

MASSACHUSETTS
FOOD



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KIDS

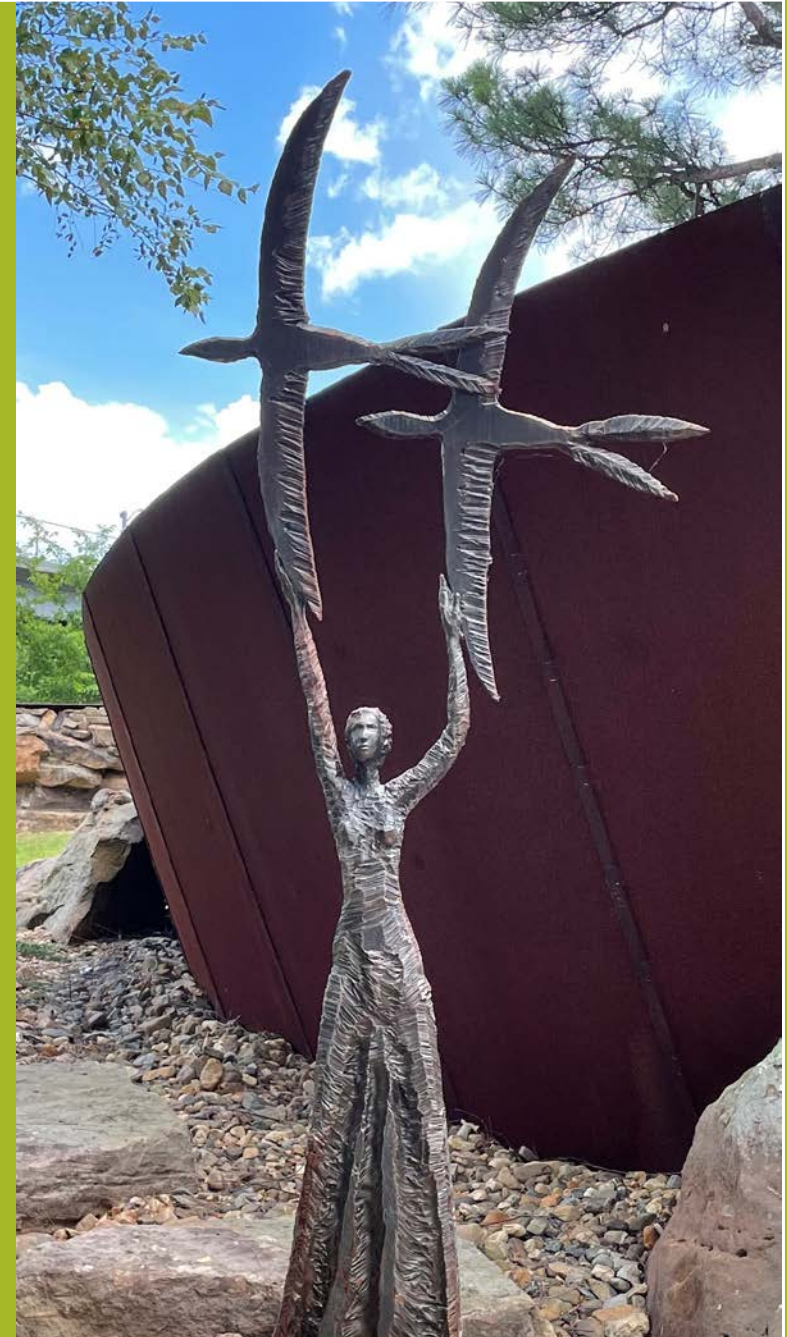
GETTING READY FOR LEGISLATOR MEETINGS

Help them to understand how great Farm to School is!

Your Top Goals

Begin to build a new relationship or deepen an existing relationship with your legislator and/or their staff.

Tell them what is happening in your district with Farm to School and how it is making a difference in the classroom, cafeteria & community.





Asking for a Meeting

- Unless you are doing an on-site tour, you will likely be meeting with a staff person (as opposed to a legislator). If you don't know the person yet, you can call the legislator's office and ask which person would cover farm to school or local food issues. If they are not sure, ask who their policy staff person is.
 - Get the person's email address.
 - Send them a request for a 20-minute meeting to talk to them about Farm to School and a bill that will likely be introduced again this year.
 - Tip sheet here:
<https://mafoodformakids.org/s/Legislator-Meeting-Request-Tips.pdf>

Get Ready for the Meeting



For ZOOM:

- Prepare just a few slides to use. You should include:
 - A photo or a few photos
 - A few fun facts about your FTS program.
- Get clear on who will be in the meeting, and who is responsible for running the meeting, taking notes, and doing the presentation.

For ON-SITE meeting:

- Prepare your space. If you are touring, make sure folks who normally are in the space know you have a legislator coming.
- Do you need to straighten up?
- Make sure there is somewhere to sit and talk for a bit, so you don't have to stand the whole time.
- Have a way to take notes.

