

TEN STEPS FOR ORGANIZING A TSTA/NEA-STUDENT PROGRAM CHAPTER

STEP ONE:

FORM A STEERING COMMITTEE

What is a Steering Committee? A Steering Committee is a small group of people who share common interest and goals

Whom Can I Contact? Friends, classmates, roommates, club members, people in your dorm.

How Do I Approach These People? Ask questions like: Have you heard of NEA Student Program? What do you think of the NEA Student Curriculum? Are you covered by insurance? Do you know what certification requirements are for your state?

Follow with:

“The Student Program helps

”

“The Student Program is an advocate of

”

“The Student Program offers \$1,000,000 liability insurance.”

WHAT DO I NEED?

- To know what the Student Program is and what it stands for
- To have literature available
- To be committed

STEP TWO:

ENLISTING THE SUPPORT OF KEY PEOPLE

Who are the Key People? President of the College, college deans, chancellors, committee chairpersons, Department chairpersons, other student leaders.

How Do I Find Out Who Has the Power? Read the college governance documents. Read minutes from meetings. Read the campus newspaper. Ask college faculty members. Consult with the former Advisor(s) if there was one (or more).

What Do I Do When I Find Them? Make an appointment to see them. Take someone with you to show support. Explain what you are trying to do. Ask about funding and facilities. Ask about being a recognized campus organization. Send them a thank you note.

STEP THREE:

SELECT AN ADVISOR

Is an Advisor Important? Yes, they are the most important link between your organization and the college.

What Do I Look For in an Advisor? Someone who has a good rapport with the students, is willing to spend time with the organization, and has a commitment to teacher education. Hopefully, the person is in the Education Department and is an NEA member.

What If No One On Campus Will Do It? Check the local schools for an NEA member. Be careful though, this may affect campus recognition. Another possibility is a retired teacher or professor in the area.

STEP FOUR:

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Who Goes to the Meeting? Your Steering Committee advisor and maybe some of the key people you contacted.

What Do I Do? At this meeting, you are going to look at the remainder of your organizational plan and prepare for your first general meeting. Make assignments for the next meeting; be sure to include publicity, program and refreshments. Do not hesitate to contact your state association for help at this time.

STEP FIVE:

CHAPTER MEETING

What Do I Need to Remember? 1) To prepare plenty of advance publicity, 2) To select a time and date which allows the most people to attend, 3) To have an interesting program, 4) To keep the meeting as short as possible, 5) To have NEA Student Program literature available, 6) To have membership forms available, 7) To leave participants with the thought that they should join because membership in a chapter is going to be a rewarding experience for them, 8) To set the date for the next meeting,

and 9) To have a sign-in sheet so you have the name, address, phone number and email address of everyone who attends.

STEP SIX:

MEMBERSHIP COLLECTION SPOT

What is a Membership Collection Spot? The membership collection spot is a place that is: centrally located on campus, open most of the time, and where someone can keep an eye on it.

Why Is It So Important? If someone has a membership form but does not know where to take it, they won't turn it in.

What If I Don't Have Enough People To Have One? Ask a secretary if they would do it. Set up a ballot box arrangement. See if the campus bookstore would collect them. Publicize the location of the membership collection spot. You may even be able to have more than one.

STEP SEVEN:

PERSONAL CONTACT FOLLOW-UP & MEMBERSHIP PROMOTION

What Kind of Contact Should I Make? Some possibilities are: phone calls, post cards, letters, visits, and, of course e-mail.

What Do I Say? Thank them for attending. Remind them of the next meeting. Ask if they have any suggestions. Did they join; do they want to? Do they know of anyone else who might be interested? Would they like some literature to distribute?

How Do I Know Whom to Contact? You should have a list from your first meeting. If not, ask people you know attended.

Why a Continued Program? Membership promotion is a year-round task for your chapter. There are peak seasons for membership drives, fall and spring. The process, however, should never take a break. Always have promotion materials visible and readily available. You never know when someone will have the urge to join and you don't want to be caught with your membership down!

Where Do I Get My Materials? Both your state and national NEA Student Program offices have materials. The national and state office address and phone are:

NEA-SP
Membership & Organizing, Room 410
1201 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

TSTA-SP
316 West 12th Street
Austin, TX 78701

Phone: (202) 822-7132

Phone: 800-324-5355

STEP EIGHT:

STEERING COMMITTEE SECOND MEETING

What Happens at This Meeting? Three important tasks must be accomplished at this meeting: 1) Plan for second general meeting, 2) Select a slate of officers and 3) Evaluate what you have done so far.

What Do We Need For the General Meeting? You need to: 1) Follow the same procedures as your first meeting, 2) Hold election for officers, 3) Propose local dues and 4) Establish any committees you may need.

