

What is happening at the Conference?

At the conference this year, each delegate will participate in the legislative process by serving as part of a lobbyist team working to get a chosen bill passed. Conference facilitators (CFs) will serve in legislative leadership and staff positions (Speaker of the House, President of the Senate, committee staff, etc). Chaperones will be assigned to a committee and serve as legislators in committee hearings. Bills that make it through the entire process will be included in the 4-H KYG Legislative Report and handed out at the Legislative Breakfast on the last day of the conference.

BEFORE THE CONFERENCE

Prior to the conference, the Core Committee will provide a list of 50 active bills being considered by the legislature during the 2010 Legislative session. The bills to choose from will focus on the following committee topics:

- Education
- Children and Family Services
- Judicial
- Natural Resources/Environment

The county delegation will choose one bill (or create their own as long as it relates to one of the four topic areas above) for every four delegates and that team will be responsible for working their bill through the legislative process by:

1. Preparing and presenting a display about the bill that includes a Bill Report,
2. Lobbying legislators during individual meetings,
3. Negotiating and compromising with other teams to merge specific ideas of bills together through amendments, and
4. Testifying at committee hearings.

If your delegation has eight delegates, your county will choose or create two bills, and so on. Your delegation does not add another bill until the total reaches a multiple of four. For example, if you have four delegates and a fifth joins the group at the next meeting, you do not add another bill until you have eight total.

If one of the 50 bills is close to what your county delegation wants but still needs a few tweaks, please feel free to write an amendment to the bill. There will be an opportunity to do that in a pre-conference meeting so you can bring the amendment to the conference and ask a conference legislator to sponsor it.

When you register your delegation for the conference, you will submit the bill number(s) your legislative teams will be working through the legislative process.

We will compile all the submitted bills into a Bill book. The Bill book will be posted on the KYG website and a link will be emailed to each county so each delegate will be able to access and review all bills before coming to the conference. This preparation is important to legislative teams so they can:

1. Find other delegations that have similar bills and develop strategies for combining ideas into one bill,
2. Identify opposing bills and draft testimony against these bills or offer amendments that make the bill better (from your perspective).

Because the delegates will have ample time to get ready, the KYG committee expects them to be prepared to participate in the mock legislature fully and appropriately so that all involved have a positive experience.

DURING THE CONFERENCE

First day

Delegates will attend a lobbyist training session to prepare them to meet with conference legislators and testify in committee hearings over the next two days. At the same time, chaperones chosen to serve as conference legislators will attend a legislator training session to prepare for meetings and committee hearings. There will be opportunities for teams to sign up for 10-minute meetings with conference legislators to discuss their bill.

Second day

Delegates will have an opportunity to share information about their bill with other lobbyists and conference legislators through a display. The display will include the bill, a bill report, any amendments, and other information to inform others of the issue the bill is trying to solve. Lobbyists will attend their 10-minute meetings with conference legislators in order to convince them to support their bill with or without an amendment and/or support an amendment to another bill.

Third day

This is committee hearing and floor action day! During committee hearings, lobbyist teams will work together to testify for and against bills to make sure their interests are supported. Bills passed out of committee will then go to the House and Senate Floors where conference legislators from all committees will vote on the bills. Successful bills that are passed on the floors will proceed to the opposite chamber (House bills go to the Senate; Senate bills go to the House) and the committee process is repeated. By this point, there will be fewer bills and those that were not passed will be considered dead. Any bills amended in the opposite chamber must be agreed to by both chambers at a conference committee meeting.

Session will adjourn Sine Die (without future meeting date being designated) on Monday. The committee will compile all passed bills into a Legislative Report and this booklet will be available to the state legislators when they attend the Legislative Breakfast on Tuesday. It is the hope of the KYG committee that the Legislative Report will reflect issues important to teens in Washington along with suggestions of ways to fix them.

Fourth day

On the last day, delegates will have breakfast with state legislators and talk about their conference experience. In addition, since there are no conference sessions on this day, counties are encouraged to schedule meetings with their state legislators on the hill before heading home. Be sure to make appointments in January, as state legislators' calendars fill up quickly.

