

Legislative 101

ERNESTINE MONDRAGON POLICY MATTERS

ADAMS 12 FIVE STAR SCHOOLS NOVEMBER 18, 2016

Policy and Legislation

- Colorado Legislature is in session from Jan – May
- There are 100 legislators;
 35 Senators and 65
 Representatives
- Close to 500 bills are introduced each year
- Each Legislator can introduce 5 bills
- To pass a bill requires 33, 18 & 1



Role of the Joint Budget Committee

In Colorado, the Governor initiates a budget proposal delivered on November 1. Colorado, has a strong legislative budget process. The General Assembly's permanent fiscal & budget review agency, the Joint Budget Committee (JBC), writes the annual appropriations bill - called the Long Bill - for the operation of the state government. The JBC also oversees the school finance act and makes the final decision on how much the Legislature will spend on K-12 education each year.

The JBC has 6 members, and this year the committee is split 3-3.

Statutes charge the Joint Budget Committee with analyzing the management, operations, programs, and fiscal needs of the departments of state government. The state Constitution requires a balanced budget. The Committee holds hearings and reviews the executive budget requests for each state agency & institution.

Role of a Legislative Consultant

- There are 178 school districts in the state
- CASE, CASB & CEA are the membership organizations representing schools & teachers
- Each year, over 100 bills are introduced that impact school districts
- The School Finance Act is the most significant bill of the session
- In the Gov's budget request, K-12 education represents 36% of General Fund spending (the largest of any Department)
- The stakes are high for school districts

Communicating with Elected Officials

- Know your audience
- Where does the legislator/congressional member come from – rural or urban?
- What is his or her profession?
- Personal issue areas and style direct or soft approach
- Examine all costs
- Number of constituents impacted

Relationships, Relationships, Relationships!

Why is this so important?

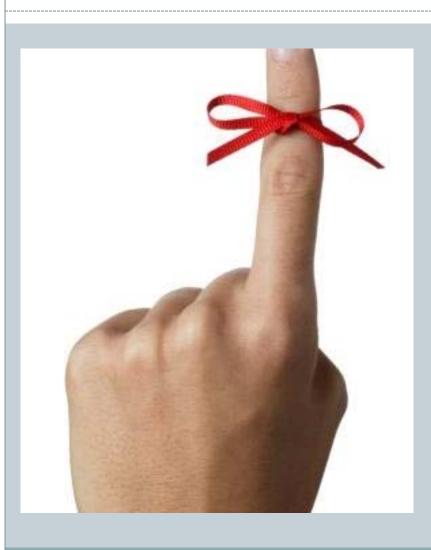
- Key to success in the political arena
- Trust
- Education of elected officials & networking
- Majority party rules the chambers & committee assignments

Cultivating Personal Relationships



- Do not only communicate when you need something
- Take time outside of work to build the relationship
- Ask how you can help the member
- Call/email your legislator
- Attend town hall meetings
- Be sure to say THANK YOU!
- Personal hand written thank you notes go a long way.

Things to Remember



When meeting with an elected official:

- Be courteous
- Be on time
- Be concise
- Distill information into layman's terms
- Use humor
- Pay attention to your audience
- Do your best to answer all of their questions
- If you don't know, say you don't know
- Know the opposing argument

Important Calendar Events

- JBC staff briefings & Department hearings for CDE are scheduled for December 7th & 16th
- December 20 Revenue Forecast
- Legislative Session begins on January 11, 2017
- March 20 Revenue Forecast

Thank You!

