



## National Student Council National Standards and Indicators of Quality for High School Student Councils

*Promoting Excellence in Student Leadership through  
Measurable and Accountable Practices*

### National Student Council High School Student Councils

National Student Council identifies five (5) core areas of student council with each having specific standards and indicators of quality that student councils should strive to meet.

#### I. Governance

**Constitution and Bylaws:** Student councils possess and function according to their written constitutions and bylaws.

1. Student councils have written constitutions and/or bylaws, and operate according to the purposes and guidelines it sets forth.
2. A copy of the constitution is provided to every student council member and is available to all students electronically or in print.
3. Student councils have a structure of leadership that is student-focused.
4. The student council constitution and bylaws are reviewed by a committee represented by its officers, adviser, and members every three to five years.

**Elections:** Student councils sponsor general and/or special elections that reflect the democratic process and provide opportunities for students to practice civic responsibility.

1. Student councils sponsor annual elections that reflect the democratic process and may include such features as voter registration, campaigning, and balloting.
2. Election/campaign rules are reviewed with all candidates and each is provided with a written copy.
3. Election ballots are handled in an ethical manner and results are appropriately and professionally announced.
4. Student councils provide information or host presentations by local election officials or other civic organizations related to election activities.
5. Student councils utilize technology to enhance the voting experience for students and improve the efficiency of the balloting process.
6. Student council elections incorporate features commonly found in public elections, such as candidate filing periods, voter precincts, and voter registration.

**Meetings:** Student councils meet regularly throughout the school year for the purpose of attending to council business.

1. Student councils hold a minimum of one meeting each month during the school year and a meeting calendar is provided to members and appropriate administrators.
2. Meetings are run in accordance with standard practices (ex. Robert's Rules of Order).
3. The leadership of student councils meets to discuss council business and prepare for general membership meetings.
4. Student council officers and advisers meet before each regularly scheduled meeting to create an agenda that is published and available to student council members and others prior to the meetings.

#### II. Service

**Participation in Service:** Student councils plan and sponsor service activities to benefit both school and community and promote service to the student body.

1. Student councils host a minimum of one service project each semester that is designed to engage large numbers of the student body.

***Serving the Community:*** Student councils work to improve their communities by planning and implementing various service projects; councils promote the importance of serving the community to the student body.

1. Student councils sponsor a minimum of one service project each year that specifically addresses a need or provides assistance in the community.
2. Student councils identify community resources and leaders as part of their community service projects.
3. Student councils seek support for service projects from community leaders and groups.

***Service Learning:*** Student councils incorporate the elements of service learning into service projects as a means to intensify and personalize the experiences for the participants.

1. Student councils support service learning projects and initiatives taking place in the school and work with appropriate faculty members to incorporate service learning components into council service projects.
2. Student councils incorporate the key features of service learning into at least one council-sponsored service project.

***Recognizing Service:*** Student councils recognize individuals and groups that make significant volunteer service contributions to the school and community.

1. Student councils encourage members of the student body to seek out ways to serve others and recognize those students who have logged multiple hours of volunteer service.
2. Student councils participate in the Presidents Volunteer Service Award as a National Student Council Certifying Organization in order to recognize student and faculty volunteer hours, and as a means of tracking and reporting service hours.

### **III. General Activities and Operations**

***Spirit and Social Activities:*** Student council works to improve school climate at the school and increase student enthusiasm and participation in school life by planning and implementing spirit and social activities.

1. Student councils plan and implement a minimum of two activities per year to strengthen student spirit and promote enthusiasm for school life.
2. Each year the student councils sponsor activities that reach out to diverse populations within the student body with the goal of providing activities for all students.
3. Student council activities encourage positive social behaviors and camaraderie among students and function to improve the overall school climate.
4. Student councils plan and host activities to welcome incoming classes of students.
5. Student councils plan and host activities to welcome students new to the school.

***Council Operations:*** Student councils operate in responsible ways that demonstrate sound financial and membership recordkeeping, evaluation practices, and school involvement.

1. Student council officers and advisers work to prepare an annual written budget and maintain accurate financial records.
2. Student councils keep records of membership and maintain historical records of their activities.
3. One or more student council officers and members meet regularly with the school principal or designee to discuss student and school-related issues.

4. At least one student council officer or other council representative serves on a site-level committee that has input on decisions affecting the school.
5. The student council officers and advisers work to prepare an annual written budget and maintain accurate financial records.
6. The treasurer regularly reports the financial activities of the council during regular business meetings.
7. The student council maintains records of council membership.
8. Student councils keep historical records of council activities, personnel, and recognitions.
9. Student councils use various methods to evaluate and obtain feedback on projects and activities.
10. Student councils maintain membership with district, state, or regional organizations.

**Fundraising:** Student councils plan and implement projects to raise funds for school-related activities and charitable giving.

1. Student councils sponsor a minimum of one fundraising project each year.
2. Student councils maintain accurate records of the money raised and use smart consumer practices to identify reputable organizations and benefactors for its charitable fundraising.
3. Student councils research charities to determine which one will receive council Support.
4. Student councils maintain a list of charities that have been researched and are found to be legitimate and worthy of supporting through council service and fundraising.

**Leadership Training:** Student councils provide leadership training opportunities for members and encourage advisers to participate in professional development sessions.

1. Student council members participate in a minimum of two leadership training sessions or programs per year (in-house, online, or by attending conferences/workshops).
2. Student council advisers annually participate in a minimum of one professional development program or training session directly related to student council or student leadership.
3. Student councils track and record member participation in leadership training.
4. Student councils regularly provide leadership training for their own members and/or the student body.
5. Student councils provides leadership training for its own members and sponsors similar sessions for other students and student leaders in their schools.

**Communications:** Student councils communicate regularly with the student body in a variety of ways; and provide opportunities for members to practice and demonstrate their communication skills.

1. Student councils provide regular updates to the student body and faculty.
2. Student council members annually participate in activities that provide practice in written and oral communications.
3. Student councils contribute regularly to school newsletters, newspapers, websites, or other informational mediums as a means of sharing their activities and accomplishments with others.

#### **IV. Civic Engagement and Student Voice**

**Civic-based Activities:** Student councils employ various methods that encourage students to be involved in the community and increase awareness of citizenry and activity.

1. Student councils provide information to the student body that explains the civic connection to select council activities (elections, community service, student forums).
2. Student councils participate in activities that involve community leaders and/or agencies.
3. Student council officers attend a minimum of one civic meeting per year.
4. One or more student council officers or other representatives make a minimum of one presentation per year to a civic board or committee (school, city, county, etc).

**Student Voice:** The student council regularly seeks out student opinion and creates opportunities to include students in significant ways on committees and in activities.

1. Student councils provide forums or other activities that provide all members of the student body opportunities to express their views and concerns and to suggest ideas for activities and improved school climate.
2. Student councils encourage students to be involved in leadership and provide opportunities for interested members of the student body to participate on decision-making or planning committees.

#### **V. Extended Council Activities**

**Local and State Involvement:** Student councils participate in leadership training and events outside of their schools to expand and enhance their programs.

1. Delegates representing the student council attend local or state-sponsored events that provide training that advances their knowledge base and leadership skills.
2. Student councils host workshops or other events that involve participants from either local schools or statewide.