February 2023

This role play template is practice for the Olympia Day meetings during the 2023 session

The conversation may not look exactly like this, but the script can be a helpful reference.

Support Role

Student Facilitator

- initiates introduction and brief agenda; typically, the regional coordinator covering the district, campus liaison, or constituent of that district
- ensures post meeting evaluations are completed by each student participant (!)
- keeps meeting on agenda points. Fields questions and supports the opening and/or summarizes the close of the meeting on Coalition messaging and priorities.

Student Constituents

Presenter

- shares the purpose of meeting, leading with thank you
- provides facts and evidence
- takes a photo at end of meeting; watches the time…

Student Testimonial (up to two if larger group)

- shares personal story on what higher education, state financial aid programs, and student supports (programs filling gaps) means to them—specifically speaking about successes and stretches

Note-taker

- takes down any key points from meeting
- captures legislator/aid commitments throughout the 15-minute meeting
- keeps note of questions asked and includes this in each post meeting evaluation

Script

Student Facilitator: Thanks for holding this meeting

- Hello Representative/Senator/LA _____. My name is _____ and I am a _____ (class standing) attending _____ (college) majoring in _____.
- First, I want to thank you for meeting with us today. This is the first time/second year I have attended something like this during session and did not know what to expect. We appreciate the chance to share student stories of what higher education, state financial aid programs, and student supports means to us/them—specifically speaking about successes and challenges since COVID.

Legislator: [Pause for response from Representative/Senator/LA]

Student Facilitator:

- This advocacy day was organized by Washington Student Engagement Networks (WA-SEN for short).
- We are the student arm of the College Promise Coalition administered by Independent Colleges of Washington with funding from the Gates Foundation.
- Are you familiar with the College Promise Coalition? ***(if leg. is familiar, skip this or shorten and move on)*** the Coalition brings together leaders and advocates from education, business, labor, and community-based organizations. This partnership advocates for post-secondary opportunities and the state's higher education attainment goals for all Washingtonians.
- WA-SEN has students that cover all corners of the state, across the three sectors -- the 34 community and technical colleges, the 6 public baccalaureate institutions, and the 10 private nonprofit colleges.
- I would like to introduce you to the team now. As I call them by name, they will share what college they attend and their major. (Suggest go alpha) *NOTE: if you are a constituent of the district rep you are meeting with, or have someone in your group who is, this is your time to point that out!*

- Now I am going to turn it over to _____ (**student presenter**).

Student Presenter 1:

- Thank you _____ (**student facilitator).** First, the reason we wanted to meet with you was to thank you for supporting students and our state's future!
- This meeting may be different than other meetings you have with constituents. **We are not here to comment on any specific legislation, but rather to share testimonials and individual experiences that you can keep in mind as legislation comes in front of you.**
- With all the pressures and anxieties that the COVID and the shutdown brought, we hope you will continue to make students a priority, especially for students who are most impacted by economic, health, and food/housing insecurities, so that those who need it can count on our elected for smart policies to help get them get to and through college.
- We are also aware that there are many students, [like me/like my classmate] a constituents of the _____ (**insert district #**), who are receiving the Washington College Grant. This college guarantee for students from households living on low income is life-changing!

- We believe without education after high school, it's very difficult to get a job in our state that pays enough to live without constantly worrying about money.
- And the pandemic has made the situation even worse.
- That is why the Coalition set a goal that 70% of Washingtonians can start and complete education beyond high school by 2030.
- So, thank you for creating the Washington College Grant. Now we need to make sure students know this Grant and other resources are there to help**-AND-**make accessing them easier!
- I would like to now pass it to _____ (**student testimonial**), attending _____ (**college or university**) who will share a bit about their college journey with you.

Student Storyteller (up to two, time permitting)

Students: Tell a bit of your story from the story worksheet you worked on!

Examples to expand upon: ***Not to be read aloud. Prompts to help you choose your story***

- *To pay for my college I receive scholarships and state financial aid and my parents help; or I would not be able to go to college if it were not for my scholarships;*
- *I am the first in my family to go to college, my family insisted that I go to college, and they are right because I know I will be thankful as my life goes on;*
- *Black, Indigenous, and students of color have been hit the hardest by the shutdown. This spans across all three sectors and the 50 campuses that make up WA-SEN;*
- *I absolutely love what I am taking in school, and I love the university I attend, it is the right fit for me and what I want to accomplish;*
- *At times going to school is hard – I see some students really struggling especially over financial issues so state aid is really important;*
- *I wish I had the support of a college navigator or advisor; I would have not stopped out or taken so long to return as an adult;*
- *I am seeing increases in needs for academic advising, food and housing supports, behavioral health care, and tutoring as classmates work to get through this time—and to stay in school.*
- *I cannot imagine not getting a college degree because what it gives you for the rest of your life;*

Legislator: [Pause for comment or response from Representative/Senator/LA]

Student Facilitator:

As we close our time with you, we wanted to reinforce the College Promise Coalition priorities for this session. Knowing about your records retention protocols, I have this laminated one-pager that we can look at together, or we can also send this in a follow up:

1. The Washington College Grant is a life-changing financial aid program for students and families. Make sure students **know that the grant and other resources exist to help them**.
2. Support students who face the highest barriers with **basic needs and navigation supports** like career guidance, food, housing, and tutoring.
3. **Offer more help completing** financial aid applications like **FAFSA/WASFA**.
4. **Break down barriers, especially financial ones**, which allow more students attending public and private colleges to **earn high school and college credit at the same time**, such as Running Start and College in the High School.
5. Offer more **access to training that leads to jobs** in health care, STEM, and other in-demand fields.
6. Make it **easier to access** and learn about available resources.

Student Presenter

- Thank you, _____ (**Facilitator**). Representative/Senator/LA, did you have any questions or comments for us? And anything we're unable to answer today for you, I can most certainly find the answer and circle back with your office.

Legislator: [Pause for comment or response from Representative/Senator/LA]

Note-taker: *Let the representative comment; take good notes!*

Student Presenter:

Thank you again, Representative/Senator/LA. Would you be willing to take a picture with us wearing one of our commemorative scarves? [Let them keep it unless they want to give it back.]

Thank each other for meeting and say goodbye.
End. **-**