

ADVICE

DUDE. be nice

Why one man was inspired to make kindness his business, and how you can bring the same sentiment to your school

How an Obstacle Course Built a Team

A high school's participation in Team BattleFrog provides a priceless lesson in teamwork

STANDING UP FOR EACH OTHER

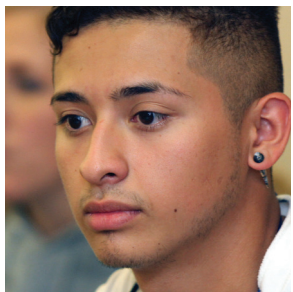
IMPROVE YOUR SCHOOL CLIMATE BY
FOSTERING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION





At LEAD, there is never a dull moment.

Phoenix, AZ, Nov. 13–15, 2015
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Leadership Experience and Development (LEAD) Conferences buzz with excitement as students and advisers connect with peers, enjoy dynamic speakers, and learn proven leadership techniques.

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“My students and I are THRILLED with our conference experience! I am leaving with so many ideas! The students loved how interactive the workshop sessions were. Phenomenal!”

Lindsay Bentz, adviser,
Northglenn High School, Colorado



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ADVICE

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Participation Station

A special section just for student leaders with a wealth of information and advice for navigating school and the future. Find it after page 14.

How do you get 30 teenagers to work together as a cohesive unit? Susan Powell and her students found the answer.

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From the Director

Fall is always a busy time here at NASSP. We have been gearing up for the LEAD Conferences, kicking off this November in Phoenix, AZ. This past September, we honored principals from across the country during a Principal of the Year event in Washington, D.C. We have also spent a lot of time preparing to celebrate National Principals Month in October.

One of the most exciting National Principals Month activities is our annual video contest. It's a fun way to show your appreciation for your principal by creating a short video telling us why your principal is the greatest! Be sure to submit your video by October 31, 2015, at www.principalsmonth.org.

The three winning videos will receive a \$200 Best Buy gift card and will be featured across NASSP's websites.

Another recognition opportunity for your students is the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, which honor students who give back to their communities. Applications are now open at www.nassp.org/spirit.

I'm also very excited to present a new twice-a-year feature to *Advise*: Participation Station. This pullout section is specifically written to and for your student leaders. It includes projects in action, tips for college prep and time management, and much more. I know you will be eager to make copies of this section to share with your chapters and councils.

Surely I'm not the only one having a busy fall, so I wish you continued success with your many activities and events during the school year. Know that all of your hard work is helping to make a difference in the lives of your students.

Ann D. Postlewaite

Ann Postlewaite
Director of Student Programs
National Association of Secondary School Principals

Powering Student Leadership and Engagement

ADVISE

A PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

EXTRA CREDIT

What are you most thankful for?



I am most thankful that my booming voice and high energy are received with curiosity and then acceptance.



I am thankful for my family and friends!

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I'm thankful for all of the dedicated chapter advisers who annually commit to working with the nation's best, brightest, and busiest students who are members of their NHS and NJHS chapters.



In addition to my incredible family, friends, and network of colleagues, I would have to say I am most thankful for the arts—apparel, fine, performing, and visual.

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NATIONAL PRINCIPALS MONTH



OCTOBER 2015

GREAT SCHOOLS HAVE GREAT PRINCIPALS

CELEBRATE YOUR PRINCIPAL!

Great schools are the result of great leadership. Principals dedicate their lives to pursuing excellence in education, and their tireless efforts have helped countless students achieve in the classroom and beyond.

National Principals Month is your opportunity to say “thank you” to your school principal, and students are encouraged to get creative by participating in a video contest.

Students can submit a one- to two-minute video telling the world why they love their principal and enter to win a Best Buy gift card for their school (and eternal YouTube glory, of course).

Join the celebration.
Visit principalsmonth.org for contest details and additional activity ideas to help you celebrate.

#ThankAPrincipal



MORNING ANNOUNCEMENTS



Show the World **YOUR STUDENTS** Have Character!

The Josephson Institute's CHARACTER COUNTS! initiative encourages young people to develop values of trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. This October 19–23, get your members and school involved with National CHARACTER COUNTS! Week. Visit www.charactercounts.org to learn more and report what you did to celebrate this year.

LEADERSHIP LESSONS LEARNED AT FREEDOM ACADEMY

Veterans Day is November 11, and 100 Utah high school students were afforded an inside look at the services and aid our soldiers provide this country. For one week last August, Camp Williams and the Utah National Guard hosted the 54th annual Freedom Academy—a weeklong military-style leadership training camp. Students awoke at 5:00 a.m. for physical training with a drill sergeant and participated in many motivational and squad-building activities. A student at Payson High School in Payson, UT, said of the event, "It gave me a whole new respect for what our soldiers do for us, and what these men and women do to keep us safe. Freedom isn't free."

TELL US YOUR HOMECOMING **STORIES**

From bonfires to fashion shows to spirit week activities, student groups across the country annually strive to make homecoming unforgettable. What did your chapter or council do this year? Submit your homecoming activity—or any of your other projects—to the National Student Project Database by visiting www.nhs.us/projects, www.njhs.us/projects, or www.nasc.us/projects.



WHO DOESN'T **LOVE FREE?**

As an adviser, you work hard. While sometimes the job may seem a bit overwhelming, a visit to www.passionforsavings.com/free-stuff-for-teachers can make life a little easier. This website offers a comprehensive list of free and discounted items and resources just for teachers. In addition, explore the site for coupons and a list of retailers that offer teacher discounts.



Research Suggests Afterschool Programs ARE KEY TO SUCCESS

The Afterschool Alliance, an afterschool awareness program established in 2000, has compiled tons of research in its report titled "Evaluations Backgrounder: A Summary of Formal Evaluations of Afterschool Programs' Impact on Academics, Behavior, Safety, and Family Life (2015)." The research suggests afterschool programs create important advantages for students, not only in terms of academics, but also regarding safety, discipline, attendance, and more.

For example, teachers of students participating in the Wisconsin 21st Century Community Learning Centers' afterschool programs reported more than two-thirds of students improved class participation, 60 percent saw improvements in student motivation to learn, and 55 percent improved their behavior in class. Teachers also reported that 48 percent of students improved in volunteering for extra credit or responsibility. To download the full report, visit www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Evaluation_Backgrounder.pdf.

Be Awarded **FOR YOUR** Outstanding Service

The Outstanding Service Project (OSP) awards recognize NHS and NJHS chapters that have made significant service contributions at the local level. Each project submitted for this award is judged based on their goals and organization, service impact, involvement, and the quality and clarity of the group's written summary. Applications for the award will be available on November 1 at www.nhs.us/osp and www.njhs.us/osp. The deadline is January 25, 2016.



Dates to Remember

OCTOBER

National Principals Month

National Bullying Prevention Month

October 16: Early bird registration deadline for LEAD Conference: Phoenix, AZ

October 30: Registration deadline for LEAD Conference: Phoenix, AZ

October 31: National Principals Month video contest entry deadline

NOVEMBER

November 1: Outstanding Service Project award applications available online

November 3: Prudential Spirit of Community Awards deadline

(www.nassp.org/spirit)

November 13–15: LEAD Conference: Phoenix, AZ

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader.”

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

PRINCIPALS MONTH



VIDEO CONTEST DEADLINE APPROACHING

October is National Principals Month, and time is running out for your school to enter the video contest. It's time to get creative and make a short video (three minutes or less) telling the world what your principal means to you, your school, and your community.

The winning school will receive a \$200 Best Buy gift card (and, of course, eternal YouTube glory). The deadline for video submissions is October 31, 2015. Visit www.principalsmonth.org/contest to learn more and enter.

They Can Tweet and Comment ... But Can They *Really* Communicate?

Today's students communicate arguably more than any prior generation. Between texting, Instagram, and Snapchat, your student council members seldom have a quiet moment free from outside contact. But does that mean they've mastered the art of communication? Not necessarily.

According to *U.S. News & World Report's* College Admissions Playbook blog: "A common complaint among employers is that young people do not know how to effectively carry on a conversation and are unable to do things like ask questions, listen actively, and maintain eye contact."

At the NASC National Conference this past summer, we asked students to identify which leadership skill they rely on most throughout the year: communication, decision making, time management, problem solving, stress management, or conflict resolution. The overwhelming majority chose communication skills. This certainly makes sense for student council members who are constantly interacting with you, their fellow members, the student body, and the community.

