**New York Charter Schools Association**  
120 Broadway, Albany, NY 12204

Phone (518) 694-3110  
[www.nycsa.org](http://www.nycsa.org)



## **PHONE**

- Your legislator's phone number can be found in:
  - In the "Directory of New York Legislature"
  - At [www.assembly.state.ny.us](http://www.assembly.state.ny.us)
  - At [www.senate.state.ny.us](http://www.senate.state.ny.us)
- Ask to speak to the legislator, or if he/she is not available, ask for the Chief of Staff or Education aide.
- Mention the subject of your call at the beginning of the conversation (invitation to school visit, position on a particular piece of legislation, etc.)
- Be brief, and clearly state your concerns.
- Thank your legislator for taking your call.

## **Visiting your legislator at the Capitol or District office**

- Contact the appointment secretary/scheduler.
  - Explain that you are a constituent and the purpose of the meeting.
- Be punctual and patient:
  - It is not uncommon for legislators to be late, or to have a meeting interrupted, due to his/her busy schedule.
- Be prepared:
  - Whenever possible, bring information and materials supporting your position.
- Be responsive:
  - Be prepared to answer questions or provide additional information.
  - Follow up the meeting with a thank you letter that outlines the points covered during the meeting, and send along any additional information and materials requested.

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