

Get Your Leaders Ready for the Year... In a Day!

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Are you in need of a training session for your students to get them ready and excited for the school year? Or maybe you need a boost in the middle of the year to get everyone out of the “winter blaaaahs” and into the “Second Semester Boo Yahs!!” It’s difficult to send every student to a camp for a week – so bring a quick, one-day training to your students to get them ready, focused, and energized!

Sample Schedule:

8:00 – 8:30 Intro and Icebreaker Activities

Make this fun and set the tone right away – we want a high energy, productive day! Get them moving, add some music, maybe throw in a magic trick. And if everyone doesn’t know each other, start with something that forces them to move around and get them meeting/talking with different folks. (Two Truths & A Lie, Perfect Match, Command Performance, Name Circles, etc.)

8:30 – 9:15 My School Activity

How important that your students/student leaders take a step back and think about what goes on at your school. In order to know where we want to go, we need to know where we came from and where we are! This is a terrific activity to think about what activities are important, what they love most about school, what helps the school community...all so they know what they want to keep doing and also change to make the school even better! (Thanks, Anne Postlewaite!)

9:15 -9:45 Goal Setting

Why are the students there? Why are they in positions of leadership? What do they personally want to get out of the year? What are they trying to accomplish this year to make the school better? Find out! Have them write it down – then have them use a pipe cleaner to make an object that represents their goal! Hang those up around the school so the students see them and are constantly reminded to work towards the goals they set!

9:45 – 9:55 Break

10:00 – 10:50 Leadership Portrait

Have students draw themselves on an 11x17 piece of paper. Then have them write the following by each body part: Mouth – a quote that inspires them/they like; Eyes – vision for what they want to accomplish by the end of the year; Ears – something they hear from students the school could do better; Heart – what they can do to make the school more connected; Arm – what they love most about the school; Hand – five personality traits they are most proud of possessing; Foot – something they want to help “stamp out” at school; Top of the Head – What will their legacy be? How will they be remembered at the end of the year/when they graduate? Then hang these wonderful works of art around the school – it can be your Hall of Leaders!

11:00 – 11:55 Mission Statement

Break students back up into groups and have them start thinking about what is important to them and what they want to achieve. Then facilitate a discussion so that you all come up with a Mission Statement unique to this group! Student Council may have a Mission Statement in its Constitution, but let’s make one for the 2016 Student Council! Then one for the 2017 Student Council. Each group is unique and may have a different group mission than the previous year. Let’s find out what that is!

12:00 – 12:50 Lunch

Or, depending on how much time you have available, you can end the training day here if you have to! If you are able to continue into the afternoon, think about playing games during lunch, maybe have trivia with each table competing, or make people with certain birthdays (e.g. all the January and February birthdays) switch their seats every ten minutes to continue mixing up the group.

12:50 – 1:45 Leadership Carnival

This is a great activity to demonstrate teamwork and utilize different skills within your group. You want to have five stations, all with different topics/challenges. One could be science questions, another could be a quiz of sports team names, one could be geography, another could be a puzzle of some sort...be creative, but just make them different! Split your group into teams (probably no greater than eight per team) and have five minutes to complete/answer each task. They have to come up with a team name and travel together around each station with their score sheet. Watch as some students step up and take charge when it's something they know and see the teamwork that exists within each group. Does everyone contribute during the activity? Were there different leaders at different stations? Process this with the students afterwards and see what they took from the activity. Most importantly, remind them that we are nothing without everyone else – both in our councils and in our schools!

1:45 – 2:15 Motivating Others/Publicity

How do we connect with the other students in the school? How about everyone in the school community? How are your leaders conducting themselves? Motivating Others begins with a smile and getting to know people in your school. Do they smile and say "hello" to others? Do they get to know people? We want to help people we know and like – so encourage your students to get to know as many people in your school as possible! We also need to publicize events and get people excited about what we are planning. It's time to start thinking outside of the box! Draw attention by utilizing unique publicity "stunts" and tools. Perhaps students can begin to think of different ways to get the word out during this session!

2:15 – 3:00 New Event/Activity Brainstorm Session

You've just spent a day getting students excited, thinking about their roles, how to improve and energize the school...so don't leave without starting to think about new events you can begin planning right there! One of the biggest mistakes advisors/administrators can make is to take last year's calendar of events, give it to the new leaders, and say "here's what we are doing." Again, each group is different and people get bored with the same events! Encourage new ideas. Energize your leaders and school community with fun, new events! People support that which they help to create – wait until you see how excited your students get when they come up with a fun idea here and begin to run with it!

This is just a sample schedule. Move activities around, remove one, add one...do whatever you need to fit your needs/desired outcomes and to make it your own, but make it fun and worthwhile for both you and your students. Know that you can make a huge impact on your year in just one day (or even half-day) of taking a step back as a council and thinking about what you want to achieve – then together you can achieve it!

Useful Resources/Tools:

Energy Stick and other great stuff from Steve Spangler – stevespanglerscience.com

Dr. Earl Reum's poem "Are You An Active Member"

"The Tree" (Lead India) video on YouTube

"Ordinary People, Extraordinary Things" video on YouTube

www.simpletruths.com – terrific inspirational videos you could show during the day

[The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens](#), by Sean Covey

[Great Games to Play with Groups](#) by Frank Harris, Fearon Teacher Aids ISBN 0-8224-3379-6

Thank you so much for being here with us at NCSA 2015! Please don't hesitate to contact me if there is ever anything I can do for you or your students. Can't wait to see you next year in Wisconsin and hear about all the great things you've done!

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