As important as communicating effectively is for them now, it will only become more vital as they enter college or a career. As their adviser, you can help sharpen their communication skills to help them excel both in student council and their future endeavors.

Here are a few tips to pass along to get them communicating like pros:

■ **Actively listen.** Effective two-way communication relies on people actually listening to what the other says—not just waiting until someone's done talking to make a point. Active listening builds relationships, improves understanding, and shows respect. To fully listen to a speaker, free yourself from distractions like text messages, avoid interrupting, set aside judgment, and provide feedback.



An exercise at the NASC National Conference illustrates how heavily students rely on communication skills.

■ **Pay attention to body language.** We say more than we know through our facial expressions, gestures, movement, eye contact, posture, and breathing. When speaking or listening, make sure your nonverbal cues match what you're trying to convey. For example, crossing your arms may suggest that you're closed off and not receptive to an idea. Also remember that people may have different standards for body language and personal space depending on their culture, age, religion, or gender.

■ **Cut back on filler words.** We all pepper our speech with the occasional "um," "uh," or "like." However, cutting back on how often we use these filler words can greatly improve our clarity, persuasion, and confidence. Speakers will appear much more knowledgeable and prepared when they don't use superfluous words—and audiences will be more receptive

to what they have to say.

■ **Be clear and concise.** No matter if you're speaking to a crowd, having a personal conversation, or writing an email, it's important to be specific in your language. If you're asking people to take an action, ensure you clearly communicate what it is and how it should be done. Also make sure to respect others' time and get your point across quickly.

Try passing along these tips to your council members as you promote activities and events to the school body and community. You can also try some role-playing exercises during your council meetings to further sharpen their skills.

For more tips and resources, communicate with NASSP on social media—see icons below—or visit www.nasc.us.



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HONOR SOCIETY UPDATE



Honor Society Is Facing Forward

This year you will find Honor Society taking on many new faces. In the next couple of months in particular, you might consider Honor Society to be the face of opportunity as college admission and planning initiatives are introduced. Read on to learn more about how these opportunities will benefit your students and their parents.

For Parents and Their Student Members

As the competitive environment for college admission climbs, NHS and NJHS are excited to offer members and their parents the opportunity to be part of a webinar series launching just before National College Application Week in November. Admission counselors representing public, private, and highly selective colleges will be available for a Q&A format session.

NHS and NJHS students can participate in a Twitter Town Hall on the college admissions process immediately following the webinar. Check www.nhs.us and www.njhs.us for further information regarding webinar registration.

For Student Members

According to Bloomberg Business, "The cost of obtaining a university education in the U.S. has soared 12 fold over the past three decades." To support members in their higher education aspirations, Honor Society is expanding its scholarship support.

The venerable NHS Scholarship program this year will award a total of \$500,000 to senior members based on merit and need. Advisers must nominate scholarship candidates, so visit www.nhs.us/scholarships for criteria and deadline information.

Starting this year, NJHS students can also get ahead on saving for postsecondary goals. The NJHS Outstanding Achievement Awards will recognize 500 NJHS members who best exemplify the pillars of NJHS with a \$500 award. In support of research on the matter, this program is designed to increase the likelihood that members will enroll in and graduate from college. NJHS advisers, visit www.njhs.us for information about the nomination process.

Stay apprised of new Honor Society initiatives by visiting each website, www.nhs.us and www.njhs.us, reading your monthly Honor Society News e-newsletter, and checking out this column in every issue. •

HONOR SOCIETY ADVISERS MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2015—

College Admission Planning Webinar

Join us for the first in our College Admission Planning Webinar series. This interactive webinar will offer a glimpse into the college admissions process like no other. Encourage your students to join in on the conversation during a Twitter Town Hall that will be taking place immediately following the webinar. Register to participate in the webinar and remind your members' parents to do so as well by visiting www.nhs.us and www.njhs.us.

NOVEMBER 2015—The NHS Scholarship application process will be open. Visit www.nhs.us to learn how to nominate the seniors who best exemplify the pillars of NHS.

JANUARY 2016—The NJHS Outstanding Achievement Award application process will be open. Visit www.njhs.us to learn about eligibility and the nomination process.



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CHAT ROOM



CLIMATE CONTROL



This October we celebrate our principals for National Principals Month. Say thanks on social media using the hashtag #ThankAPrincipal, and ensure your principals are encouraged all year long!



School should be a welcoming place for every student, and what better way to do that than promote an open and family-like environment? The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) posts inspirational ideas like this welcome board on its "Learn. Teach. Lead." Pinterest board (www.pinterest.com/officialascd). Tweet us your own welcome boards @NASC_ or @NHS_NJHS.



Encouraging a healthy school climate takes a little bit of everything. Find out what matters most to your students and inspire change.



The NHS chapter at Hearne High School in Texas rewarded good deeds with its "Tag, You're It!" program. Search "Hearne" in the NHS Student Project Database for more info!

The Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) is active in bullying prevention awareness. Join the conversation to #StopBullying with @NationalPTA on Twitter and in the classroom.



Keep Chatting

If you like this page, be sure to follow, like, and share with us on social media, too! For real-time updates, check out these channels:



Facebook:
facebook.com/nhsandnjhs
facebook.com/NASC4LEADERS

Instagram:
[@NASC4LEADERS](https://instagram.com/NASC4LEADERS)

Pinterest:
pinterest.com/NASC4LEADERS

Twitter:
[@nhs_njhs](https://twitter.com/nhs_njhs) [@NASC_](https://twitter.com/NASC_)

A CONVERSATION WITH...

Get inspiration from one special individual who's making a difference

Daryn Frischknecht

Staff assistant for Congressman Chris Stewart



Daryn Frischknecht was involved heavily in her high school's student council, serving ultimately as student body president. She was also a member of NHS. Today, she works as a staff assistant for Congressman Chris Stewart (of Utah's 2nd district). As staff assistant, her responsibilities range from conducting research and tracking legislation on labor policy issues to managing interns.

Advise: Please describe your journey as a student leader. What role(s) did you play? How did they lead you where you are now?

Frischknecht: My journey as a student leader was kind of a roller coaster. I first became interested in student government in middle school, running for office in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades and never actually winning an election. It was something I wanted to be involved in so badly, so I ran again in high school. I was elected to office every year in high school, serving as student body president my senior year. From there, my whole life began to revolve around participating and performing as a student leader. I wanted to be involved. I wanted to be a part of the decision-making process. I wanted to make a difference.

I was thoroughly involved in student government in college, serving as the student advocate vice president. Through this position I was able to represent my peers' ideas, concerns, and needs to the university administration, as well as local, state, and national government. One summer during college I moved to Washington, D.C., to participate in an internship on Capitol Hill. I was able to witness how leadership can build—and destroy—a nation. I felt an immense urge to be a part of this, and to use my skill set and knowledge for good.

Advise: What skills did you pick up from your time as a student leader that you now use on a daily basis?

Frischknecht: Some of the most important skills I learned as a student leader revolve around communication. Taking on a leadership role helped me to provide clarity and keep my council on the same page to ultimately achieve success together. Communication harbored confidence in my dealings with others and continues to do so. Now in my career, communication helps me convey ideas, promote productivity, and be a part of a team to find success.

Advise: What is your fondest memory from your years as a student leader? What activities did you find most engaging?

Frischknecht: The activities I found the most engaging as a student leader were the ones where the whole school was fighting for the same cause. As student body president, my council and I made service a priority throughout campus. We really tried to engage the whole school in our different causes from coat drives to campus clean-up days. My high school ended the school year as one of the top schools in the state for the most service hours.

Advise: What advice would you give the student leaders of today?

Frischknecht: Remember that high school is not the end-all be-all. The things you are learning as a student leader can help you truly make a difference in the world! Dream big, and work hard. The world needs leaders like you. •

STANDING UP





FOR

EACH OTHER

IMPROVE YOUR SCHOOL CLIMATE BY FOSTERING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

BY JONATHAN COHEN

Understanding and celebrating diversity is a challenge. If you are different than someone else, it can easily trigger feelings of anxiety and fear. Are you going to hurt me? Are you going to like me? Is it safe to be open and honest with you? These worries are—in part—built into how our brains work: We are always attuned to possible dangers. This helps us to survive. Evolutionary psychologists often talk about “in-group” and “out-group” behavior and how being in or out of the group profoundly shapes our behavior.

