



Teambuilding Tips

One key to your success will be how well students work as a team. There is no “right” number of students to form a team, and teams can come in many shapes and sizes. You may be working with different groups of students who work on different parts of a Play or challenge, or it might be one group made up of individual students who have never worked together. One student may *love* data collection and can help with [surveys or polling](#), while another group of students may be really into art projects and can help with promotional materials.

The organization and makeup should be based on the enthusiasm and interests of students, the size of your school and the Plays the groups want to implement.

How do I recruit students to help lead this effort?

Start by reaching out to existing student organizations, clubs and/or teams — such as student council, service learning groups, athletic teams and others. Using an existing infrastructure will help you start strong with a group of students who are already committed to school service and working cooperatively as part of a team.

In addition, ask adults in the school to recommend students who they think would be interested in working on this program, such as students in a health, consumer living or physical education class or students who have special skills and interests — from art and design to marketing and promotion, academic subject areas, technology and media, health and wellness, sports and more. Promote this opportunity to all students.

Post information on the school’s website, via morning announcements and in central information locations in your school to help spread the word.

How can I help students work together?

Once you have a group — or several groups — of interested students, work with them on planning for [Plays](#). Have students self-select the areas they’d like to work on, or assign students to groups. Work with students on the ways they’ll need to work with each other — and with adults — to accomplish their goals.

Consider, and have students consider, what successful leadership and teamwork looks like. How will you ensure that your team(s) is/are equipped to take on this very important role? Consider the following:

Ten Characteristics of Well-Functioning Teams*

- **Purpose:** Members proudly share a sense of why the team exists and are invested in accomplishing its mission and goals.
- **Priorities:** Members know what needs to be done next, by whom and by when to achieve team goals. Students demonstrate responsibility in fulfilling their individual responsibilities.
- **Roles:** Members know their roles in getting tasks done and when to allow a more skillful member to do a certain task — including when to ask for help from the Program Advisor(s).
- **Decisions:** Authority and decision-making lines are clearly understood. Students involve the appropriate school authorities when needed.
- **Conflict:** Conflict is dealt with openly and is considered important to decision-making and personal growth.
- **Personal traits:** Members feel their unique personalities are appreciated and well-utilized.
- **Norms:** Group norms for working together are set and seen as standards for everyone in the group. Students are respectful and inclusive of all members of the team.
- **Effectiveness:** Members find team meetings efficient and productive, and look forward to this time together. Students set and adhere to meeting schedules based on strategy implementation plans.
- **Success:** Members know clearly when the team has met with success and share in this equally and proudly.
- **Development:** Opportunities for feedback and improvement of roles are provided mutually and taken advantage of by team members and the Program Advisor(s).

In addition to focusing on these characteristics, offer students guidelines about how to be effective as leaders and as part of the team:

Guidelines for Effective Team Membership*

All members:

- Contribute ideas and solutions
- Recognize and respect differences in others
- Value the ideas and contributions of others
- Listen and share information
- Ask questions and get clarification
- Participate fully and keep their commitments
- Are flexible and respectful of all team members' contributions
- Have fun and care about the team and the outcomes

**Adapted for student groups from National School Board Association's Educational Leadership Toolkit*