



ELECTED OFFICIAL ROUND TABLE QUICK TIPS

2021 Guide to Forming an
Elected Official Round Table



www.earlylearnersd.org



STARTING THE PROCESS

We recommend finding a strong leader within your community. These leaders can include but not to limited to: for-profit businesses, religious organizations, law enforcement, military organizations, etc. This leader(s) could not only help to give your message from a leader perspective but consider asking this partner if they would sponsor the event.

Sponsorship would include:

- Location for the round table to be held
- Meal, snack, or refreshments you would plan to offer
- Any type of invitation you would like to send out

INVITATION

We recommend making a personal call and reaching out to your identified contacts for the event. After that, send a save the date, preferably about a month in advance. Consider your leader, sending the personalized invitation. Next, create a formal invitation of some kind to be sent out at least 2 weeks before your event.

For more information on the layout of a round table, please look at the [SAMPLE AGENDA](#).

What should be included in your invitation?

If you are mailing out an invitation you can include the invitation itself ([See example](#))

Any one pager, there are several examples on the Early Learner SD website [HERE](#)

Any other important local information you may want to include

Who to invite:

- Local Elected Officials
- Representative of K-12 that is pro-early learning
- Early Learner Provider(s)
- Early Learner Parent(s)
- The for-profit industry that is pro-early learning
- Economic Development representative, either regional or local
- If you wished to consider other entities, please refer to the stakeholder list from the Early Learning Toolkit [HERE](#)

INFORMATION AND AGENDA ITEMS

We recommend that you have some of your partners speak at this event in order to have a well-rounded perspective of the issues and effects that quality early learning experiences have in your community. We recommend the following be included but not limited to: K-12, early learner provider, early learner parents, for-profit entity/community leader, and economic development. We recommend that after your meeting, visit a quality early learning program follow immediately after the meeting. (Please see attached [BRIEF](#) for a description of Quality Early Learning)

Finally, always follow up with action items or take away from the meeting/discussion. Below are some of the action items Early Learner Communities are using:

- Making sure that the ARPA funds are spent completely, and wisely in SD. Know all of these relief funds are vital to the stabilization of our child care industry in SD.
- Voluntary registry list
 - MAYORS, please consider having a registry within your own community to help with local workforce and to also know your capacity for children or lack there of
- Finding ways to increase child care capacity in our community
- Examples of ways to increase capacity:
 - Helping individuals start child care (in-home or center based) businesses to support the local early learners
 - Using city or public space, rent-free, to programs that are established and quality programs
- Promotion of the Preschool Levels of Excellence
- Way to continually engage with early learning entities and advocates:
 - **Early Learner SD:** www.earlylearnersd.org
 - **DSS:** dss.sd.gov/childcare
 - **ECE Enrichment Offices:** dss.sd.gov/childcare/educationalopportunities/sites.aspx
- Other asks may come from local concerns that your group deems vital to the conversation

FOLLOW UP EMAIL

Follow up with your entire group, especially your elected officials and provide them with any information asked for in the discussion. We would also recommend following up with any other additional, powerful, research. Be sure to include a summary of the conversation in your email. Identify an individual who will be a recorder prior to the meeting. If you have many tables, have a recorder at each table and identify a primary recorder to whom all of the notes will go to. Some examples can be found below. You can also follow up with the Early Learner SD website or any other organizational info you would like to provide.

➤ We encourage you to reach out to DSS, SD ECE Enrichment Office, and Early Learning Advocates such Early Learner SD if you have more questions. You can provide the following contact information to your participants in your follow up email.

- **DSS:** dss.sd.gov
- **ECE Enrichment Offices:** dss.sd.gov/childcare/educationalopportunities/sites.aspx
- **Early Learner South Dakota:** www.earlylearnersd.org

RESEARCH

Early Learner SD Website: www.earlylearnersd.org

Federal Reserve of Minneapolis ECE Landscape in SD: www.minneapolisfed.org/article/2021/scanning-the-early-childhood-development-landscape-in-south-dakota

MIT Study: seii.mit.edu/research/study/the-long-term-effects-of-universal-preschool-in-boston

NAEYC Resources: www.naeyc.org/get-involved/advocate

More information for advocacy and preparation efforts can be found on the Early Learner SD website at this link: www.earlylearnersd.org/take-action

➤ Here, you will find the following information: sample meeting request letter for state legislator, sample talking points, connecting with state officials, sample letter to the editor, sample email to candidates for public office, and more!

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR YOUR EFFORTS

If your community/team cannot find financial support from a for-profit entity, as referenced above, please reach out to Early Learner SD at info@earlylearnersd.org for the possibility of some assistance.

NEXT STEPS

This is a decision made by your community group. Please identify what you see happening with early learning in your community.