The National School Climate Center (NSCC) works with youth as well as educational leaders from around the world to support school communities in order to create more supportive, safer, and healthier climates for learning, to support success in both school and life.

One of the many projects we work on with school leaders is helping them to measure school climate. Through short surveys, we ask students as well as parents/guardians and school personnel how they feel: How safe they feel in schools, how connected and supported they feel, what kind of teaching and learning is going on, and more. By using school climate surveys, like our Comprehensive School Climate Inventory (CSCI), we develop helpful strategies that allow us to understand a school's strengths, needs, and weaknesses.

One of the most common survey findings we have discovered actually has a huge effect on school climate. Parents and educators typically report that some students feel unsafe in schools, but most

believe this is only a mild or moderately severe problem. However, students across America report that feeling unsafe in schools is a major and severe problem. We have discovered that this is virtually always rooted in mean, cruel, and/or bullying behaviors linked to an intolerance of diversity. Students tease and bully others who are different (i.e., in “out groups”). And any and all differences can, and too often do, become the focus of mean, cruel, and/or bullying behaviors, including: ethnicity, gender, religious preference, socioeconomic status, body type, sexual orientation, and disabilities.

Helping to make schools safe—socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically—is an essential goal for virtually all educators, student council and Honor Society members, and parents. It is well known that if we—students or adults—do not feel safe, it undermines our ability to listen, learn, work, and collaborate with others.

Learning and working to make schools safer is not something any one person can do alone. School climate improvement needs to be an effort



NSCC's Upstander Alliance includes free resources: pledges, toolkits, and short film clips that educators can use to support student conversations for advisory periods, classroom discussions, and schoolwide assemblies. Visit www.bullybust.org/upstander for more information.

that educators, other school personnel, parents/guardians, students, and community members/leaders work on together as a "whole village."

The School Climate Improvement Process

Most school improvement efforts in the United States and around the world today tend to focus on students' language, math, and science learning. Although there is a growing appreciation for social, emotional, civic, and intellectual learning, most school improvement efforts focus on student cognitive learning. However, these more social forms of learning are always going on and help provide the foundation for success.

"School climate" refers to the quality and character of school life. It is based on patterns of students', parents', and school personnel's experiences of school life, and it reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, as well as organizational structures. A sustainable, positive school climate fosters youth development and provides the learning necessary for students to live a productive and satisfying life to which they actively contribute. This climate includes:

- Norms, values, and expectations that support people feeling socially, emotionally, and physically safe.
- People who are engaged and respected.
- Students, families, and educators working together to develop, live, and contribute to a shared school vision.
- Educators who model and nurture attitudes that emphasize the benefits and satisfaction gained from learning.
- Each person contributing to the operations of the school and to the care of the physical school environment.

An effective school climate improvement process is one that ignites the intrinsic motivation of students, parents/guardians, school personnel, and community members/leaders to address three essential questions:

1. What kind of school community do we want ours to be?
2. What are our current strengths, needs, and weaknesses—not just academically but also socially, emotionally, and civically—as

revealed through school climate survey measurement (or any number of other measurement strategies)?

3. Given the "gap" between our vision and current reality, what schoolwide, instructional, and/or relational goals do students, parents, and school personnel feel are most important to work on together?

School climate improvement is all about teamwork: Students, parents/guardians, school personnel, and community members are learning and working together. Honor Society and student council members especially can be a conduit for positive change in their school. Extraordinary school improvement research has underscored that the principal and other educators can't foster a school transformation process alone—everyone has to learn and work together. Over the last decade we have learned that mobilizing students to be meaningful co-learners and co-leaders in the improvement process is a key to success!

Upstander Alliance

Being an "upstander" means that you struggle—in the best sense of the word—to consider what it means to do the right thing when seeing or hearing something that is wrong—someone crying, someone being treated in a mean or cruel manner, or someone being bullied. Too often when students and even adults see a student being bullied, they are a bystander—they literally or figuratively walk on by and don't help. We suggest that this is not socially responsible, and student leaders—such as those involved in student council, NHS, NJHS, or other groups—should strive to set a positive example for the rest of the student body.

For many years, NSCC has showcased a growing body of free information and guidelines for students as well as educators and parents about bully-victim-bystander behavior. Over the last few years, the center has become more focused on developing toolkits and other resources to support students being "change agents" in their school community. All of this serves to foster conversations and behavioral changes that have the potential to shift the social norms of the school from a culture that implicitly supports bystander behavior to a culture that explicitly recognizes, celebrates, and supports upstander (or socially responsible) behavior.

Supporting Student Leadership Around the World

The Tony Blair Faith Foundation's "Face to Faith" project (www.facetofaithonline.org) supports students from a wide range of different faiths and belief traditions (including those of no faith) in talking with each other—via facilitated video conferences—about their experiences. Face to Faith has learned that the number one concern students report internationally (regardless of geography or socioeconomic status) is bully-victim-bystander behavior.

Face to Faith and NSCC are partnering to support students from

around the world learning to do two things. First, our “Standing Up for Each Other” effort will support students discovering the extent to which mean, cruel, and/or bullying behaviors are going on in their school community. And secondly, we provide information and guidelines to affirm students’ understanding of what they as learners and leaders can do to promote more supportive, safer, and healthier school climates. Visit www.surveymonkey.com/r/T6NMWW2 to join the project.

It is important to remember that dialogue is something that is learned. It is critical for students, especially those in chapter or council leadership roles, to experience a range of activities that are explicitly designed to enhance dialogue skills. Learning to have controversial conversations provides an essential foundation for healthy group life and democracy. Rather than shying away from these topics, we must focus on the skills and knowledge that students must learn to be able to have difficult conversations with others.

The School-Community Partnership Process

It really does take the whole village to support children’s healthy development and capacity to learn. Most educational leaders know that K–12 schools need the support and help of community members and leaders, but relatively few schools focus on this foundational goal.

The NSCC has developed a Community Scale and School-Community Partnership Process to support school climate reform efforts. This process can be an exciting way to engage students as leaders in their council or Honor Society chapter. Students take a very short survey to 15 sectors of the larger school community (ranging from faith-based establishments to local media, law enforcement, local political/civic leaders, arts organizations, and more). They ask these two questions:

1. What are your perceptions of our school/community partnership as it is currently?
2. To what extent would you be interested in learning about and actively supporting the school’s improvement efforts?

We have been very excited to see how many methods students as well as community members have developed. For example, one community had an Elk Club that included many members who needed students to work on various summer projects. The students and these community members ended up collaboratively hosting a job fair that resulted in many students obtaining summer jobs. In another community, members of a senior citizen complex wanted to learn about what high school students were thinking and doing. And, the high school students decided they wanted to learn from the senior citizens. This has resulted in a new monthly set of meetings that involve students going to the senior citizen facility so both groups can learn from each other.

Community members and leaders also have the ability to

support the school’s improvement goals. Several school communities that have identified bully-victim-bystander behavior as a central problem are now working with community members and leaders to address this together. In fact, what it means to be a witness and how we respond to someone being hurt has profound historical and civic implications. Mean, cruel, and/or bullying behaviors are only possible if the community of witnesses passively or actively supports this. And, when parents (not to mention faith-based leaders and local, civic, and media leaders) talk about the role of the witness in human history and/or daily life and recognize the school’s efforts to raise awareness about bully-victim-witness behavior, they can powerfully support the school’s efforts to create a healthy school climate.

“Too often when students and adults see a student being bullied, **they are a bystander—they literally or figuratively ‘walk on by’ and don’t help.**

We suggest that this is not socially responsible.”

Listen to students talking about their experiences with the Community Scale and the School-Community Partnership by visiting www.schoolclimate.org/climate/community-scale.php.

Members of the whole school community—students as well as parents/guardians, school personnel, and community members—should be active co-learners and co-leaders of the school’s improvement efforts. Although the principal should be the “captain of the ship,” remember that school improvement needs to be a “whole village” effort. Students, especially those involved with student council and NHS/NJHS, can and should play a central role in the process. •



Jonathan Cohen, PhD, is the president and co-founder of the National School Climate Center. He’s also adjunct professor in psychology and education at Teachers College, Columbia

University, and a consultant. He may be reached at 212-707-8799 or jonathancohen@schoolclimate.org.