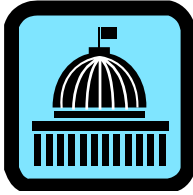
Roles at the Conference

Delegates-Lobbyists

Chaperones-Conference Legislators

Conference Facilitators-Speaker of the House, President of the Senate, Committee Chairs, Clerks

The committee will use Conference Facilitators (past KYG participants) chosen by the committee and trained on the curriculum in order to facilitate the process. We expect that all coordinators, chaperones and delegates will treat them with respect because without their dedication, KYG would not be the positive experience it has proven to be in years past.



Session Agendas

Below is a rough outline of each session at the conference

Session A

Lobbyist 101 session for delegates to prepare for their role. This is a time to ask questions of real lobbyists! Prior to the conference, delegates are expected to research their topic and bring or know all relevant information. This session will be designed to help delegates communicate that information to legislators. You will also use this time to sign up for 10-minute meetings to talk one-on-one with a legislator about your bill.

The chaperone meeting and Legislator 101 session for chaperones are combined. The time will start with the regular chaperone meeting information and then move into the Legislator 101 session to prepare the chosen chaperones for their roles. If possible, we hope to have current or past legislators available for questions.

Session B

Bring your bill display down to the ballroom and be ready to lobby conference legislators walking around the room. This will also be a chance to strategize with other groups about combining efforts or to learn about issues that appear to conflict with your goals.

Session C

Be ready to speak convincingly with conference legislators. During this session, teams can split up or meet together with legislators for 10 minutes to present their ideas about their bill and convince legislators to pass their bill during the committee meeting or vote against an opposing bill. Be prepared with your research so you can answer questions the conference legislator may have. You will have five minutes to get to your next meeting and it is important you are on time to your meetings.

Session D

More meetings with conference legislators.

Session E Committee Hearings

Hearing schedules with the bills in order of appearance will be posted prior to this session. Lobbyists will be expected to review all the schedules and sign up to speak on any bill they want to support or oppose. Lobbyists will be given a time limit to speak according to the number of people signed up on the list. Again, be prepared to answer questions from conference legislators about your bill or about your position on a bill. Towards the end of the hearing, the committee will vote to pass bills. It is at this time that conference legislators may amend a bill.

Session F County caucus meeting

A list of bills going to the floor from each committee will be read to the entire group. Your county will be given time to meet about whether the county supports or opposes the bills and why. Suggestions for amendments can be discussed (this may be a way to revive your bill if it did not pass out of committee).

Session G Floor Session to vote on bills

Conference Representatives and Senators will testify for or against and vote on bills brought before them. Debate will be limited to one minute per speaker. There will be a gallery to observe the debate.

As a lobbyist, it will be important to pay attention to arguments or concerns brought up on the floor. You may want to remind conference legislators of the way you want them to vote on a bill. If so, you can write a note to pull them off the floor and do one last pitch. Paying attention to floor debate may also give you information about issues you'll need to address with the members of the opposite chamber when you testify in front of them in Session H.

Session H Committee Hearings to hear bills from opposite house

The process repeats itself with the bills that were passed on the floor and moved to the opposite house. Lobbyists will now testify in the opposite house on only those bills that were passed on the floor. If a legislative team does not have a bill that made it that far in the process, they will try to get their issues solved via an amendment to a bill that is still alive or can oppose a bill that does not support their interests.

Session I County caucus meeting

Another opportunity to discuss the bills that were passed in committees (same as Session F).

Session J Floor Session to vote on bills

The process repeats itself with the bills passed out of committee (same as Session G).

Session K Conference Committee meeting

Any bills with changes made in the opposite chamber must be agreed to by the original chamber. A small group of representatives and senators from each committee area will meet to discuss any differences and come up with an agreement.

That is the conference in a nutshell, but you may still have questions. Continue reading the curriculum to see if these questions are answered. If you still have questions, please feel free to contact Melissa Beard at melei@stanfordalumni.org. She will be glad to answer any questions you may have! ***There is no reason anyone should come to the conference not knowing what is going to happen.***

No one is born a good citizen; no nation is born a democracy. Rather, both are processes that continue to evolve over a lifetime. Young people must be included from birth. A society that cuts off from its youth severs its lifeline."

-- Kofi Annan