

# PREPARE YOUR FIRST STUDENT COUNCIL PROPOSAL

A practical guide for school student council members.

## EVIDENCE

What students  
need

## DRAFT REQUEST

- 1** One activity
- 2** A clear request
- 3** Local approvals

## ABOUT THE EXAMPLE

The school, students, costs and arrangements in the worked example are fictional teaching material. Your school's current procedures determine approvals.

# YOU HAVE AN IDEA. MAKE IT CLEAR.

You have an idea for your school. Give the person deciding on it enough information to understand what students need, what will happen and what you are asking them to approve.

Start with one manageable project. Read the example, replace the prompts in the proposal page, then check the request with your student council advisor. Keep the school's own form if one is required.

## Ask this before you announce anything

Which form and deadline apply? Who approves the activity, space, spending and publicity? What adult supervision is required? Write down the answers and where you found them.

## Make the decision clear

Use a specific request: 'May we run [activity] for [students] at [time and place], with spending up to [amount]?' Support for the idea may still leave practical approvals to complete.

## Keep your first version small

Choose something your team can prepare, run and clean up with the people and time actually available. A short lunchtime activity can be a useful starting point.

### LOCAL ROUTE TO CHECK

**Form and deadline**

**Approval owner**

Write down the answers and where you found them.

# CHOOSE SOMETHING STUDENTS CAN USE

## 1 Begin with a specific need

Ask students what would help them. Include people outside your usual group. Write a short, accurate observation, such as: 'Six ninth-graders we spoke with did not know when clubs meet.' That tells the reader what you heard without claiming to speak for the whole school.

## 2 Check what already exists

Ask the advisor or activities office whether a club, event or resource already addresses the need. You may be able to improve something that is running instead of organizing a separate event.

## 3 Look for an avoidable barrier

Who could miss out because of the time, cost, location or format? For a clubs introduction, students who take a bus may find an after-school event difficult. Consider a lunchtime option and a printed list for anyone who cannot attend. Ask staff to confirm access arrangements.

### Choose a result you can notice

For a first club preview, a useful result is that visitors leave knowing one club's meeting time and how to contact it. Count visits if helpful, and ask a simple optional question about what information was useful. Keep names and personal stories out of the project notes.

### Write your project in one sentence

'We want to help [students] do [something useful] by running [one activity].' If the sentence contains several events, start by choosing one.

#### WHAT WE HEARD

Six ninth-graders

#### WHAT IT DOES NOT SHOW

The whole school's view

Source 1

Source 3

# A PROPOSAL SOMEONE CAN DECIDE ON

Worked Example. This is a request awaiting approval.

The first question

**Could we hold a club fair next Friday?**

## LUNCH CLUB PREVIEW

## DRAFT REQUEST

### Project

Lunch club preview. Help new students find a club whose meeting time works for them.

### Request

Three existing, school-approved clubs host information tables during one Friday lunch. The activities office must confirm the date and location before we announce it.

### Need

Six ninth-graders told council members they did not know when clubs meet. We will also make the meeting list available to students who cannot attend.

### People

Maya coordinates. Three club representatives host their tables. The advisor confirms the supervising adult and the permitted capacity. Maya and Jonah lead cleanup.

### Plan

Borrow three tables. Allow 5 minutes to set up, 20 minutes for visitors and 5 minutes to clear the space before the bell. Staff check that the location and timing work.

# WHAT THE REQUEST INCLUDES

Example Record. Approval is still pending.

LUNCH CLUB PREVIEW

PRACTICAL DETAILS

Budget

Request a ceiling of \$15: printing \$6, signs \$4 and a \$5 reserve. These are illustrative estimates. School finance staff confirm prices, tax and the purchasing route before anything is bought.

| THE \$15 REQUEST                   |                                 |                                   |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <div>\$6</div> <div>Printing</div> | <div>\$4</div> <div>Signs</div> | <div>\$5</div> <div>Reserve</div> |

These are illustrative estimates. School finance staff confirm prices, tax and the purchasing route before anything is bought.

Access and safety

Free entry, clear routes and written club information. No food, fundraising, outside visitors or photography are included in this request. Staff confirm supervision and emergency arrangements.

Publicity and finish

Use advisor-reviewed school announcements after approval. Record the number of visits and one improvement for next time. Leave the space ready for normal use.

# YOUR PROJECT PROPOSAL

Duplicate this page and replace the prompts. Use your school's official form where required. Keep the request short enough that someone can find the decision quickly.

