

## Getting Students Involved

“Nobody cares how much you know, until they know how much you care.”

When is the last time you asked your student body anything? A survey is a great first step in letting them know how much you care...

### SURVEY

How to write a “user-friendly” survey:

- LENGTH: short! One page, one side
- SPONSOR: name of the organization (no abbreviations or acronyms)
- REASON: why are you conducting the survey? (clear, concise statement)
- BACKGROUND: what do you need to know about the person completing the survey?
- LAYOUT: RESPONSES
  - As many yes/no or “ranking” (5= strongly agree thru 1=strongly disagree) questions as possible
  - Questions requiring writing should require minimal writing on the respondent’s part (list)
- TARGET: if looking to target a specific population, consider a special cover letter (penny for your thoughts, you’re a lifesaver, teabag, etc.)
- METHOD: how to administer...
- 8-8 method:
  - 8 people survey 8 people for 8 days (yield 512 responses)
  - distribute: please return by deadline (not as successful)
- REVIEW: were new issues/problems discovered? (answered questions often yield new questions)
- ANALYSIS:
  - What does the data tell us?
  - What are our next steps?

Immediate idea after survey data is analyzed: sponsor a series of “town meetings” to discuss or explore issues or concerns

### LONG-TERM Solutions

SGA structure (constitution)

| <b>How to get more students meaningfully involved?</b>               |                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Traditional positions (president-vice-president-secretary-treasurer) | Expanded positions (president–vice president for every grade, recording/corresponding secretary-treasurer) |
| Elected only                                                         | Elected & appointed (parliamentarian, historian, sergeant at arms, program manager, etc.)                  |
| Standing committees                                                  | Standing and ad hoc committees                                                                             |
| Grade-level constraints on positions                                 | Minimal grade-level constraints                                                                            |

Executive Cabinet: inclusive

- Elected and appointed officers
- Appointed chairpersons
- Class presidents
- Club presidents

Purpose of an inclusive Executive Cabinet:

- Report on activities

- Calendar events (no conflicts)
- Discuss problems & issues
- Delegate responsibilities

Representatives: The Cornerstone of the SGA

- Provide leadership training for your representatives
- Have meaningful involvement
- Accountability system
- Representative's mailboxes
- Informational bulletin board
- Scheduled evaluations

### **MONTHLY THEMES**

- helps in planning activities and events
- promotes a link between clubs and organizations
- creates a vehicle for student input, decision-making, and selection process
- contributes to school unity

From monthly themes, a further division into weekly or even daily themes can be developed:

- Example: November themes could include citizenship, veterans, community, thanksgiving

#### ***September: Get Involved***

- Survival kits for faculty
- Welcome Week
- Activity fair
- Election of class reps
- Leadership training
- Lucky lockers
- Staff birthdays
- Get to know your staff!

#### ***October: Fall into the Spirit***

- Harvest dance
- Establish study circles
- Couch potato
- Scarecrow contest
- Peer tutoring program
- UNICEF drive
- "almost anything goes"
- Class pumpkin carving contest
- Hay ride
- October Fest

#### ***November: Excellence in Education***

- American Education Week
- Goblegrams
- Turkey scavenger hunt
- Career Days
- Mock elections

- Turkey teacher legs contest
- Veteran's Day
- Holiday baskets
- Geography Bee
- Spelling Bee

***December: Caring & Sharing***

- Door decorating contest (theme: Peace on Earth)
- H-U-N-G-E-R Week (helping neighbors gain essential relief)
- Clothing drive (hats, mittens, coats, etc.)
- Toy drive
- Holiday Hugs
- Adopt a Family
- Party at Children's Home/Senior Center
- Holidays around the world
- Gift drive
- Toys for Tots
- Cards for senior citizens/military
- Book drive
- Gift baskets

***January: Me Month***

- Self-concepts/self awareness workshops
- BIONIC Week (Believe It Or Not, I Care)
- Snowman contest
- Pat-on-the-Back Day
- Teen depression/suicide awareness
- Clubs' evaluations
- 2<sup>nd</sup> push for involvement in clubs
- Jingle Ball dance
- School-wide resolutions

***February: Heart Month***

- Hoops for Hearts
- Student/faculty basketball game
- Lollipop sales
- Jump rope for the American Heart Association
- Heart & Sole (shoe drive)
- Self-love
- Blood drive
- Flowentines, teddy bears

***March: Creativity Month***

- Shamrocks against dystrophy
- Talent show (lip-sync show)
- March Madness activities (daily lunch contests)
- March of Dimes walk-a-thon (a step in the right direction)
- School clean-up
- Art show
- National Music in Your Schools Month

- March B-ball Madness
- Your School Idol
- Talent show

***April: Citizenship/Leadership***

- National Student Leadership Week
- Student Member of the Board of Education Election
- Student government & class officers elections
- Voter registration week
- Student recognition breakfast
- Comedy Club assembly (April Fools)

***May: Wellness Month***

- Track & field day
- Mini Olympics
- Yearbook signing
- Wellness festival
- Articulation with feeder student government
- Blood drive
- Senior Goodbye Day
- No Smoking Day
- Senior Memories (videos, etc.)
- Field Day
- Carnival
- Carwash

***June: The End is Here***

- Awards assemblies
- Blowing Bubbles Week (exam week)
- Car wash fundraiser
- SGA induction ceremony – passing of the gavel
- Presentation of a school gift
- Good-bye assembly – videos, etc.
- End of the year trips
- End of the year pep rally
- Lots of senior events (i.e. picnic)

**ACRONYM THEMES**

MAGIC – Making A Greater Individual Commitment/Contribution (etc.)

DOG – Don't Ostracize 9<sup>th</sup> Graders