

HOW TO GET FACULTY HELP AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENT COUNCIL AND ITS PROGRAMS

“A person does not care until they know you care about them.”

The faculty, administration, and support staff of the school must feel connected to the Student Council, informed about Student Council projects and programs, and appreciated by the Student Council.

Helping Administrators To Feel Connected to Student Council and Informed about Projects and Programs

1. Work with the superintendent, principal, and the assistant principals during the summer to build a relationship between the new Student Council officers, cabinet and advisor(s). Even if there is a long tradition of administrative support, it never hurts to enhance it and make sure that they connect with the new leaders of the student body.
2. As this school year ends, the new Student Council officers, new cabinet or committee chairs and advisor(s) should find time to review the activities and projects of the past year(s) and develop specific goals for the new school year. These goals should be written down and if time permits, some specific objectives should be listed to carry out these goals.
3. A mid-August (or before the start of the new school year) meeting with the administration should be scheduled now or before everyone leaves school in June. At this meeting, a written copy of the goals should be shared by the Student Council leaders with the principal and other administrative leaders. Time should be set aside to have the principal share the administrative goals with student leaders to create understanding and a cooperative atmosphere. Consider scheduling this as a breakfast or lunch meeting paid for and sponsored by the Student Council.
4. Create a plan for the year for regularly scheduled meetings between the principal/administrative team and the Student Council leaders. While once a month would be good, once a marking period should be the minimum for such planned meetings. This does not preclude Student Council leaders from holding more spontaneous meetings with the principal as ideas or concerns arise.
5. Invite the principal or assistant principal to visit Student Council meetings. Particularly invite the principal to address the Student Council at the first meeting of the new school year.
6. Send the principal and assistant principal(s) a copy of Student Council meeting minutes. Many times they will not have a lot of time to read them, but they then have them for reference and will appreciate the gesture that student leaders care to try to connect with them.
7. Discuss, before and during the school year, how Student Council will make a positive impact the school climate and will enhance an atmosphere of learning and positive feelings about school. Solicit from the administration their support and understanding of the important role that Student Council can play in the school. Ask for their support in helping all faculty and staff members to see the importance of Student Council and school activities in the creation of a successful school. The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) is an organization that most principals and assistant principals belong. NASSP is the parent organization of the National Association of Student Councils and has distributed a number of articles to principals on the value of Student Council and co-curricular activities in schools.

Helping Faculty Members Feel Connected to Student Council and Informed about Projects and Programs

1. Student Council advisor(s) should assist student leaders in scheduling a meeting with the representative group of teachers in your building that have been elected by their fellow teachers from their education association or union. Meet in late August as the teachers are returning to school or within the first weeks of the new school year. This group may not be used to meeting with student representatives. It is important that goals have developed for the year and that students have met with the school administration before this meeting. The teacher representative group should know why the Student Council wishes to meet since it has probably never happened before. The meeting should be well prepared for and like the meeting with school administrators it should focus on:
 1. The ideas Student Council has for the new school year
 2. How Student Council plans to create a positive school climate for learning and activities in the building,
 3. The operation of the representative system and how the teachers can support student council in that effort of good representation and good reporting
 4. An opportunity to hear the concerns and ideas that the teacher organization has about the school and the Student Council that Student Council.
2. Provide all teachers with a copy of the minutes of each Student Council meeting. This can be done electronically. Ask that they be posted on their classroom bulletin board. Encourage teachers to read over the minutes themselves so they also know what Student Council is doing. Many teachers may not always have time to read the minutes, but the thought that Student Council wants to connect with THEM is also important.
3. Many Student Councils create a Student Council Newsletter to distribute to the student body. They may also work with the school newspaper to have a Student Council column in each issue. Consider printing a Student Council Newsletter for Faculty and Staff to be distributed once each marking period highlighting what Student Council has done in the past 6-9 weeks and what they have planned in the future.
4. Distribute a Student Council events calendar to faculty and staff members and encourage them to attend or to participate in upcoming Student Council events
5. Plan a Student vs. Faculty Game (Soccer, Volleyball, Basketball, Softball) If Student Council plans a Ping-Pong Tournament, 3 x 3 Basketball Tournament, Video Game Tournament, invite faculty members to play or enter their own team(s).
6. **Personally** ask Faculty and Staff for their help or invite them to participate in Student Council events and programs. Morning Bulletin announcements are fine, a flyer in faculty mailboxes is great, but having Student Council officers and representatives individually approach faculty and staff members is absolutely THE MOST EFFECTIVE.
7. Plan one faculty involvement project each school year. Examples include: having faculty submit HS Yearbook pictures, baby pictures, or take pictures of faculty members' legs or smiles to be identified by the student body. Do it to raise funds or do it just for fun. Connect in a cute, creative and positive way with your faculty. (Contact us at PASCIInfo@aol.com for more details on any of these ideas)

