

Florida League of Cities

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# Speaking to Students in the Classroom

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## *When a Teacher Reaches Out to You*

### **BEFOREHAND**

Ask him or her the reason for your visit. What is the teacher trying to accomplish? Are they studying a certain topic for you to assist with? Do they want you to talk about your role as an elected official? Be part of a panel discussion? Read to the students?

Ask the teacher for information about the class: number of students, grade level, their understanding of city government, etc., so you can prepare for the visit.

Ask the teacher to generate a possible list of questions from the students.

## *When You Reach Out to a Teacher*

### **BEFOREHAND**

Contact the teacher well in advance to make arrangements such as date, time, location, etc. Share the purpose of your visit and what information you will be sharing with students so the teacher can prepare the class.

Ask the teacher information for about the class: the number of students, grade level, their understanding of city government, etc., so you can prepare for the visit.

Ask the teacher to generate a possible list of questions from the students.

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*Be prepared. Plan ahead. Be age- and grade-appropriate.*

**Depending on the type of visit, here are some things to consider:**

### **PLANNING YOUR VISIT**

- Begin with the end in mind.
- What is the purpose? What do you want students to know? What impact do you want to have on them?
- Assume the students know nothing or very little about their city.
- Use current real-life stories that the students will connect with.
- Students have short attention spans, so your overall presentation should be as interactive as possible.

## USING POWERPOINTS

- They should be simple, visually appealing, make an impression and not be word-heavy.
- They should engage students in the discussion and not just be for the students to read what the presenter is saying. If you read the slides, you will bore them and lose their attention.

## Q&A

- Students always have questions. If you received them from the teacher beforehand, you will be more prepared.
- This is an opportunity to connect with the class on what they consider to be important to them.

## POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

- There are many activities included on this website.
- Another idea is to gather opinions from students about a current city project.
- Make a list of government services that are most relevant to the audience, and list examples of how your city directly addresses those services. Have students try to guess or create their own lists.