

The Job of the Student Council Advisor

Selection, Duties, and Qualifications

- A. The selection of a Student Council Advisor is usually made by the Principal after consultation with prospective candidates and reviewing a list of potentials which may have been submitted by Students. This responsibility must never be left to chance.
- B. The term of appointment to the Advisorship of Student Council is left to the direction of the Principal, but periodic evaluations should be made to discover if goals are being reached and if people's life achievements are being fulfilled.
- C. Personal qualities of a "strong" Student Council Advisor should include:
 - a. enthusiastic personality and sense of humor
 - b. energy, imagination, and resourcefulness
 - c. interest-in and experience with youth
 - d. at least one year of experience in the school where the assignment is made so that he/she may be familiar with the educational philosophy of the school and the academic climate of the faculty-student combination
 - e. a genuine interest-in and understanding-of the curricular programs of the school
 - f. sound judgment in relations with both adults and students --- the ability to communicate with both (often concurrently)
 - g. sufficient resourcefulness and tactfulness to offer suggestions in a constructive fashion
 - h. cooperative attitude in association with the administration, faculty, coaches, and Student Council
 - i. administrative, executive and business knowledge and skills
 - j. sufficient insight to understand the consequences of Student Council actions and the ability to express these understandings to administration, faculty, coaches, and the Student Council
 - k. objectivity in personal views while working with youth
 - l. democratic and realistic association with Student Council
 - m. faith and interest in young people and their ability to recognize and solve problems
 - n. frankness and a willingness to acknowledge errors and to assume the responsibility for them
 - o. fairness in judgment of outcomes, procedures, and public relations
 - p. calmness under stressful situations
 - q. patience in working with young people
 - r. adaptability to new and varied situations
 - s. ability to serve as the "behind the scenes" coach
 - t. ability and willingness to express appreciation
- D. Some of the problems which are common to Student Council Advisors:
 - a. control of youthful energies of the Student Council – seeing that projects meet the objectives of the Student Council and that the projects are carried through to successful completion
 - b. improving the Student Council meetings (efficiency, involvement, evaluation)
 - c. defining areas of Student Council authority and responsibility and having that be understood by Council Members
 - d. establishing standards for Student Council (attendance, involvement, ethics, etc.)
 - e. obtaining and maintaining student body, faculty, and administrative support of Student Council and its programs
 - f. ability to cope with the conflict of loyalties between faculty and students
 - g. establishing the role of Advisor in the Student Council meeting: a resource person, a directional guide, a counselor when needed
 - h. finding sufficient time to meet with Student Council officers for planning agendas, setting committees, etc.
- E. Part of the Student Council Advisor's role involves securing cooperation and assistance from the school administration and faculty for the Student Council Program
 - a. the Student Council Advisor should develop a reputation of doing things well and thoroughly
 - b. should be given credit for their contributions to the Student Council program
 - c. the Student Council program should be presented and fully justified to the faculty, and then the Student Council should continue to earn that justification
 - d. the Student Council Advisor should seek faculty assistance on Council projects, activities, and events.
 - e. good judgment should be exercised in the use of student educational time. Will the activity interfere with other school work?
- F. Responsibilities of the Student Council Advisor:
 - a. In general, the Student Council Advisor has full supervision of all the activities of the Student Council. He/she serves as the Principal's personal representative to the students
 - i. to attend all Student Council meetings and approve all projects and activities
 - ii. to supervise and give guidance in the planning of agendas, activities, events, and projects
 - iii. to supervise closely the expenditure of Student Council funds – to help prepare the Student Council budget
 - iv. to be present at all Student Council Sponsored functions
 - v. to correlate the Student Council program with the philosophy of the school and or school district
 - vi. to keep the faculty, administration, and parents of Council members informed about Council's programs
 - vii. to act as the liaison person among/between the Student Council, the administration and the faculty
- G. Sources for Student Council Advisors
 - a. Usually the teacher who assumes the duties of Student Council Advisor does not have any specific preparation for the responsibilities. Most of the specialized training will come after assuming the duties of Student Council Advisor
 - b. The Student Council Advisor must become reasonably well-informed in each of the following areas of Student Council work:
 - i. philosophy and history of the assigned Student Council
 - ii. educational objectives for student council and leadership skill development strategies
 - iii. standards for leadership development
 - iv. organization – calendars, time management, goal setting, proper use of delegation

- v. projects and activities – ideas and limitations
 - vi. techniques for group leadership
 - vii. parliamentary procedure and other meeting skills
 - viii. finance – meaningful fund raising and budgeting and knowledge of school procurement policies and procedures
 - ix. evaluation techniques
 - x. values, ethics, their importance, clarification, and retention
- H. An Advisor can obtain resources to perform these duties more efficiently:
- a. by attending formal university courses in Student Activities Programs
 - b. attending Student Council Conferences/Workshops/Conventions
 - i. local/regional – school district resources
 - ii. state – Arizona Association of Student Councils – www.stucoaz.org
 - iii. national – National Association of Student Councils – www.nasc.us
 - c. attending Advisor Training Conference/Workshops/Conventions
 - d. visiting successful, well established student councils
 - e. contacting other Advisors and initiating dialogue/question and answers
 - f. subscribing to professional publications for the advocacy of successful Student Activity Programs or Leadership Development
- I. Criteria for evaluating the work of the Student Council Advisor
- a. Does the Student Council Advisor:
 - i. really enjoy to associate with student leaders?
 - ii. show a keen interest in the environment and the school atmosphere?
 - iii. enlist the confidence of young people under their charge?
 - iv. have a contagious enthusiasm?
 - v. seek to become proficient in the field of Student Council involvement?
 - vi. show an ability to give constructive suggestions and criticisms concerning the Student Council Program?
 - vii. give guidance in a democratic fashion?
 - viii. show a willingness to give time and thought to making the Student Council a more productive laboratory of citizenship and leadership development?
 - ix. display a sense of humor
 - x. find chief satisfaction in student growth – not in expressed appreciation of personal efforts. (students first policy)?