

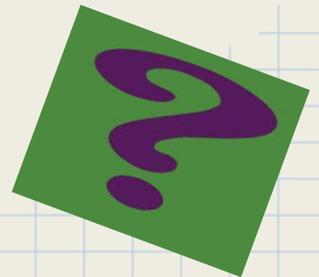
How to Start Your School's Student Council

By The Chicago District Association of Student Councils



Reason Why

- As a willing advisor or student member, you must come up with a reason why you want to start a student council at your school.
- Improving student morale, working to solve a school issue, improving relationships between staff and students, or simply planning a school event such a dance are all reasons to start your student council.
- A solid reason will remind you of why you started this organization and fuel your efforts when working throughout the year.



Establishing Positions & Roles

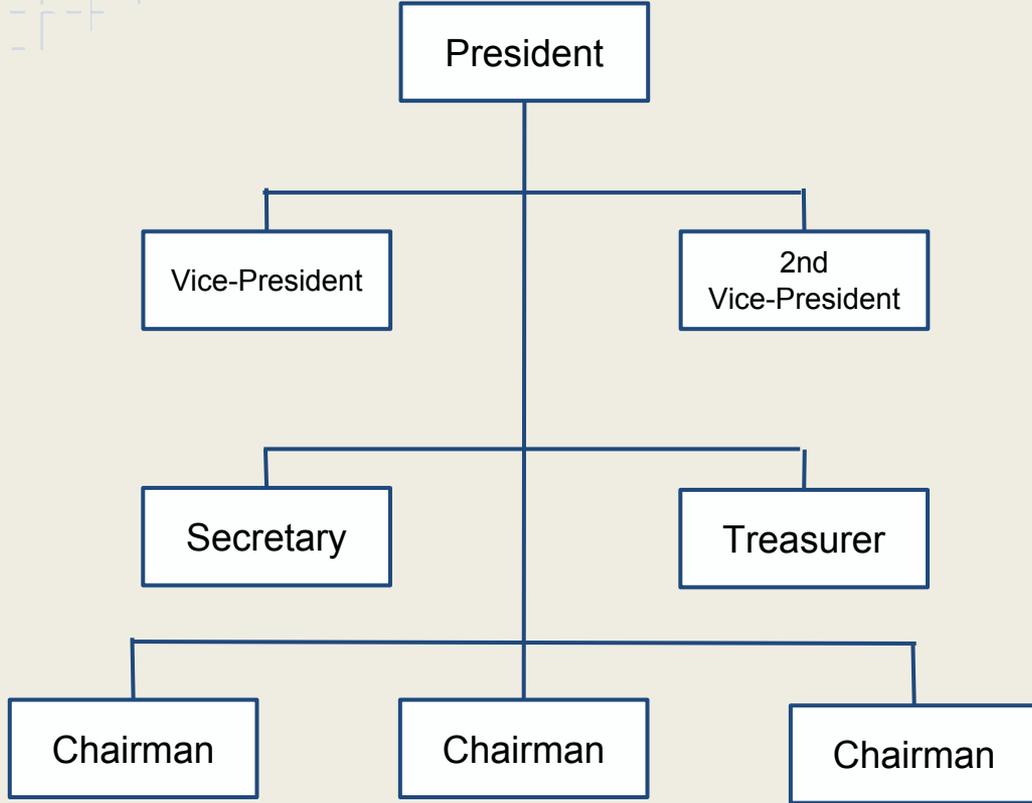
- Although you may have a group of individuals who want to achieve the same goal, you must have separate positions and roles so that everyone can play their part without any conflict.
- Positions include President, Vice-President, 2nd Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Together these positions are labeled the Executive Board.
- Positions may be added on where ever seen fit or if you would simply like for your student council to expand. These positions can be assigned to specific areas such an Activities Chairman, Fundraising Chairman, and Community Service Chairman.

Establishing Positions & Roles (CONT.)

