
STUDENT SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER TOOLKIT



Special Section: for School Staff

a project of
**REACHING
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FOR SCHOOL STAFF

Value of a Student Board Member

The student board member has a unique perspective as an individual who is in the school every day. They can communicate the on-the-ground reality of the school and classroom to the school board.



Allison Shelley/the Verbatim Agency for EDUImages

What Are Your Responsibilities?

- Identify potential student board member candidates and encourage them to run for the position, especially those whose voices are underrepresented in student government.
- Ensure equal access to candidacy and elections; be open to holding student board member elections during class time to promote high voter turnout.
- Work with student member candidates and their families to ensure access to the position, including time and transportation.
- Keep up with board meetings and activity.

- Respect the perspectives and unique experiences of the student board members.
- Encourage student voice at the classroom and building levels.
 - Examples: focus groups, class-level feedback, student-designed learning
- Humanities/social studies teachers: Teach about the role of the school board.
 - Invite the student member to speak to your class.
- Advisers to student government or other civically-oriented clubs: Coordinate with the student board member to bring school board business to the student body.
 - Ensure equity throughout the student government election process.
 - Encourage the student government to listen to diverse/underrepresented student perspectives.
- Teachers with student board members in their class: Check in with the student board member about their experience in the role.




Key Tips for Success

- Promote equity both in the election process and in access to the position, including transportation and time.
- Encourage students to run for student board member.
- Check in with student board members about their experience.
- Communicate with families.

Additional Resources

- Quaglia Institute Guide to Focus Groups: <https://bit.ly/quagliaguide>
- Youth Participatory Action Research Hub: yparhub.berkeley.edu



Encouraging Student Voice in Classrooms

Allow students to have a say in their learning. This may include:

- *Giving feedback on lessons and teachers (e.g. through anonymous surveys).*
- *Making decisions about their own assignments and assessments.*
- *Engaging in student-centered learning and/or personalized learning.*
- *Participating in democratic classroom practices: Students and teachers develop norms and make decisions together.*