

Step-by-Step

Planning a school tour

JOIN US IN GATHERING EVIDENCE

How can I get a school involved?

We will be documenting educational resource deficiencies in schools that have been harmed by the current inadequate state school financial policies. We will be examining the loss of teachers, school counselors, librarians, nurses and other staff; the lack of interventions and supports for at-risk students; the need for art, music, AP and IB courses, electives, extracurricular activities, sports programs and after school programs.

Reach out to your contact in a school district or a school. Typically, a principal or a superintendent would be the appropriate person to reach out but it could also be Parent Teacher Association at your school.

Give them a week or two to respond, but then don't be afraid to be persistent.

Once you hear back, set a day and time to have a conversation with them.

Once you get agreement to have a school tour, set a date and send them the cover letter and the questionnaire ahead of the tour. The main point you want to make is that, whoever is filling out the questionnaire is as descriptive as possible, and is available during the tour for follow up questions. The goal of the tour is to highlight the need in the school that is attributed to the fact that there is unpaid Foundation Aid (formula to fund schools equitably) Schedule a meeting with everyone who will be part of the tour to prepare and answer any questions they may have. Encourage parents and students to share their stories.

TOUR COMPONENTS

Participating schools can take part in one or more of the following to be included on the tour.

School Tour (approx. 2 hours) School officials and stakeholders (including both students and parents) would take you on a tour of the school to highlight what students need to succeed and things that are lacking. Individual schools would plan the details of each local tour.

After the tour meeting (approx. 1.5 hours)

School leadership, local stakeholders and members of the team touring will meet to discuss in depth the issues facing your school district. Using the questionnaire, participants will begin the process of gathering evidence that can be used to support advocacy efforts.

Local Press Briefing (1 hour)

In order to help get the message out that schools are in need and to let the larger community know that we need help, you can plan to hold a press conference focusing on the state's responsibility, a focus on what the school's needs are.

NEXT STEPS

The findings of your tour can be the first step in an in-depth investigation into the lack of teachers, staff, programs and services needed to give all of our students a "sound basic education" as is required under the New York Constitution. The Alliance for Quality Education would like to collect these findings and work with you, your school and your school community to possibly produce a statewide report on the need to fully fund the State's Foundation Aid Formula.

**Contact Maria Bautista, Campaigns Director AQE
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