



TEXAS YOUTH AND GOVERNMENT

Candidate

Student Manual





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IMPORTANT STEPS

1. Review Campaign Rules and information below.
2. Indicate that you plan to run for office when completing the annual YG Program Registration. You must complete program registration to access the candidate application.
3. Candidate Application can be found on the Texas YMCA Youth and Government website, under the "Candidates" page in the "Sections" tab. **All Applications are due** before the District Conference.
4. Submit a digital headshot/photo of yourself in professional business attire. Make sure that it is a good quality picture with good lighting that illuminates your face. Take the picture outside if you do not have access to good lighting inside. The background of the picture needs to be white or off-white. A plain wall with nothing on it will work best! This picture will be used as needed for District and State. Upload your picture with the online Candidate Application you submit.
5. Make sure that you create a great campaign speech and visual aid to be displayed at Conferences. In addition, make sure that you read all Campaign Rules to avoid disqualification.

A Special Note On Social Media:

You may campaign for District Conference elections using your pre-existing personal social media accounts. After the determination of your candidacy at District Conference, you can begin campaigning for State Conference. You can declare your State Conference candidacy, post pictures, upload your platform, and post videos on social media sites. You can also work with your District Directors to promote your candidacy on official District YG pages.

ALL postings must abide by our core values of RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, CARING, and HONESTY. No negative messages towards another candidate or the YMCA are permitted. NO candidate or associate of a candidate may spend any money to promote a campaign on social media (e.g. paying for a campaign Snapchat filter, boosting a campaign post on Facebook). Furthermore, delegates are not to reference the YMCA, Texas Youth and Government, a branded entity, in titles of their campaign pages. They also should not independently create social media accounts associated with their potential or actual YG positions (e.g. a Texas Youth Governor Twitter account). Please speak with State Office staff if you have any questions or concerns.

Any violation of these rules will lead to disqualification from the election process. The State Director and other YG personnel reserve the right to disqualify candidates for other reasons pertaining to social media at their discretion. Inappropriate photos, foul language, and trash talking over social media are never permissible. All delegates should hold themselves to high standards on social media and remember that their personal Facebook pages and Twitter/Instagram/Snapchat accounts, any Facebook groups or fan pages representing them, and/or all other social media sites must reflect the values of the Y and YG listed above and are accessible to YG staff. Please see Campaign Rules, #5 for more information.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Please be aware that officers for the YMCA Texas Youth and Government program will have duties and responsibilities associated with their office. See below. Most YG and JYG officers must attend mandatory training at the State Office in Austin the spring/summer after they are elected. They also may have the chance to represent Texas at additional events/conferences. Officers are not guaranteed national conference spots and must still submit applications. Officers must adhere to Y values and all codes of conduct at all times, including at national conferences. At the discretion of the State Office, officers found in violation of these values/codes may be removed from office.

The Youth Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, State Affairs Forum Chair, Attorney General, Chief Justice, County Court Judge, Media Co-Editors-in-chiefs may serve on the Texas YG Program or Advisory Committee as ex-officio members. Meetings are in person or held virtually throughout the term you are in office.

Please remember that you represent the YMCA Texas Youth and Government program in all aspects of your life, including on social media. With this condition in mind, please hold yourself to high standards on your personal social media platforms, and please refrain from creating social media accounts associated with your YG position without first consulting the State Office.

Officer Code of Conduct

As an Officer of a YMCA sponsored program and in conformity with the basic purpose of the YMCA, you agree with and will observe the following principles as your personal code of conduct while participating or representing the YMCA or representing your club and district.

Please read:

1. You understand that violations of the Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary actions by YMCA Staff.
2. Disciplinary actions may also include expulsion or removal from officer position.
3. You will conduct yourself at all times in a way which reflects good conduct and sense of responsibility, remembering the YMCA values: respect, responsibility, caring and honesty.
4. If you create Social Media sites OR post to Social Media sites that reference YMCA and/or Texas Youth and Government and/or your position as an officer in YG, you agree to follow the same YMCA values as stated above. Any form of behavior unbecoming a student officer representative including Cyber Bullying will not be tolerated.
5. You agree to help all delegates, regardless of race, gender, religion, national origin, disability, or political beliefs, to feel welcome and to protect their rights to full participation.
6. You agree to avoid violations and violators. While not always fair, you could be held accountable for the actions of those you are with -- often referred to as "guilt by association".
7. If a student officer requires an inordinate amount of attention from the staff thereby causing inadequate levels of supervision for the remainder of the participants or members. The YMCA reserves the right to take disciplinary action.
8. You understand that any violation of the above can result in suspension or expulsion from the program. No refunds will be made.
9. You will also abide by all the YMCA Youth and Government student code of conduct.

