

AACS School Visit Toolkit Walkthrough

July 2026

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Why Host a Visit?

- Bringing elected officials into our schools accomplishes several things:
 - Allows us to tell our story authentically
 - Builds relationships with elected officials
 - Establishes the value of our schools as:
 - Workforce development hubs
 - Entrepreneurship incubators
 - Thriving small businesses
 - Community cornerstones through volunteerism
- Hosting a visit is good for your school individual and all our schools collectively!

The Basics of the Visit Process

- Find your elected officials.
- Send an email invitation to their indicated scheduler or point of contact.
- Plan out a 30-minute visit within your school.
- Provide a walkthrough of your campus and show all aspects of what students learn daily.
- Follow up with your elected officials to say thanks and provide any additional information they requested.
- Post photos and videos of the visit to social media while tagging AACCS and let AACCS's team assist in broadening the reach and impact of your visit.

How to Request a Visit

- Find your elected officials online
- **Call** the nearest district office (not the federal or state office)
- Explain that you are a constituent small business owner and job creator
- Ask about the process for requesting a visit by the elected official
 - This will vary from official to official
- Be willing to accept visits from an official's staff if they are unavailable
 - Staff can often spend more time with you and develop deeper understanding of issues affecting schools

Planning Your Visit

- Share clear logistics for the day of the visit with the official's staff
- Alert your school staff about the visit in advance
- Walk your tour route to ensure safety and maximize engagement
- Have someone serve as a photographer for the school
 - Always get a picture with officials in front of your school logo!
- Prepare any materials you will distribute to officials or staff
 - AACCS one-pager with your content, brochures, business cards, etc.
- Complete and distribute a media advisory letting local media know the visit is happening

Planning Your Visit

- Align Your Message to the Officials
 - What committees do they serve on?
 - What is their background, and how does it align with our schools?
 - Are they sponsoring legislation affecting schools, and how?
- By aligning our message with the interests of officials, we maximize the effectiveness of the visit and the likelihood that officials will see our needs as aligning with their priorities
- Keep your talking points brief, with 3-5 main points, and have data you can share that highlights your work in the community

Planning Your Visit

- Changes happen, including the day visits are scheduled
 - Always be accommodating when/if timing or attendees change
 - Do not be discouraged if an official cannot make it last minute – use the time to engage with their staff
 - Ask on arrival how much time they official and their staff can spend with you, and front load your talking points for shorter visits
- Have fun!
 - Hosting a visit should be enjoyable for schools and staff
 - **You** are the experts during the visit, so be confident in the story you have to share!

Sample Visit Schedule

- Arrival (5 Minutes)
 - Greet guests In the lobby and introduce yourself and your school
- Campus Tour (15 Minutes)
 - Highlight key staff, program metrics, local salons/barbershops who hire your graduates, and student support resources. Conduct a hands-on demo if possible
- Wrap Up/Photos (10 Minutes)
 - Share student success stories, get a photo near your school logo, provide take-away materials, and offer your school for future events

After the Visit/Maintaining Relationships

- Send a thank you email 24-48 hours after the visit, and include the one-page fact sheet as an attachment
- Coordinate with the official's staff on social media posts or other shared content promoting the visit
- Share photos, videos, and attributable quotes with AACCS for further distribution
- Maintain the relationship by:
 - Inviting to future events such as graduations or ribbon cuttings
 - Provide periodic updates about the school and the sector

Questions/Final Thoughts

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