



## SEVEN STEPS FOR EMAILING YOUR DECISION-MAKER

Email has changed the way that we communicate, and in many ways has replaced other forms of communication, such as phone calls or handwritten letters. This technological tool is fast, cheap, and efficient.

However, because it is a fast and relatively informal means of communication, many elected officials view it as less credible than other methods. If you use email to communicate with your decision-maker, you should do so in the context of an ongoing relationship in which you use other methods as the foundation of your communication.

To craft an email with impact follow these steps:

1. In the subject line of the message, state that you are a constituent.

Subject: Message from a constituent on charter school issue.

Most elected officials have their staff sort and respond to email, and this strategy will increase the likelihood that your message is read.

2. State your request concisely. View your message as different from an electronic letter. Again, email is less formal and much more brief than traditional written communication. Craft your message accordingly – keep it tight and short.

3. Provide personal examples and local context. Use similar principles as those in letter-writing, but in a tighter format. If you are sending a generic email written by a group of which you're a part (i.e. response to a Colorado CAN action alert), insert personal examples in the message.

4. Persuade a like-minded friend, family member, neighbor, or colleague to send an email as well. Quantity is critical. Decision-makers pay attention to issues when they believe that many of their constituents care about that issue. One email alone may not be convincing.

5. Report your email. If the email is initiated by an organization, ask if they want you to report your email.

6. Follow up. Because the impact and access of email varies widely from decision-maker to decision maker, be sure that you are using other methods to communicate with your elected official. Follow up on your email with a phone call, handwritten letter, or visit.

7. Communicate more than once. As with all forms of communicating with your elected official, view your email as part of an ongoing relationship. Keep in touch and tuned into your decision-maker and his or her position on charter schools.

These tips came from the Colorado CAN Grassroots Advocacy Toolkit. Read it [here](#).