- President
 - Presides over all meetings for your Student Council
 - Prepares an agenda for all meetings with the help of the advisor
 - Vote only in the case of a tie
 - Perform any duties assigned by the Executive Board
- Vice-President
 - Preside at all meetings in the absence of the President
 - Assist the President as needed
 - Perform any duties assigned by the Executive Board

Establishing Positions & Roles (CONT.)

- Second Vice-President
 - Assist the President as needed
 - Perform any duties assigned by the Executive Board
- Secretary
 - Take minutes at every meeting and keep them on file
 - Take attendance at every meeting
- Treasurer
 - Handle all financial matters
 - Work with advisor to prepare annual budget and maintain and monitor the bank account of your student council



Establishing Positions & Roles_(CONT.)

~The position doesn't make the person. The person makes the position.~

Identify Resources

- In order to execute plans you need know what resources you have available to do so.
- Resources will aid your efforts and even make them easier depending on what you have access to.
- Resources can include: money, spacious areas(i.e. gyms & theater), printer/copier machine, office supplies, connections to significant people and personal talents or skills.
- Identify how much of a resource you have and to what extent you are able to use that resource.

Set a Goal

- Setting a goal for your first year will often be closely related to your reason for starting the your Student Council.
- Ideas: Fundraising for a specific cause, planning a dance, creating and/or participating in a community service project, and planning a talent show for students.





Process to Reaching Your Goals

Recognition

- As an organization of students who are working for the betterment of their school it is important that your student body and staff are aware of your presence.
- With recognition comes support and with support comes the ability to do more within your school.
- Advertising can be done through flyers, intercom announcements, events sponsored by your Student Council, gifts of appreciation to staff members, awards given to significant students, and any other means of advertising that your school has available (i.e. newsletters, websites, etc.).

Productivity

- One of the worst things that can happen to a Student Council is for its members to begin the planning of an activity or event and then fail to follow through.
- Failing to follow through on any plans lowers your credibility as an effective organization within your school that is capable of performing tasks.
- Executive Board members should meet **AT LEAST** once a week. This enables members to report on progress periodically which creates consistent growth in your efforts.

(School Name)
Student Council Executive Board Meeting
(Date)

- I. Call to Order
- II. (General Subject)
 - a.(Necessary Detail*)
 - b.(Necessary Detail)
- III. (General Subject)
 - a.(Necessary Detail)
 - b.(Necessary Detail)
 - c.(Necessary Detail)
- IV. (General Subject)
 - a.(Necessary Detail)
 - b.(Necessary Detail)
 - c.(Necessary Detail)
- V. For the Good of the Order
- VI. Adjournment

*Agendas are used as guides for the information that will be discussed about at a meeting. This means that they do not have to be filled with every detail pertaining to the subject matter. Details will be announced verbally and are noted by the secretary and any other individual who chooses to do so.

Long-term Goals

- As a staff member who plans on being the sponsor for years to come and as a younger student who plans on being involved for the remainder of their high school career it should be your objective to improve on the year prior.
- Every new year your goals should consist of strengthening an area you saw as “weak” in the past year.
- Areas of improvement that even developed councils work to improve on are organization, communication, productivity, and effectiveness.

Long-term Goals (CONT.)

~Rome wasn't built in a day and neither will your student council be. It takes time for things to grow to their full potential so instead of impatiently waiting for that time, celebrate the moments of progress and your student council be the ideal organization before you know it.~

What Works for You

- -Every school looks different
 - Every school has a different kind of student body
 - Every school has a different general attitude
- With that being said every student council has a different set of obstacles to face so you all should do what works best within the boundaries of your school.

Most Important of All...

~Student council is a means of bettering your school and being the voice for your student body (hence the name STUDENT council). Make decisions that will appeal to the majority of your school's population and **NOT** that of only the group of Executive Board members. Yes, the Executive Board members hold large responsibilities and, therefore, are in charge but that does not mean they are in full control. They are the ones who guide their peers to great outcomes instead forcing them into them.~