Candidate Duties – DISTRICT CONFERENCE

- Responsibilities for candidates during district conference include:
 - Give a short campaign speech during opening ceremonies.
 - Participate in your section activities during District conference day
 - Campaign throughout the conference day.
 - Encourage other delegates to vote at lunch time
 - Possibly assist during closing ceremonies.
 - Winners for your district nominees for each position will be announced during closing ceremonies.

Candidate Duties – STATE CONFERENCE

- Responsibilities for candidates during State conference include:
 - Governor Candidates will give a short campaign speech during opening ceremonies. Voting will begin at the end of section orientation and will close at the end of lunch on Saturday.
 - Governor Candidates will have a separate schedule to allow them time to campaign to all sections. All Other Positions will participate in their section throughout the conference.
 - Officers Position for the duration of State Conference (i.e Speaker of the House, etc.) will give a short campaign speech during section orientation. Winners announced during section orientation – assume duties in relevant section immediately. (Offices like Speaker of the house
 - Officer Positions for the duration of the Program Year (i.e Governor) will give a short campaign speech during section orientation. Voting will begin at the end of section orientation and will close at the end of lunch on Saturday. (Offices that serve for a whole program year)
 - Campaign throughout the entire conference (Offices that serve for a whole program year)
 - Encourage other delegates to vote.
 - Assist during closing ceremonies.
 - Winner announced during closing ceremonies (Offices that serve for a whole program year)

Election Procedure

All delegates participating in district and state office will have an opportunity to vote for officers based on section participation. All delegates running for office are expected to encourage other participants to vote for Governor and in their section elections. The Governor seat is the only position which is voted on at-large by all participating delegates. All other offices are voted on only in the section relevant to their duties. The list below details which offices are elected by which sections.

- State Affairs Forum Chair – State Affairs Section
- Attorney General– Mock Trial (District and County Court)
- Chief Justice – Appeals Court
- Speaker of the House/Hyde House – Legislative
- President Pro Tem of the House – Legislative
- Media Co-Editor and Chief – appointed by the section leader at both conferences

**** Please note : If two students from the same school are running for the same position, the local club must hold an election to decide which student will receive the club's nomination for district conference as the candidate for that role.**



CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

HIGH SCHOOL – Officers for Duration of the Program Year

Office	Qualifications	Duties	Must meet grade level to run/hold office
Governor	- Participated in YG for at least 2 full program years - Have attended 2 years of District and State conferences before nomination. - Attend Candidate Qualification Meeting. - Be able to speak extemporaneously in public. - Good working knowledge of Parliamentary Procedures. - Be acquainted with present-day problems and issues. - Serve during the 12 months following the election and attend the following year's State Conference. - Possess leadership experience. - Be at least 16 years of age by June 15th of the year of election. ***First runner up will be offered the position of Lt. Governor. Second runner up will be offered the position of Secretary of State. Finally, third runner up will be offered a position in the Governor's Cabinet.	- Speak at the Opening Session of the YMCA Youth Legislature and recommend a legislative program. - Appoint any committee that they believe will improve the performance of the Legislature while in session or any committee requested by the Legislature. - Handle all youth relations with the public press. - Study each bill passed by the YMCA Legislature and sign it into law or veto it. Give a public veto message when relevant. - Participate in the State Conference Closing Session. - The Youth Governor is usually called upon for other services by the YMCA and the State Government during the year as Governor of the YMCA Youth Legislature. These may include attending YMCA meetings, acting as amiable delegate to other Youth and Government programs, and attending conferences or committees. Perform these tasks as able. - Must attend the Youth Governors Conference in Washington, D.C. in June, and the National Affairs in July. - Attend spring/summer training as scheduled by the State Office. - May be asked to assist with program trainings and events	Junior
Lt Governor	See Qualifications for Governor	- Preside over the Senate during the Joint Session. - Preside over the following State Conference's opening and closing ceremonies. - Appoint any committee that they believe will improve the performance of the Legislature while in session or any committee requested by the Legislature. - Participate in the State Conference Closing Session. - Must attend a mandatory meeting at State Conference immediately after election. - Attend spring/summer training at the State Office. - May be asked to assist with program trainings and events	Junior
Secretary of State	See Qualifications for Governor	- Help Election Section Leader with election procedures and candidate campaigning during the State Conference following your election - Participate in the State Conference Closing Session. - Must attend a mandatory meeting at State Conference immediately after election. - Attend spring/summer training at the State Office. - May be asked to assist with program trainings and events	Junior

