

IDEA FILE ~

PROOF POSITIVE THAT STUDENT INVOLVEMENT WORKS!

Appeal to students and others by coordinating interesting programs or projects and by bringing up **real** issues and solving **real** problems.

- Have students be assistants to PTA/PTSA officers. This will provide students with valuable leadership skills and with opportunities to offer youth perspectives on pertinent issues. Students can also serve as members of the nominating committee and be nominated for office.
- Ask student members to study a legislative bill and present their research to your PTA's/PTSA's board. This is an excellent opportunity for students to learn about the PTA's/PTSA's involvement with legislative issues and to learn how the legislative process works. Students can also prepare and present testimony for a school board, state legislature, or Congress.
- Establish a peer-counseling program. With proper training, students can assist each other with personal problems, stress, drug education, etc. Contact professional social workers, counselors, and psychologists for assistance.
- Develop a tutoring program. In addition to tutoring each other, students may wish to tutor at a local elementary or middle school.
- Ask students to assist in writing and designing your PTA's/PTSA's newsletter. Add a student focus column written by students. Many young people will find it easier to express themselves on paper.
- Encourage student involvement and activities in the community. Students can volunteer in many capacities. Try organizing an environmental clean-up day.
- Ask for students' opinions regarding your school's instructional program. Include students in this process by asking how the students could evaluate and improve their school.
- Work with students in planning a career night or college night for students and their parents.
- Work with other student groups to plan an orientation for incoming freshmen. At the meeting, explain PTA/PTSA membership, programs and projects, and make suggestions about how to involve students. Ask students for ideas, too.
- Work with students to organize art fairs (Reflections entries could be included), talent shows, school financial aid workshops, résumé writing workshops, and health fairs.
- Ask other student groups to help coordinate PTSA projects. Make sure they are involved from the initial planning stages and in all aspects of the events.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE

- ❑ Survey the student population to assess their views of and ideas for PTA/PTSA.
- ❑ Organize events for a chemical-free graduation night. Plans could include dancing, movies, and games in a festive atmosphere.
- ❑ Recognize students for their achievements in both academic and nonacademic fields.
- ❑ Propose a "bridge the gap" dance for both young and old.
- ❑ Sponsor a breakfast at the start of the year to welcome students back to school. Invite the faculty. Students and other PTA/PTSA members can volunteer to serve the meal together. This is a great way to involve students from the very beginning of the year.
- ❑ Have students conduct an informal program for parents and other concerned adults so that the adult community can see youth in action
- ❑ Have a student serve as chair of a committee. Encourage students to work as equals with other PTA/PTSA members. This will help them be active unit members.
- ❑ Encourage student participation on panels or forums that are of interest to them. This will provide essential student perspectives on issues that affect them.
- ❑ No matter which projects you decide to work on with students, it is essential that you include them in the planning as well as in the execution of the events.

Adapted from National PTA, *Annual Resources for PTAs*