8. For the opening of the school year, create a display in a main showcase or bulletin board that shows pictures all new faculty and staff members. Create an information questionnaire that allows them to share things about their family, hobbies, interests. The students will enjoy learning about the faculty members yet it will not be too personally invasive to the faculty.

Faculty and Staff Appreciation

There are hundreds of ideas for projects for Faculty and Staff Appreciation done every year in schools. Some examples are found below and PASC is always looking to hear ideas from middle schools and high schools are doing so that we may share with all of our member schools. Send your ideas to PASCInfo@aol.com or put them on the PASC shared wiki site by going to: <http://PASC-shares.pbwiki.com>

Plan at least one Faculty and Staff appreciation activity each semester.

Some school districts restrict the use of student funds to pay for Teacher/Staff Appreciation. In those cases, it is important that the Student Council have an annual budget for Funds Raised and Anticipated Expenses. That budget should be approved at the first meeting of the year in a recorded vote by the representatives showing approval for use of all student funds (Vote MUST be clearly shown in the meeting minutes). OR the Student Council can do a fund raising project in which all who participate know that the funds will be used for Teacher/Staff Appreciation projects throughout the school year.

Consider appointing a Student Council standing committee whose sole job for the year is to plan appreciation projects for the Faculty and Staff of the school.

Most importantly, if a staff member helps Student Council in ANY WAY on a project or activity, make sure a hand-written thank you note is sent promptly.

Appreciation projects can be costly or done inexpensively. They can be done monthly or on a large scale. Here a few ideas:

1. Welcome back to School Packet (Survival Kit)
2. Student Council members sign up to help teachers get their rooms decorated and carry textbooks on an In-Service Day before the start of the school year.
3. Pay Day (candy bar) with a note "Your Deserve an Extra Pay Day"
4. Decorate the faculty room or lunch room with Pumpkins for Halloween (Could be done for many holidays)
5. Hold a free-affle for staff to win a Thanksgiving Turkey (see if the local market will donate one or two)
6. Decorate the faculty room with azalea plants for Valentines Day and then hold a free raffle to see who gets to take them home.
7. Serve coffee/ tea/juice, and home-made pastry or cookies to the staff by rolling a lunch cart around the halls during a one period on one specific day. Quick classroom interruption will be loved by students and not minded by thankful staff.
8. Pair Student Council members with faculty and staff members for a Secret Elf project. Ask council members to buy or make something nice for their Secret Teacher or Staff member for \$5 or less.
9. Buy daffodils or other flowers and present to all faculty and staff for the first day of spring.

10. Select a day and have Student Council members go out at lunchtime and wash the windshields of cars of staff members and leave a thank you note on the car.
11. Create a Teacher of the Year Award. Announce at an end of the year assembly or awards program

Don't forget:

National School Nurses Day May 12, 2010

Secretaries/Administrative Professionals Day April 21, 2010

Food Service Workers Day: September 24, 2009

Make School Logo Aprons for them to wear on School Spirit Days

School Bus Drivers Appreciation Day: May 3, 2010 (You don't have to wait this long)

Invite them for coffee/tea and homemade goodies after their morning run. Have seniors write a paragraph about their best Bus Driver Memory and share them with the drivers.

National Custodial Workers Day: October 6, 2009

Bake cookies and create a punch to serve to the custodial staff. Remember there may be a day staff and night staff.

Whatever you do, find ways to say thank you, show appreciation, and connect as a Student Council with all faculty and staff members in your building.