Chief Justice	• Have at least one year of prior experience as a Judge • Have attended one full program year of District and State conference before nomination. • Must participate as a judge if running as a candidate for this role at District • Must sign up to be a judge at State, regardless of whether they win the position or not • Be at least 16 years of age by June 15th of year of election. • Attend Candidate Qualification Meeting. • Have a general knowledge of Judicial process and court procedure. • Be able to speak extemporaneously in public. • Have displayed leadership ability. • Be conversant with present-day issues and problems. • Be willing to be available for the duties of the office. • Attend Candidate Qualification Meeting. • Serve during 12 months following election and attend the following year's State Conference Judicial Program.	• Preside over the Court of Appeals. • Thank attorney teams on behalf of the other judges after each presentation. • Notify Counsel when time to speak is up. • Serve as chairperson during discussion of case after arguments. • Lead critique (if any) with the whole group after all cases are over. • Convene, recess, reconvene, and adjourn the Court. • The Youth Chief Justice will be presiding officer at all sessions of the Youth Court of Criminal Appeals, both in Chambers and in open Court. In this respect, they will be clothed with all the powers of a chairperson of a parliamentary body except that they will have but one vote equal to that of each of the Associate Judges when the Court makes a decision or issues an opinion regarding any case before such Court. • Serve as chief administrative officer of the Court. Announce all official rulings and decisions of the Court and officially represent the Court at all functions. • Must attend a mandatory meeting at State Conference immediately after election. • Attend spring/summer training at State Office.	Junior
Attorney General	• Have at least one year of prior experience in the program • Have attended one full program year of District and State conference before nomination. • Must participate as a judge if running as a candidate for this role at District • Must have been selected as one of the top Attorney Generals at the District Conferences. Must sign up to be a judge at State, regardless of whether they win the position or not • Beat least 16 years of age by June 15th of year of election. • Attend Candidate Qualification Meeting. • General knowledge of judicial process and court procedure. • Be able to speak extemporaneously in public. Have displayed leadership ability. • Be conversant with present-day issues and problems. • Be available for the duties of the office. • Serve during 12 months after election and take part in next year's Judicial program. • Have good judgment and decision making abilities. • Be able to remain unbiased and uninfluenced by past loyalties or other • students' opinions when interpreting judicial proceedings. • Be able to guide and encourage others through constructive feedback.	• Chair the opening session of the District Court Trial. • Maintain an office to receive attorneys, witnesses, bailiffs, and judges to discuss judicial proceedings. • Serve as a mentor and provide guidance to younger students in District Court. • Help provide training and ongoing guidance/evaluation for Attorney General candidates through evaluations and personal conversations. Chair periodic meetings with them to review and monitor judicial proceedings. • Monitor scoring and evaluation of all Trial Court proceedings. • Monitor all District courtroom logistics. • Uphold overall responsibility to help with the planning and implementation of the Trial Court section. • Must attend a mandatory meeting at State Conference immediately after election. • Attend spring/summer training at State Office.	Junior