EXPLORE

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JUNE 24–26, 2016
CENTURY HIGH SCHOOL
PORTLAND, OREGON

2016 NASC National Conference

During this memorable three-day event, student council members and advisers will roll up their sleeves and dive into robust leadership training. With high-energy, engaging speakers and informative workshops, this conference never fails to send you home with the knowledge and enthusiasm to improve your council and realize your leadership potential. [#NASConf16](#)



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NASSP
National Association
of Secondary School Principals
NASC is a program of NASSP

ADVISERS: Tear out this special student section and pass it on to your members!



PARTICIPATION STATION

Welcome to Participation Station, a place where student leaders can find a wealth of information and advice for navigating school and preparing for the next stage, whatever that may be.

If you're an established student leader looking for some direction for your next project, or if you're just starting out and seeking inspiration and mentorship, Participation Station is right for you. The stories, quotes, and checklists in this section are aimed at one goal: helping students become great leaders.

Leadership means being prepared and taking action when it's your time. Preparation is more than just creating a meeting agenda; it's evaluating the big picture and analyzing how all the pieces fit together to take something from good to great. Staying prepared for the ups and downs is also a necessary skill for successful leadership. Rely on your network of friends, family, and advisers when you're not sure what to do next. Start early, set a distinct goal, and don't be afraid to ask for help along the way.

Enjoy this first edition of Participation Station, and keep an eye out for opportunities to participate in future issues of *Advise*.

TOOLS FOR STUDENT LEADERS



Your leadership organizations are packed with information and opportunities after high school. Check out the National Association of Student Council Distinguished Student Leaders Program (www.nasc.us/distinguished) and the the student section of the National Honor Society website (www.nhs.us/students) to get the most out of your membership.

IN THIS ISSUE

PROJECTS IN ACTION
The National Student Project Database is full of incredible ideas and inspirational leaders. The Connect club is a great project on new student orientation for our first Participation Station! **2**

SHOW OF HANDS
Science, art, teamwork, and what else? Find out which skills adults say students need to succeed! **2**

YOUR FUTURE IS BRIGHT
Have you started thinking about college yet? No matter where you are, here are some pointers to get your head in the post-secondary game. **3**

TIME MANAGEMENT
Figure out how to make time work for you, not against you. **4**

PROJECTS IN ACTION



A CASE STUDY IN CONNECTIONS

National Honor Society members Sydney Winkler and Stephanie Sison, now seniors, struggled when they first arrived at Manheim Township High School in Lancaster, PA—Sydney as a freshman and Stephanie as a new student. They wanted to find a way to ensure that other students had better experiences in the future. Here's their story.

We got lost multiple times, sat alone on the first day at lunch, and even sat in the wrong classrooms. With this in mind, we wanted to make sure that both freshmen and new students would see familiar faces upon entering their first day of school. The Connect club mentors are those faces.

The first step to starting Connect was finding an adviser. We selected our English teacher, Mrs. Deibler. She guided us and supported us on all levels. As a team, we met with the principal, guidance counselors, and the teaching staff to present our plan. Once Connect was approved, we promoted it around school to encourage participation. Mentors joined through an application process.

The Manheim Township Educational Fund donated a generous amount of money to help kick-start Connect. Along with other events throughout the

This inspirational story and others like it can be found on the National Student Project Database. Visit nhs.us/projects, njhs.us/projects, or nasc.us/projects for more project ideas, or to submit your own! For full access, ask your adviser to help you log in.

year, we planned an Orientation Day for new students at the beginning of each school year.

For this year's Orientation Day, we featured a 45-minute Q&A period and a scavenger hunt for students to become familiar with the school's layout. We set up mentor stations with QR codes. When students scanned the QR code with their smartphones, information about the school came right up. The first group to make it back to the cafeteria was rewarded with Chipotle gift cards.

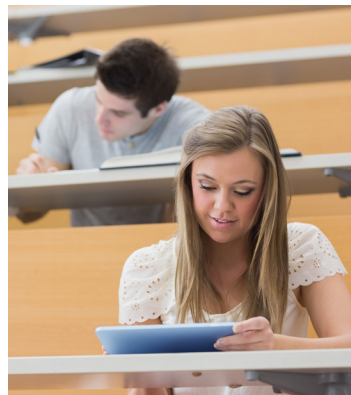
We have watched our club grow tremendously in the past year. When we graduate this spring, we will pass Connect to new leadership. Throughout this school year, we will survey Connect members and decide on next year's president. We hope to visit the orientation next year as we once again assume the role of incoming freshmen—but this time, for college.

SHOW OF HANDS

FACTS AND STATS YOU NEED TO SUCCEED

Advantages of Early Acceptance

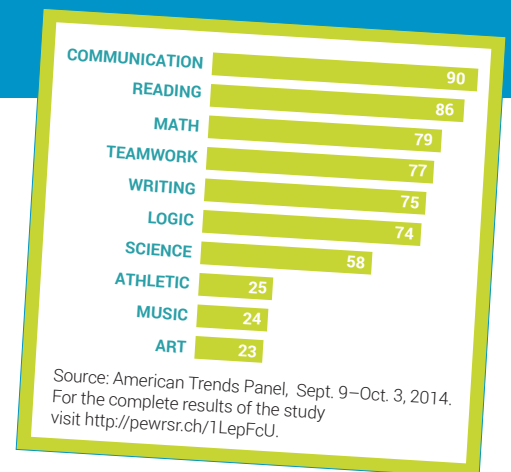
According to Bloomberg Business, acceptance rates for college early acceptance programs can now be more than twice as high as in the regular round. Duke University advertises the advantage of applying early on its website—those students will have an edge that's equal to about 100 extra points out of 1600 on the reading and math sections of the SAT entrance exam.



Skills Needed for Success

As college application season starts to heat up, consider a recent Pew Research Center poll that focused on what skills

American adults believe students need for success after high school. The poll asked about 3,000 adults with various levels of education to rank a list of discipline-spanning skills. What skills do you think are most valuable and are necessary for success after high school or college? See how your answers match up to the adult rankings in the chart above.



Source: American Trends Panel, Sept. 9–Oct. 3, 2014. For the complete results of the study visit <http://pewrsr.ch/1LepFcu>.

CHARITY CHECKLIST

YOUR FUTURE IS **BRIGHT** A College Prep Timeline

Planning for college can be overwhelming with all the options for schools and programs of study, but planning ahead for any big decision is always a smart move. Take these tips for a great start, and remember to have fun planning your future!

IF YOU'RE IN GRADES 6–8:

- Think about the subjects that really engage you in school.
- Get involved in school clubs or sports.
- Talk to your teachers, counselors, and family about your options.
- Develop good study habits and prepare for more challenging coursework in high school.

IF YOU'RE IN GRADES 9–11:

- Challenge yourself academically.
- Schedule meetings with your counselor and parents together to discuss your plans.
- Research scholarship and grant opportunities, and talk to your parents about setting up a savings account.
- Plan campus visits and find the nearest college fair.
- Determine what qualifying tests you need to take and schedule a first round.

AND FINALLY, IF YOU'RE A SENIOR:

- Apply for scholarships early in the fall.
- Rank your top choices and discuss them with your parents.
- Determine if you want to retake the SAT or ACT to achieve a better score.
- Be prepared for application fees. Include those in your overall budget.
- Put thought into your application essays.
- Submit applications and continue focusing on your current schoolwork.

For a detailed list of college prep steps at every stage, visit www.actstudent.org/college/checklist.

How Do You Know Which Charity to Support?

Lots of student organizations wish to raise money for charitable causes. But how do you figure out which one to select? We consulted Charity Navigator (www.charitynavigator.org) to determine the best way to choose wisely.

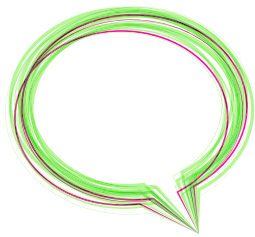
- ❑ Take time to read the group's entire mission statement and ensure each element is something you truly support.
- ❑ Confirm financial reporting habits. Evaluate the methods and strategies the charity has established for distributing donations.
- ❑ Seek out evaluation reports. It's important to know that the program you support is being run efficiently and is having a positive impact on its community.
- ❑ Find internal and external reviews of the services. How an organization responds to constructive criticism or feedback can be a determining factor in whether or not you donate. Make sure the charity you choose is "walking the walk."





STUDENT QUOTES OF THE MONTH

NASC DISTINGUISHED STUDENT LEADER
JESSICA SUMMERS



“I’ve learned that leaders don’t sit around once they reach their all-star potential; they help bring others up as well.”