Get Ready for the Meeting

Think about what each person will say at the meeting.

Write out a few key points you want to make sure to say.

Have a few “pivots” ready in case the person asks a question that might get you off-track. Here are some pivot examples:

That’s a good question. (pause) Here’s how I think about this issue...

The important thing to remember is...

What I really want you to know is...

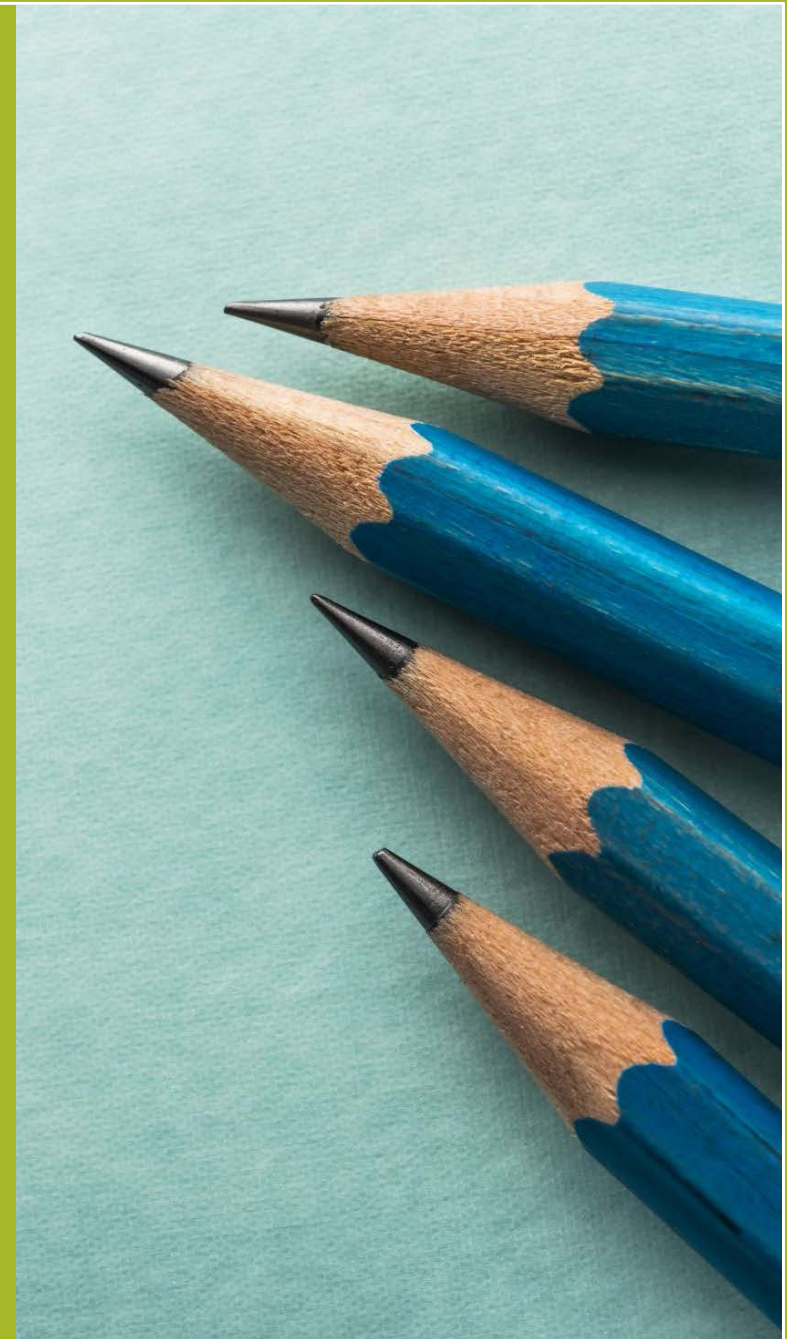


Get Ready & Keep It Brief

Keep it short - plan for about 20 minutes total.

Be sure to allow the person some time to speak.

Remember a key goal is to build a relationship, even if they don't agree with you right off.





Potential Agenda for the Meeting

- Thank the legislator or staff person for making the time to meet with you and do introductions – everyone from your team should briefly introduce themselves. (3 minutes)
- Allow the legislator/staff person to introduce themselves. (2 minutes)
- Share your presentation / Give your tour (10 minutes maximum)
- Ask the legislator/staff person if they can help to support the Farm to School bill this year (and if so, how) and take notes on whatever they say. (5 minutes)
 - Don't argue or try to convince them of anything.
 - If you can answer a question easily, do it. Otherwise say you will follow up with the answer.
- Thank the legislator or staff person for their time and let them know you will stay in touch.

More detailed tips here: <https://mafoodformakids.org/s/Legislator-Meeting-Agenda-Talking-Points.pdf>

After the Meeting

AFTER YOUR MEETING, send a quick thank you email (you can bcc Lisa), and include the [Farm to School handout](#) as an attachment.

Share your experience with MA-FTS using [this form](#).

