

Handout: A Framework for Planning Your MLA Visit

It is important when hosting an event at your school that things are run professionally and efficiently. Consider the following as you arrange your event:

Preparation:

- Consult your administration regarding visitors to the school and review any related policies.
- Decide on a location and which class or classes will attend.
- Work with school staff or students to set up the room and seating, if needed.
- Engage students in preparatory activities to improve their background knowledge and spark discussion about current political issues.
- Plan student questions in advance.
- Let students know expectations regarding their professionalism.
- It has been strongly suggested by teachers not to invite media so that the conversation is focused on the students rather than public messaging.
- Assign a team of students to capture the event for publication. Consider submitting a photo or written content to your local newspaper or the school newsletter.

Event Format:

- Choose a moderator (teacher/student) to keep the visit on schedule and organized.
- Establish an agenda and guidelines for the MLA visit. Share the agenda and targeted issues with the MLA in advance of the visit.
- Develop a format for the visit and determine the length of each portion. Below is a suggested framework.
 - a) Welcome – Moderator should welcome the MLA and detail the structure of the meeting.
 - b) Opening Introduction – Brief introductory statement from the MLA (3-5 minutes).
 - c) Questions about role/experience – Determine a list of questions and who will ask them to the MLA. Possible suggestions:
 - Why did you want to become an MLA?
 - How would you describe your job?
 - What is the most rewarding/challenging part of your job?
 - Do you have any memorable experiences you can share?
 - What different roles within government have you served?
 - d) Questions about current political issues – Determine a list of questions and who will ask them to the MLA. Select questions that relate to issues of interest, nationally and locally.
 - e) Closing Remarks – Final words from the MLA (2-3 minutes).
 - f) Thank You – Plan a formal ‘Thank You’ from designated students.