NHS SCHOLARSHIP WINNER
ALEXIS JOHNSON



“Any individual can be faced with a hardship at any given moment in their own lives. We all need to be ready to serve others but also accept help when we are needed, either physically, spiritually, or mentally.”

Learn more about the NHS Scholarship at www.nhs.us/scholarships or apply to become an NASC Distinguished Student Leader at www.nasc.us/distinguished.

Are You Ready to LEAD?

LEAD Conferences offer students the opportunity to grow and connect through three major regional events per year. Look for an upcoming LEAD Conference near you!

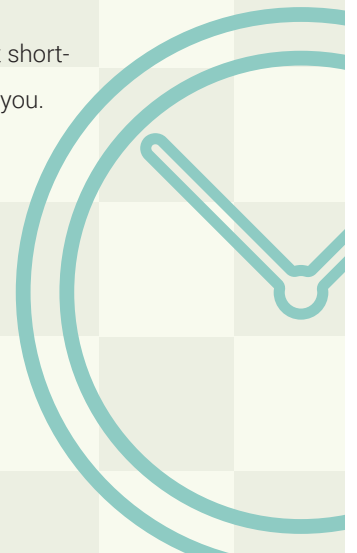
- **Nov. 13–15, 2015**, Phoenix, AZ
- **Jan. 29–31, 2016**, Washington, D.C.
- **Feb. 12–14, 2016**, Chicago, IL



MAKE TIME WORK FOR YOU

Time is always in short supply, but these tips will help you manage it better

1. **Prioritize**—think about the negative or positive outcome when the task is either accomplished or not accomplished. Rank tasks accordingly.
2. **Commit**—stick to the plan; don’t let short-term gratification distract or derail you.
3. **Re-evaluate**—sometimes you can over- or underestimate the time needed to complete a project. Use extra time to double-check your plan and determine if it is the most efficient in its current form.



TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR NASC ADVISER RESOURCES

The NASC website has a wealth of information, tools, and resources to help you and your council strive for success.

Make sure you're logging into the Adviser Resources section of nasc.us and utilizing everything available to you:

- Tools for managing your council such as officer transition and end-of-year checklists
- The Communications Toolkit, which provides communications and public relations resources to help you bring positive attention to your school
- Resources specifically for new advisers, including a survival guide and tips on building a constitution



Visit nasc.us/adviser-resources and get to know all the tools available to you!



NASC is a program of NASSP



BY BRENT CAMALICH

DUDE. be nice



MAKING KINDNESS COOL

WHY ONE MAN WAS INSPIRED TO GET OUT THERE AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE, AND HOW YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS CAN DO THE SAME

Brent Camalich hopes to inspire people to treat others better. As CEO of DUDE. be nice (www.dudebenice.com)—an apparel company based in Southern California—he’s changing the world by creating clothing styles that are trendy and promote a simple message: Be excellent to one another. His goal? To build a brand that positively impacts campuses and communities across the country through selfless programs that young people want to be a part of.

If Kindness Is Going to Stick, You Have to Feel It!

Overwhelming research suggests that the best way to develop kindness in young people is by actually feeling it, not just thinking about it. Antibullying and kindness weeks/months are well intentioned, but I’ve come to discover a couple of issues with this approach: 1. They often don’t do a very good job of inspiring action, and 2. Just using terms like “anti” to describe what’s supposed to be a positive week is counterintuitive and has become cliché in the eyes of young people. Understanding this, my team and I decided to create a brand that inspires young people to treat others better—DUDE. be nice.

There are so many brands that young people are wearing every day that are negative or insignificant. We want to stand for something positive. I’m sure you’ve noticed some of the trendy brands young people are wearing to school these days that sometimes make you shake your head with confusion and disappointment. Often, there is a complete lack of awareness that the clothes a young person is wearing say a lot about their own personal brand. At a middle school recently, I noticed a kid wearing one of the more popular teen brands today called Young & Reckless. When I asked him, “What happens when you’re ‘young and reckless?’” he took a moment, dropped his head, and responded, “Ahhhhh, you probably get hurt or hurt someone else.” I asked him how cool that was, and he quickly recognized it actually wasn’t very cool at all.

Companies like that are making millions of dollars from young people, and I’m not sure they care too much about making a difference in their lives. The ultimate goal of DUDE. be nice is to motivate young people to do nice things for others. We’ll tell you more about some free resources we’ve created for you to make DUDE. be nice a part of your school, but first, here’s why building this brand for and with young people is so important to us.

What’s the Motivation?

I was one of those kids in high school who participated in everything—a sort of “student leader,” really—so I should have been the kind of guy that always went out of my way to make others feel like they mattered, right? Wrong. While there are plenty of things I’m proud of from my high school years, I am also super embarrassed about how I handled some situations and how that negatively impacted people’s lives. I recently reached out to a person that I tore down consistently in high school to apologize. While he accepted my apology, he made it very clear how much of a negative impact I had on his life. He let me know that I “made high school a time that he would never want to relive.” This breaks my heart, and I don’t want anyone to ever experience either side of this situation.

My motivation for being involved in leadership in high school was mostly about me: I wanted to be sure my college application was nice and full, and I liked being in the limelight. I wish leadership for me would have been more about creating

Students at Buena Vista High School in Ventura, CA, celebrated their favorite security guards with a parade throughout the school and the guards were the stars.



How do you make DUDE. be nice come to life on your campus?

We've created a few resources to make being kind a little cooler and easier:

- Check out the free videos from the DUDE. be nice Project at www.dudebenice.com for inspiration. Warning: You may need a tissue or two.
- We've also built a free DUDE. be nice Week Activity Guide to help students create a week of positive events on your campus under a more relevant umbrella. This guide also takes a deeper dive into why all of this being nice stuff actually matters. You can download and print it out at www.dudebenice.com/pages/dbn-week. Note: This week is meant to be student-led. Teachers should provide encouragement and parameters.

Here are some additional online resources you can use to promote kindness and a welcoming school climate:

- www.stompoutbullying.org
- www.stopbullying.gov
- www.character.org/key-topics/school-climate
- www.ripplekindness.org
- www.thinkkindness.org

opportunities for my classmates that made high school better for them. DUDE. be nice gives us a platform to help young people reshape what being a true leader really means. We want kids to grow up and feel proud of the person that they were in school.

In college, I directed all of my attention toward opportunities that would land me a career in journalism after I graduated. And before I graduated, I got hooked up with a job producing the 11:00 news for a CBS affiliate in California. I thought I had “made it.” I worked 12 hours a day, almost seven days a week for a year-and-a-half writing the news, putting our show in the order I thought would create the most viewership, and directing the anchors during the show via fancy earpieces. Have you watched the news lately and thought, “Wow, what a wonderful world we live in!”? I know I haven’t.

Unfortunately, I became addicted to telling tragic news stories because those were the types of stories that typically generated the most viewership. More viewers meant better ratings and more advertising dollars. I fell victim to the newsroom mentality “if it bleeds, it leads.” I quickly became disenchanted with this mentality and moved on.

Fortunately, during a couple of months in college, I worked at a youth summer camp where we took kids wakeboarding, skateboarding, backpacking, and taught leadership skills—we basically got paid to do whatever we could to positively impact kids’ lives. I loved it, and I knew it was time for me to reintegrate myself back into this type of atmosphere.

After I realized that producing the news wasn’t my dream job, I went back to working at the youth summer camp. It was an incredibly meaningful experience, but my parents eventually suggested that I get a “real” job because they were tired of me asking for a little extra cash at the end of every month to cover my rent. When the camp wasn’t in session during the summer, I spent my time marketing the camp. In other words, I was responsible for telling families and their kids why going to our camp was a great thing. I enjoyed finding new ways to influence people to sign up for camp, especially since I believed in the product I was selling.

Through different relationships and persistence, I eventually moved on to a “real” career spanning sports, entertainment, and traditional marketing. I had some amazing experiences that I could have only dreamed of as a kid. While I’ve worked in what some would consider “dream jobs,” I’ve still always wanted to feel like my work is having a positive impact on youth while also leveraging my favorite career experiences over the past decade.

A Tangible Way to Make an Impact

DUDE. be nice comes to life through the DUDE. be nice Project, which is a platform to get young people stoked about doing nice things for awesome people in their communities. It encourages young people to find those unsung heroes and recognize them in a super fun, creative, and meaningful way. The best part is the students choose their unsung hero, not the staff. Amanda from Loara High School in Anaheim, CA, said, “We always talk about doing nice things, now we are finally going out and doing it.”

