



Pearls and Diamonds for Advisors

Trusted advisors are key to the success of any youth-led organization. And the most important skill that they possess is knowing how to keep students “engaged” in the group. Just like in relationships, engagement is beyond showing up. It means that the student is invested in the group and cares what happens. Engagement is difficult to maintain in youth organizations, so SLS asked our successful advisors how they engage youth and keep them coming back. Here’s what they said:

Engagement:

1. Welcome them.
2. Give them a job responsibility.
3. Make them know they are needed. Let officers delegate responsibility to others so they learn not to do everything themselves. Teach them to let others fail.
4. Listen to their concerns.
5. Encourage other school activities.
6. Praise your members – have officers do this in a public setting.
7. Give handwritten Thank You notes.
8. Give credit to the student so the whole school knows of their contribution.
9. Keep good communication with all members – type/publish minutes of meetings.
10. Post signs in the school regarding positive events with the students. For example, one might read, “_____ had a blast this weekend – ask them what happened.”
11. Use a system of accountability – especially to the group and each other.
12. Have fun meetings.
13. Support passionate leaders.
14. Encourage them to work with the system themselves. For example, let them learn how to approach administration, other teachers, maintenance, etc.
15. Set achievable goals for the year.
16. Keep them focused on goals, commitment, and each other both for short term and long term.
17. Post the photos of them and their events on school display boards.