

Step-by-step: the process

Although there are many existing clubs, there is always room for more. However, many students remain unaware of the surprisingly simple process that one must go through to create their own club. Here's what to do:

by Stephanie Colinders

Starting a club is an exciting and engaging process; to be able to bring something new to the school community and form a group of diverse people driven by the same interest is truly something special.

"The beauty of clubs and extracurriculars is that it brings you out of the classroom and sets you in a different environment with a different set of challenges with different people," guidance counselor Luke Kostu said. "It puts you, in some ways, out of your comfort zone and it helps you become part of the larger school community."

This involvement is invaluable, and from it, lessons can be learned that will last a lifetime.

STEP #1: Coming up with an idea

Whether the club is being founded by one person or three, all must come to an agreement about what exactly the club will be. What will the club focus on? Will it be an academic, social or service club? Most importantly, what is the purpose and intention of the club?

"I wanted to start this club [Young Democrats] based off a general passion for kids getting involved," Giancarlo Castro, junior and co-founder of Young Democrats, said. "I know there are so many people that are frustrated with the system, but don't know what to do to

enact change. With this club, I hope to show that anyone can do even the smallest thing to make a difference."

Just like Young Democrats, new clubs should be looking to address a void in the already existing club options. Due to the presence of so many pre-existing clubs, it's important to have a unique standpoint that makes its purpose different from the others.

Once this is determined and achievable goals are established, the following steps are ready to be taken.

STEP #2: Finding potential members

Next, the founder(s) must compose a list with approximately 10-12 names of students who would want to participate in the club. This is what takes the longest; finding like-minded individuals whose own interests align with that of the group can be difficult.

However, this is one of the most important steps because it demonstrates the desire for this club amongst the student body.

Without members, there would be no club.

"Personally, I found that word-of-mouth was the most effective way to recruit members," Castro said. "I knew this was something that people are interested in, so once they heard about it, I immediately got responses."

There are always going to be students with same interests out there - all they need to do is be found.

of creating a new club

STEP #3: Selecting an advisor

Every club is required to have at least one faculty member who is willing to serve as the advisor for the group. This means they will take responsibility for the members during meeting times and will work with them to help achieve the goals of the club. The advisor must be present at all meetings, and will more likely than not be the one hosting them. To find an advisor, oftentimes founder(s) will seek out teachers they know well and are close with.

If the theme or idea behind the club is close-

ly related to a certain subject (i.e. a reading club, science club, etc), then it would be to the founder's advantage to inquire amongst teachers within that academic field.

"I picked [history teacher Rebecca Dibrienza] who I thought would be a good fit considering what they teach," Castro said. "And I took into consideration their own views to make sure they aligned with that of the group."

Ultimately though, whoever is chosen to be the advisor is up to the founder(s).

STEP #4: Meeting with principal Dr. David Heisey

This is the final and most important step. To meet with Dr. Heisey, an appointment must be scheduled through his secretary, Beverly Moskal. In preparation for this, the founder(s) should come with the list of names, a designated advisor, a clearly established purpose, goals for the club and a general idea of how things are going to be run.

"One of the things Dr. Heisey is going to consider is the needs or goals of this club being met by any other group in the building," Kostu said. "In case there might be some overlap or maybe there's something already like that going on."

If this were to occur, Dr. Heisey could redirect the

founder(s) to the already existing club for them to join instead, as there is no need for a new club if one is already doing the same thing.

Dr. Heisey can also provide feedback and assistance to help the founder(s) clearly define their purpose and make their club the best it possibly can be.

However, if there are no such issues and Dr. Heisey grants his approval, then the club is free to begin meeting. That's all there is to it!

"You need leadership in the group, you need membership in the group, you need defined goals/purposes of the group..."
- guidance counselor Luke Kostu



artwork courtesy of Savannah Reilly

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