In our celebrity-crazed society, often times our “heroes” are the people on the covers of magazines or that person with hundreds of thousands of social media followers. The DUDE. be nice Project encourages young people to “zoom out” and identify the true heroes in their community—the people who dedicate each day to making others feel special. We’re really good at praising people for outstanding academic and athletic achievement, but we often neglect to recognize people for outstanding *character* achievements.

The DUDE. be nice Project helps kids reprioritize the type of lifestyle that is truly admirable and will create a more happy life for themselves and others. What if schools made it a priority to recognize compassion, honesty, and simple acts of kindness? Research suggests that kids would be more compassionate, unselfish, and more focused on other people. This initiative is a kick-starter to reinforce good character.

We've had the opportunity to work alongside dozens of schools and students to plan special surprise events for those under-appreciated members of the community, including but not limited to a school custodian, parent volunteers, and a crossing guard. It used to be a priority for me to tell tragic stories, but now I get to work with young people to create incredibly good and uplifting ones. The coolest part is that we've documented our experiences with schools, and you can watch these stories for inspiration on our website, www.dudebenice.com. We hope your students create their own DUDE. be nice projects and share stories with us and your communities.

This type of activity isn't just for student leaders, but rather the entire school and surrounding community. Jimmy Gleich from Bishop Manogue Catholic High School in Reno, NV, can attest to that after surprising his big-hearted food-service worker: "It was an event that the whole school could embrace. Everyone was able to have ownership of it. It didn't matter if you were a leadership

kid or not. It was our whole school, our community, and it changed our kids. They've never had more fun being selfless."

Plus, it's important to us that people understand this generation actually cares a whole lot more for others than they may have previously thought—these stories help make these kids shine. More than 2 million people have enjoyed videos of these stories from our Facebook page, and the most common comment goes something like this: "Man was I wrong about kids these days ...". That gets us pumped.

Did We Solve the World's Problems?

We don't expect that the DUDE. be nice Project will solve all of the cultural challenges facing your school. However, we're fueled by the fact that we can play a small part in creating meaningful and positive memories for young people. We're all trying to figure out how to be happier in this world, and the most time-tested way to do that is by intentionally doing nice things for other people—making other people smile is good for you, and it's good for them. And the good news is significance doesn't have to be monumental; the little things we say and do each day can leave a lasting impression. •

Brent Camalich is the CEO of DUDE. be nice. He may be reached at brent@dudebenice.com.



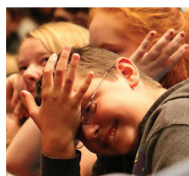
"Day to day...I was just living...Taking up space. I didn't feel like I was worth anything, just because I was different from the norm. You gave me another reason to hold onto my life, and not end it." - Student

BOB LENZ Standing up for the Value of Every Person

October is National Bullying Prevention Month. As you plan your school's campaign to raise awareness and motivate change, consider a school assembly program with International Speaker and Author, Bob Lenz.

"Bob Lenz gave our school the best assembly I've seen in my 24 years of teaching. I've never seen that type of response. Bob connects in a natural, easy-going way with teens." -Teacher

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HOW AN OBSTACLE COURSE BUILT A TEAM

A STEM high school's participation in Team BattleFrog provides a priceless lesson in teamwork and collaboration





BY SUSAN POWELL

Written in collaboration with student council members Sammie Addisu, president; Madeline Burkey, co-chair; Sydney Turner, co-chair; and Jazz Duncan, communications

How do you get a group of 30 individuals to work together as a cohesive unit? Pretty tough, right? Let's add to this dilemma: The group is composed of teenagers who come with all the peer pressures, academic commitments, and social obligations of a typical high school student. As a student council adviser for nearly 20 years, I know firsthand that one of the toughest tasks any adviser faces is figuring out how to get a group of teens to work together.

Each year, several advisers are sitting down with their outgoing seniors planning an upcoming retreat for the newly elected members of their school's council. Many of us use the tried-and-true method of whisking our students away for an overnight retreat at an offsite location in the hopes that after 24 hours of team building, ice breaking, goal setting, and lots of social time, the tendrils of unity will begin to form among council members. For the most part, this is a very successful event, but the reality is that being a member of a student council is all about on-the-job training.

All advisers know to plan, prepare, and anticipate, but the learning curve can be steep because student councils are ever-evolving as they try to adapt to the fluidity of the middle- and high-school arena. The key to a successful, cohesive, and functioning student council is teamwork, so it comes as no surprise that advisers are always looking for ways to reinforce student council bonds of unity. One early morning in May 2014, a golden opportunity presented itself to me, bringing one of the greatest experiences I have ever had as a student council adviser.

It all began when, after reading an article in the local newspaper, my husband and our 10-year-old daughter decided they wanted to be a part of the inaugural BattleFrog Obstacle Course Race in Conyers, GA, and signed up for the 5K and Tadpole Race, respectively. While

Continued on page 27



IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

Here are some of the thoughts and impressions shared by student council members Sydney and Madeline at my request:

"The first obstacle was not actually on the course, but us working together. We found that together we could benefit the team in many departments, because we each had different strengths and talents. The next hurdle was organizing a training regimen suitable for our team of first-time obstacle course runners. We struggled to find a day and place to train that worked for the whole team. As chairs, we stressed the need for team cooperation. If we were to do this race, we had to train. Eventually, the team came together to agree upon the training schedule of 'Mandatory Mondays,' which everyone was to attend, and 'Optional Thursdays,' which were a make-up training day for those who couldn't participate on Mondays.

"Our group of about 20 student council members was uncomfortable with each other. We had just been elected into the council in January, so we had only been together about three weeks. Each individual on the team was at a different athletic level and had specific strengths and weaknesses. At first we were all doing the same exercises, but some were moving faster than others. It seemed as though we could not find a team rhythm. As co-chairs, we knew there was only a certain amount of time that we could pretend to not need the support our teammates could offer. We had to start working together in order to accomplish the obstacles on the BattleFrog course. As the race day hovered over our heads and anticipation began to run in our veins, the team bond really began to grow. We stopped training as individuals and started working toward our goal as a team. We encouraged each other inside and outside of training. Students who would never have interacted because of the age difference could now find things they had in common—a goal to finish this race. People who had never spoken before were now joking and laughing every chance they got. As chairs, we were ecstatic. The teamwork that was starting to show up in our training and preparation sessions was thoroughly encouraging.

"Saturday, May 16, 2015, started as smoothly as we could have hoped. Everyone arrived on time at the race site. None of us could keep still because we were all nervous. Necks craned to see the little bit of the course that was visible. When we walked through the gates, we saw a familiar face in one of the BattleFrog members who visited us at school, Mr. Mike, a retired Navy SEAL.

He welcomed us to BattleFrog and took us on a quick warm-up around the tadpole course. He got us pumped up and gave us a rally cheer of 'lock it up.' The time eventually came for us to approach the starting line for our wave of the course. As we neared, most of the excitement that had been running rampant among the team turned suddenly to fear. However, we didn't allow our anxiety to stop us. We formed a team huddle, chanting and yelling. We kept on shouting 'lock it up' because that was what we were going to do to this course. We were going to lock it up and conquer it.

"The starting gun went off, and our team was jolted into action. Every ounce of anxiety evaporated from our minds, leaving us filled only with determination for the course ahead. We had prepared ourselves physically, and we helped each other prepare mentally. As we approached the first of several obstacles of climbing walls, our team, as expected, had split up into several groups. Each consisted of people of roughly the same athletic level. As each group scaled vertical walls, carried 50-pound sacks up a hill, and splashed into pits of mud, we were there for our teammates with encouragement to keep them going, even though we were physically exhausted. Finally, with nothing left in our bodies to give, we emerged from under the Normandy Jacks, the finish line coming into view. As our feet crossed the line and the BattleFrog medallion was placed around our necks, it was the single most rewarding personal experience any of us have ever had.

"As the whole RMSST BattleFrog team can agree, running BattleFrog was an outstanding experience that was made more fun and beneficial by running the race with a team. Our experiences in training in the months before the race, as well as the bonding that happened on the day of the race, were large factors that contributed to our success as a team; many individuals on our team would likely not have passed the finish line on their own. The race was effective in drawing us closer together, which has enabled us to work more efficiently together in our student council. Although the race pushed every team member both mentally and physically, we were able to accomplish incredible things and find the true definition of teamwork."

“We found that together we could benefit the team in many departments,
because we each had different strengths and talents.”

