



Strategies for Building & Maintaining Student Interest in C3 Clubs

Chicago Conservation Corps (C3) Student Clubs
City of Chicago Department of Environment (DOE)



- **Offering student incentives**
 - Food, snacks, pizza
 - Prizes like t-shirt/water bottle for coming three weeks in a row
 - Service Learning Hours
 - Extra credit
 - Field trips
 - Getting out of class to talk to other classes
- **Fostering student recognition**
 - Finding ways to recognize students are more than just a number in a huge school
 - Making special recognition certificates
 - Parties/rewards for your Club members
 - Juice and donuts with the principal
 - Special picture in the yearbook
 - Helping students feel important by helping them understand they are doing important work
 - Opportunity for younger students to interact with older students
 - Club involvement/leadership can be put on resumes and college applications
 - Get involved now, and then do it in college!
 - May lead to employment opportunities!
- **Building and maintaining relationships with students**
 - Strong relationship with students → strong relationship in community
 - Getting to know the students, and what incentives they want
 - Creating healthy, safe, fun, and accepting social situation – something many students may not have in their home life
 - Engaging minority groups/underrepresented communities to let them know it's a safe environment for them to congregate/be accepted, and to do something positive
 - Example: gay/lesbian, minority, ethnicity, students with behavioral issues
 - Students from a particular neighborhood that can all ride home together
 - Keep track of student information at meetings (use Time Tracker provided)
 - Creating e-mail listserv or facebook group; sending out reminders about upcoming meetings, competitions, events; calendars and itineraries – keeping students very informed
- **Advertising and promotion**
 - Flyers, announcements, assemblies
 - Promoting Club in your classes; giving flyers and PPT files to other teachers
 - Articles in your school newspaper/parent newsletters about your activities, “green tips” and “green news”
- **Getting student involved in recruitment**
 - Everyone bring a friend/prizes for bringing a friend
 - Having outspoken students visit classrooms to promote Club activities – “student experts”
 - Find 1-2 students who are really involved, and let them run with it
 - Having “student mentors” or “recycling buddies” with younger students or feeder schools



- **Partnering with other teachers and clubs**
 - Science teachers promoting club in their classes
 - Have other well-likes/charismatic teachers promoting Club
 - What other clubs are working on similar issues? Joint activities?
 - Joint festival with recycling club, gardening club?
 - Art club to help design brochures?
 - TV club to help with promotional video?
 - Math club to help calculate recycling averages/improvement?
 - Finance club to help calculate economic incentives to energy efficiency?
 - Amnesty International to help with community service?
 - Ski club: recognize importance of stopping global warming?
- **Make meetings fun and interesting**
 - Our project guides are just a start – what issues/challenges do students care about in your school? What is important to them? What do they enjoy?
 - C3 staff is flexible and open to your proposals to modify curriculum
 - Hands-on/interactive approach to activities
- **Developing a mission/vision with your students**
 - If your Club could do/create anything, what would it be?
 - “Making our school the greenest in Chicago” or “Creating a sustainable community one student at a time” – whatever inspires you and your students
 - Reading/recreating mission before every meeting; including it in promotional materials
 - Helps to put Club activities like waste audits into a larger picture
- **Timing of meetings**
 - Selecting consistent weekly meeting time
 - Meeting during division/homeroom time
 - Students not obligated to stay after school
 - Good publicity for teachers/students to see the Club around doing fun activities
 - Getting a sense of what is preventing students from attending, and then overcoming this obstacle
 - Transportation? Permission slips? Homework overload? Social problems/students disliking one another?
- **Remember the point of expanding Club membership!**
 - Goal: to help more student practice conservation in their every day lives
- **Perseverance!**
 - Many second year Clubs started out struggling to generate any student interest at all, but now have to turn away students because they’re so popular
 - Sending a consistent message
 - Fluctuation, especially after school breaks or finals – sometimes you have to start from scratch
- **Being in touch with other C3 teachers**
 - Mentor
 - We can put you in touch with other teachers
- Keeping us updated!