## **The request**

We request approval for [activity] on [date and time] at [place], with spending up to [total and currency] from [proposed funding source].

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## **The reason**

We heard or observed [specific need and its limits]. This project would help [students] to [useful result].

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## **What will happen**

Describe setup, the activity and cleanup. Include the expected number of participants and anything that affects normal lessons or school routines.

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## **People and resources**

Name the student lead, agreed team roles, materials and space. Identify the staff support or supervision still to be confirmed.

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## **Cost and access**

List estimated costs and the spending ceiling. Explain how students can participate without an avoidable barrier, and how others can get useful information.

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## **Before launch**

List required approvals, publicity checks and safety arrangements. Name who will check each item and when. Keep unconfirmed items clearly marked.

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## **Finish and review**

Name the cleanup owner. Say what you will record, where the approved version will be kept and when the team will review what happened.

# HAVE THE APPROVAL CONVERSATION

Take the draft to your advisor through the school’s usual route. Ask them to identify missing information and the person who can make each decision.

## A message you can adapt

‘We have drafted a small activity to help [students do something useful]. Could you review the proposal and confirm who needs to approve the date, space, spending and announcement? We have marked the arrangements we still need help to verify.’

## Ask adults to confirm the boundaries

Check required supervision, room capacity, access, emergency contacts and any consent process. If you add food, travel, fundraising, visitors or photographs, ask which extra requirements apply. Staff should handle purchases, bookings and formal agreements through the school’s approved process.

## Keep concerns in the right place

If someone describes bullying, harm or a safety concern, contact a trusted school adult or the school’s designated student-support staff member promptly. Keep the details out of public project notes and group chats. Ask the advisor what reporting route applies at your school.

## Be clear when something is unconfirmed

‘I need to check that before I confirm it’ is a useful response. Record the open question and who will check it. Leave publicity and spending until the relevant approvals are in place.

| CONFIRM WHO CAN APPROVE EACH PART |       |          |              |
|-----------------------------------|-------|----------|--------------|
| Date                              | Space | Spending | Announcement |

Source 2

Source 3

Source 4

# USE THE DECISION

## 1 If it is approved

Save who approved what, the date and any conditions. Confirm the adult arrangements, student tasks and spending route before launch. Give the team the approved version so everyone is working from the same plan.

## 2 If approval has conditions

Keep the activity marked pending until those conditions are met. In the lunch-preview example, 'approved once supervision is confirmed' means the supervising adult still needs to be arranged. If that cannot happen, ask about a different date.

## 3 If it needs revision or is declined

Ask which concern needs addressing. A smaller activity, different timing or clearer supervision may be worth discussing. Return through the agreed approval route with the revised proposal.

### After the activity

Set aside ten minutes to compare the intended result with what happened. Check actual costs, finish any outstanding tasks, thank the people who helped and record one useful change. Ask staff where to keep the approved proposal and review.

#### KEEP WITH THE APPROVED VERSION

Who approved what • Date • Conditions

# SOURCES AND LOCAL CHECKS

Planning guidance: NASC Handbook (2018), Project Planning Guide, p. 94; TASC Resource Guide, section 3 (2015), project proposals, p. 10. Local-process example: Fairfax High School, Starting a New Club or Organization. Student support: StopBullying.gov, What Teens Can Do (reviewed 2022). Links checked 2 October 2026. The association guides are planning references; your school's current procedures determine approvals.

## **1 NASC Handbook 2018 Project Planning Guide**

Page 94 separates fact finding, approval owners, resources, an itemized budget and publicity responsibilities. Consulted as an older planning reference, not current local policy. The example and reusable prose are original.

## **2 TASC Resource Guide Section 3 Preparing a Project Proposal**

Published 2015. Page 10 recommends a concrete proposal, anticipating practical concerns, costs, cleanup, review and advisor/administrator approval. Its exact sign-off order is not imposed on other schools.

## **3 Fairfax High School Starting a New Club or Organization**

Current official page confirms school-employed sponsorship, a formal approval route and finance-office controls for this school system. Used to show why local procedures need checking. Its numerical thresholds and deadlines are not generalized.

## **4 StopBullying.gov What Teens Can Do**

Official federal guidance, last reviewed 8 February 2022, advises teens to tell a trusted adult about bullying and avoid public or online shaming. No medical or evaluated-intervention claims are made.