What Officers Do We Need? President, vice president, and secretary/treasurer

How Do We Evaluate? Take a good look at your past activities. Don't be afraid to admit mistakes. Take measures to correct them.

What Should I Submit to the State Association? You need to complete the affiliate application and submit it along with the appropriate documents (Constitution & Bylaws, etc. See Appendix for samples.)

STEP NINE:

PLAN ACTIVITIES FOR YEAR

Who Is Involved? Your elected leaders, committee chairpersons and advisor.

What Types of Things Do We Plan?

Suggestions:

- Set a membership goal.
- Plan the membership drive.
- Identify program areas of concern.
- Set tentative meeting dates.
- Plan for state activities.
- Plan for national activities.
- Develop a budget.

Remember:

- To prevent problems by asking for help.
- To set only those goals you can reach.
- To be patient; growth takes time

STEP TEN:

CONTACT LOCAL AND STATE ASSOCIATIONS

What is the Local Association? Your local community school district will have a local education association, employees that are affiliated with the state and the national associations.

What Can the Local Association Do?

- ▶ Local leaders and staff can give you advice and help you with your student local.
- ▶ They can speak in classes or at your local meeting.
- ▶ They can provide opportunities for student members to visit local classrooms and to attend teacher In-Service day.
- ▶ They can also invite students to attend regular association or regional meetings.
- ▶ They can help answer questions about building your chapter and about entering the teaching field.
- ▶ Be wonderful contacts for you when you begin your job search.

Whom Should I Contact? Call the Association President. If you are student teaching, ask to meet the Association representative in your building.

What Can the State Association Do for You? Arrange for members to speak at meetings. Provide materials or other information. Provide other speakers. Provide statewide conferences.

GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING A LOCAL CHAPTER ADVISOR

A Local Chapter Advisor is a faculty member of the university/college where an NEA Student Program chapter is organized. The faculty advisor has the responsibility of counseling and guiding the program of the Student chapter and its members. Active teacher members from nearby K-12 Associations may be called upon to act as advisors or co-advisors.

A Good Local Chapter Advisor...

- ❑ Knows what's happening at the institution. (Politics)
- ❑ Has contacts on campus
- ❑ Networks with Dean and faculty
- ❑ Bridges communication with faculty
- ❑ Keeps students pumped up; a dynamic motivator; has good ideas
- ❑ Helps arrange and organize ideas
- ❑ Advises leaders and the group in decision-making - Listens

- ❑ Keeps group on track
- ❑ Is current on education issues
- ❑ Believes in and promotes a team philosophy
- ❑ Provides moral support and mentoring
- ❑ Current on recruitment strategies

A STUDENT ADVOCATE - Establishes continuity on campus - Makes suggestions and encourages students - Believes in and fosters professional development - Has a strong commitment to students beyond the classroom - Can develop good working relationships

The Local Chapter Advisor's Role and Responsibilities...

The chapter advisor, whether he/she is from the campus faculty or a local education association, is one of the most critical components of the successful campus chapter. Experience has shown that the advisor's interest in and cooperation with the students, faculty, and administration have an extremely positive effect on the student chapter. The following are major responsibilities of the campus chapter advisor:

- To promote the student program with the faculty members and the campus administration
- To work closely with the students to provide a continuum of leadership ability
- To provide program guidance meaningful to the future of the students in teacher preparation programs
- To develop among the members, an understanding of, and commitment to, the United Education Profession.

Some Suggested Activities to Ensure Effectiveness...

These suggested activities may help the advisor to reach the maximum potential of their local chapter.

1. With an established membership committee, plan and implement a membership recruitment program that includes a concentrated drive and continuous follow through. Any time is membership time.
2. Contact the state student organizer for materials and assistance that will be valuable to the chapter. The Organizer can provide the advisor with advice and information from the state Association as well as the support and resources that it can provide.
3. Contact the local education association in the area of the campus for their support. They can provide many resources for the chapter including speakers.

4. Enlist the support of other colleagues by letting them know what the Student Program is all about and that they are more than welcome to participate.
5. Contact advisors from other campus chapters. Many activities can grow and thrive through the cooperative efforts of different chapters. Ask your State Student Program Organizer for contact names and addresses of chapters in your area.
6. Be sure to plan a year-long program that meets the needs of the members.
7. Develop a budget that provides adequate funds and can be controlled. The State Student Program Organizer can offer assistance with resources.
8. Determine a meeting time at a location that is convenient to all the key participants that will allow the advisor and the student leaders to meet on a regular basis.
9. Establish a "home base" for the chapter, a location where notices and calendars can be displayed and where meetings can be held on a regular basis.
10. Encourage members to drop in.
11. Be sure to notify the State Student Organizer with the appropriate address so materials and important mailings can be received efficiently.