— Sammie Addisu, RMSST student council president

David and Bella were involved in the courses, I had the opportunity to stand by several of the obstacles to watch the participants compete in awe-inspiring feats of physicality and mental acuity. Along the way, I met several Navy SEALs who either built or were supervising obstacle events. It was an honor to converse with these men who have sacrificed so much for our country.

What I learned that day from a courageous group of battle-tested warriors is that no matter how extraordinary the feats that U.S. Navy SEALs accomplish in their career, their triumphs come from one very ordinary idea: Teamwork leads to success. Now, I am smart enough to realize that the skill sets and rigorous training schedule of a U.S. Navy SEAL far exceed anything my student council could ever accomplish as a group, but I started thinking—wouldn't it be great if I could use the BattleFrog Obstacle Course Challenge as a learning experience in teamwork for my student council?

That's when the bell went off in my head. The morning after the race, I wrote a heartfelt thank-you note to the BattleFrog organization for a wonderful experience and mentioned that if BattleFrog returned to the area, I would be thrilled to have my school be a part of this event. Several months later, BattleFrog informed me that they were returning to Conyers in May 2015 and would like to talk to the Rockdale Magnet School for Science and Technology (RMSST) student council about being a part of this event. Thus began this incredible journey for our student council.

The RMSST is a specialized STEM high school of about 325 students in grades 9–12. Our student council hosts all the traditional high school events from socials to canned food drives on campus, but we also recognize our STEM roots by having assemblies to cheer on the math, science, robotics, and debate teams, as well as our annual AP Pep Rally. We have members of our student body who are accomplished athletes on a variety of team sports with our main school, Rockdale County High School, but no member of the RMSST student council had ever experienced anything like BattleFrog.

In November 2014 and February 2015, RMSST was honored to have two members of the BattleFrog family meet with our student council. We formed a plan to participate in BattleFrog as both volunteers and race participants. The first and hardest decision for me was to find two co-chairs that would be a good fit to lead this committee. This job entailed several challenging months of getting a

group of novice athletes ready for an 8K obstacle race. The planning, coordinating, and communication were going to be a monumental task that would need constant collaboration between the chairs to keep it on track. I selected two newly elected ninth-grade representatives that I thought had potential to be future officers. Upon being informed, Sydney Turner and Madeline Burkey had that slightly dazed look that all young members have when first given the reigns of responsibility. Under the watchful eye of our president, Sammie Addisu, the two ninth graders took RMSST Team BattleFrog all the way to the finish line.

From the first member who crossed the finish line in 90 minutes to the last member at over five hours, I witnessed the incredible sense of triumph in every single member as the BattleFrog medallion was hung proudly around their neck. Physically exhausted and with tear-stained faces, I saw a group of young people transform in front of me into confident young adults who now knew that no obstacle in life could ever prevent them from completing a task. At the end of the day, while sitting next to Sammie on the tailgate of my truck, she looked me in the eye as she tapped the side of her forehead and told me that she now realized obstacles were completely in your mind. Sammie recognized that if she—who initially thought she could not do the course because of a terrifying fear of heights—could finish this course, then she could do anything in the world. She realized that she had to just stop thinking and fearing and just start doing, while trusting that her teammates at the bottom of the vertical wall would be there as she climbed down.

This was one of those rare gifts we get as student council advisers where we actually witness the moment when team unity is achieved at its highest level, in which lives are impacted, and growth occurs to create confidence and courage in young people. The students want to keep this spirit alive and hope to make a spring obstacle course a yearly event for our council. I thank the BattleFrog family wholeheartedly for their service to our country and their willingness to provide us the chance to experience this transformative journey. •

Susan Powell is student council adviser at Rockdale Magnet School for Science and Technology (RMSST) in Conyers, GA. RMSST has been recognized as a 2012, 2013, and 2014 NASC Council of Excellence.

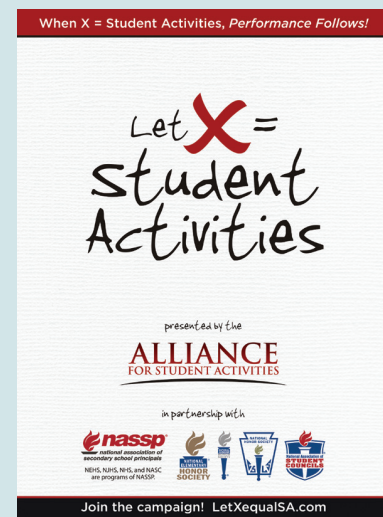
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PUT THIS INTO PRACTICE

BY LAURA MULLEN

Engage your chapter or council by participating in this interactive activity

Leadership Is an Open Book



Objective

Students will participate in a decision-making activity and observe various leadership skills in action. At the conclusion of the activity, students will be able to discuss the various skills of the people in their group and what actions translate to leadership.

Materials

At least five different Little Golden Books prepared for the activity. You may need more books depending on the size of your group. *Note: You could do the activity with a different kind of children's book as long as you do not have visible page numbers and the books you use are an equal number of pages in length.*

Time required

30–45 minutes

Procedure

Students must work together to reconstruct each Little Golden Book.

Every Little Golden Book from the \$0.25 originals printed back in 1942 to the current \$3.00 versions have the same layout: a cardboard cover with a “golden” spine and 12 pages printed front and back, for a total of 24 colorful pages. They are always the same exact size and length and have unnumbered pages, which is what makes this activity work so well.

Make a key for yourself of each book. Record the title of each book and the order of the pages. Because the pages of the book are not numbered, this will be the only way for you to know which order the pages go in for the book to be complete. (This is easiest if you take a picture of each page and keep a digital record for yourself.)

Take your Little Golden Books and, using a box cutter, cut the pages out from the binding of the cover. You should have 12 pages per book (at least 60 pages) and a now pageless set of covers.

Put the students into five groups (or more if you have more books). You should have one group of students for every Little Golden Book. Give each group one book cover.

Shuffle the pages so that they are completely random, and hand each student one of the pages from one of the books. Ideally they should not have more than two or three pages from the book that corresponds to their cover.

Instruct each group to rebuild their book in the correct order of the story, and tell them that you are looking to see who finishes first. Be sure to explain that students cannot hide pages from other groups, and each person can only hold ONE page at a time. Let students interact.

What makes this task difficult is students have to determine what books/stories are being used in the activity, which book they should attempt to reconstruct out of those options, how many pages they will need to have a complete story, and in which order those pages should be placed.

Processing

After students have finished putting their stories back together, have them discuss the following questions (first in their small groups and then with the group as a whole):

- What steps did your group take to put your book back together?
- How did you work together?
- Did anyone stand out as the one giving instructions or guiding the group?
- What did the leaders do that made this activity easier?
- Did anything make the task more difficult?
- What could your group have done differently to be more successful?
- What does this activity tell us about effective leadership?



Laura Mullen is the NJHS and NEHS (National Elementary Honor Society) adviser at Murphy Middle School in Murphy, TX. She may be reached at laura.mullen@pisd.edu.

COLLABORATION

Get fresh and inspiring ideas for your next project

POPCORN DAY



Did you know October is National Popcorn Month? Birdville High School's student council in North Richland Hills, TX, took advantage of the occasion by treating the student body to free popcorn during all lunch periods. They worked five popcorn machines, distributed the goods, and helped the janitorial staff clean up after the event.



Bring a Veteran to SCHOOL DAY



Chula Vista High School in Chula Vista, CA, worked with local Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Posts and the USS Midway Veterans Association to obtain commitments from approximately 75 veterans to come to the school and visit social sciences classrooms to share their personal experiences. Afterward, an assembly was held that included a tribute performance from the school's show choir and featured

speakers such as the local senator, the mayor, the school superintendent, and high-ranking VFW officers. Veterans Day is November 11!



Use this key for help determining whether these projects could work for your school.



CHAIN OF LOVE



October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Andrews High School in Andrews, TX, planned an activity called "Chain of Love" to support this cause. Student council members sold paper chain links and buyers wrote the name of someone they wanted to honor on them. The links were put together, and a breast cancer survivor broke the chain during halftime at a school football game. All of the money raised from link purchases was donated in the name of the person written on the link that was broken.



DISCOURAGE BULLYING WITH LIP DUBS

Lake City High School in Coeur d'Alene, ID, shot a video of students performing a skit and included clips that featured students being bullied. Then, they added shots of students

lip-syncing to uplifting and positive songs such as "Firework" by Katy Perry and "Happy" by Pharrell Williams. The project was aimed at elementary school children and when the video was shared with them, the reception was phenomenal! Watch the video here: <http://bit.ly/Kvwmoc>.



SPACE



CANDY ELECTIONS

To help students at Fairbanks Middle School in Milford Center, OH, understand what campaigning is all about, NJHS members held candy elections. After a pre-election vote to narrow the pool to five candies, NJHS members were divided into five groups that campaigned for the candy they represented. During campaign week, each candy group was allowed one morning announcement plus the opportunity to hang posters, give out candy samples, etc., while demonstrating both positive and negative campaigning. In order to win the election, a group had to have the best positive change from the pre-election vote to the actual vote held at the end of November. **Tip:** Let students get creative! Hanging locker decorations, using window paint and sidewalk chalk, wearing costumes, creating campaign T-shirts, stickers, and flyers are all great ways to get the message out there.



LEAF RAKING FOR THE ELDERLY



Westborough High School in Westborough, MA, helped the local elderly community by holding two leaf-raking events during the fall season. Students met at 8:00 a.m. at the school, then split into groups that visited different homes throughout the town. Students raked until about 1:00 p.m., and when the job was done, the elderly residents almost always came out to thank and hug the participants. It was a heart-warming experience for all involved.



MOVEMBER MUSTACHE COMPETITION



The Movember Foundation is an organization that raises money for prostate and testicular cancer during the month of November by encouraging people to grow out their mustaches and facial hair to raise public awareness of the illnesses. Oneida Baptist Institute in Oneida, KY, sponsored a schoolwide mustache contest. Male students and staff were encouraged to grow their mustaches all month long, and at the end of November, photos of the best ones were displayed for students to select their favorite. Students voted using their spare change, and all proceeds were donated to the cause.



AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK TEACHER CHOICE LUNCHEON

American Education Week is November 16–20, 2015. Arbor View High School in Las Vegas, NV, honored its staff by having each class (freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior) provide a gift for the teachers and staff. In addition, teachers were given the opportunity to vote on their choice of food for a special luncheon held at the end of the school week. **Tip:** Visit a local business and explain your plan. Chances are they will be happy to create an affordable and delicious meal to show appreciation for your teachers.



WANT MORE IDEAS? Log in to the National Student Project Database for thousands of project ideas from schools across the country.

nhs.us/projects • njhs.us/projects • nasc.us/projects



TAKE TEN

As a busy adviser your time is especially valuable, so we've rounded up tips and resources just for you that only take 10 minutes or less

MAKE IT A SOCIAL (MEDIA) EVENT



Get your team interacting on social media to promote your event—before, during, and after. Live tweeting during an event can be a big promotional tool if you organize your group in the right way, and it won't take much time since students will be on their mobile devices at the game, the dance, or the special event anyway.

- Spread the word by promoting an event or group hashtag a few weeks before the event. Make it easy to remember and trendable; the more people who use it, the bigger reach your event has.
- Encourage interactivity! Responding to comments and questions throughout the event (using the event hashtag each time) just adds to the promotion. People love getting mention notifications.

GRANMAW FAITH SUN! (FUN WITH ANAGRAMS!)

For a light-hearted brainteaser at the end or beginning of a meeting, create anagrams with a theme—maybe at your last meeting before winter break. Split your group up into teams, and allow five minutes for the teams to figure out the anagrams (hint: they can be seasonal or holiday-related). The first team to finish wins a themed prize. Or, consider implementing this activity to introduce your next event. The first team to figure out what the event is would be given the prize of being the head of the event-planning team.

REFLECTIONS

As a way to decompress from a busy day or week, spend the last ten minutes writing about something you accomplished. Your accomplishments can range from small to incredible—you remembered to eat breakfast or the event you helped plan was a success. Taking the time to appreciate personal achievements makes the speed bumps a little more manageable. While you're planning out your to-do list for the next day, consider adding an accomplishments list to reflect on your progress, big and small.



Say THANKS

It's always great to hear "thank you," and students or colleagues can always use a little extra encouragement. If you witnessed a random act of kindness or saw someone truly go above and beyond, take the time to send that person a thank-you note.

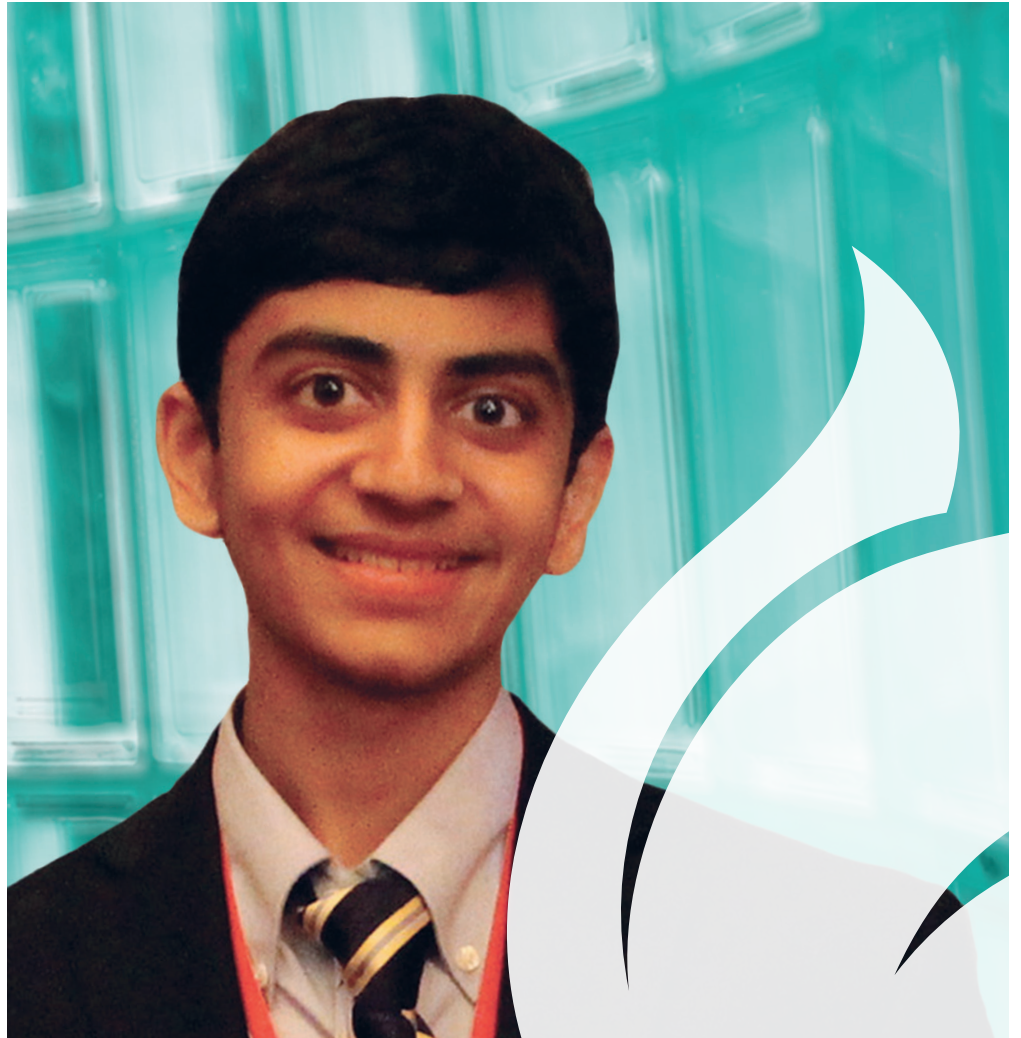
Even if the act didn't directly affect you, acknowledging good deeds can leave a big positive impression. Keep the momentum moving past the season of giving thanks, and it could even boost school morale!



THIS IS THE FACE OF OPPORTUNITY

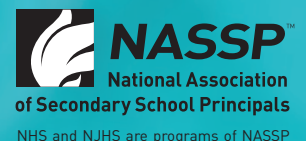
“Being a part of NHS throughout high school was an amazingly fulfilling experience. Through NHS, I learned to serve through teamwork and discovered the true meaning of scholarship. These invaluable NHS experiences fostered my passion in global health, helping me to pursue a dual degree in management and biology.”

ABHISHEK RAO
NHS ALUM
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA



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Feature: Scent Vents

Benefit: Easy Sale

Smens



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Cupcake • Mocha



BLACK INK

Glitter Gel Smens



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