County Judge	See Qualifications for Attorney General	• Serve as a mentor and provide guidance to younger students in County Court. • Chair the opening session of the County Trial Court. • Maintain an office to receive attorneys, witnesses, bailiffs, and judges to discuss judicial proceedings. Immediately document concerns or challenges raised by judicial participants. • Help provide training and ongoing and guidance/evaluation for Country Judge candidates through observation and personal conversations. Chair periodic meetings with them to review and monitor judicial proceedings. • Monitor scoring and evaluation of County Court proceedings. The County Judge ensures that all evaluations are properly conducted and accurately recorded. • Monitor all County courtroom logistics. • Uphold overall responsibility to help with the planning and implementation of the Trial Court section. • Attend spring/summer training at State Office. • Must attend a mandatory meeting at State Conference immediately after election. • May be asked to assist with District trainings.	Junior
State Affairs Forum Chair	• Have at least one year of prior experience in the program • Have attended one full program year of District and State conferences before nomination. • Must have served previously as a chair at District and State Conference. • Candidates must present a proposal at the District and State Conference. • Be at least 16 years of age by June 15th of year of election. • Have attended the State Conference and participated in the State Affairs Forum section at least once prior to year of nomination. • Have experience presiding as a committee chair at the District and State Conferences and strong knowledge of parliamentary procedure. • Be a junior in high school. • Be able to speak extemporaneously in public. • Have displayed leadership ability. • Be well-versed in present-day issues and problems. • Attend Candidate Qualification Meeting. • Serve for 12 months following election and attend the following year's State Conference.	• Preside at all joint sessions of State Affairs Forum. Must know the procedure for State Affairs Forum. • Assist Section Leaders in the successful running of the section. • May be called upon to represent the YMCA and speak about the YMCA State Affairs Forum section to other groups. • May be invited to attend Junior Youth and Government Conference in early spring. • Must attend spring/summer officer training at State Office. • Must attend a mandatory meeting at State Conference immediately after election. • May be asked to assist with District trainings.	Junior

Media Editors-in-Chiefs	• Be at least 16 years of age by June 15th of the year of election. • Have attended the State Conference at least once prior to year of nomination and served in the Media. • Attend Candidate Qualification Meeting. • Be a junior in high school. • Be able to speak extemporaneously in public. • Be well-versed in present-day problems and issues. • Serve during the 12 months following election and attend the following year's State Conference. *Please note that there are 2 State Media Co-Editor in chief positions available	• Oversee media production. Supervise writing. Organize and approve layout, scheduling of all media content. • Makes the final decisions about content posted on TXYG sites. Manage the passwords provided, and do not abuse the privilege • Work closely with Section Leader to direct total operation of section, communicating with other delegates. • Set the atmosphere under which all others will work and draw out the best performances from all participants. • Hold staff meetings with editors and provide avenues for staff group decision on policies. • Attempt to keep all media participants involved throughout the Conference and allow those who are interested to sample a variety of tasks. • Responsible for the care of equipment. • Ensure that content being produced reflects the program in a positive and professional manner. • Attend spring/summer training at State Office. • Must attend a mandatory meeting at State Conference immediately after election. • May be asked to assist with District Trainings.	Junior
District Representative	• Be at least 16 years of age by June 15th of the year of election • Have at least one year of prior high school YG experience in the program • Have attended one full program year of District and State conferences before nomination. • Be able to speak extemporaneously in public. • Be able to remain unbiased and uninfluenced by past loyalties or other students' opinions when advocating. • Be able to guide and encourage others through constructive feedback. • Be in tune with the specific needs of the delegates in your region	• Represent the interests of your district and serve as a reliable voice during the program year • Serve as a resource to local YMCA Directors to support with programming, interviews, or other local events that support YG • May be called upon to represent the YMCA and speak about the YMCA's program and impact • Cultivate leadership skills in other delegates in your region by being an exemplary citizen and delegate, and by providing guidance to those around you. • Interact with delegates from across your region to better understand their needs and challenges.	Sophomore or Junior



HIGH SCHOOL – Officers for Duration of State Conference

Office	Qualifications	Duties	Must meet grade level to run/hold office
President Pro-Tem of the Senate	• Have at least one year of prior experience in the program • Have attended one full program year of District and State conferences before nomination. • Must have served previously as a chair at District and State Conference. • Have at least one year of prior experience as a chair • Have attended both a District and State conference prior to nomination. • Must have been a chair at District • Must sign up to be a committee chair at State, regardless of whether they win the position or not • Be at least 16 years of age by June 15th of the election year. • Have strong knowledge of Parliamentary Procedure and experience presiding. • Have displayed leadership ability. • Be well-versed present-day problems and issues. Attend Candidate Qualification Meeting. • Be able to speak extemporaneously in public	• Preside at most sessions of the Senate. Must know the procedure and try to conduct the business of the Senate with decorum and dispatch, according to Senate Rules. • Receive aid and advice from the Lieutenant Governor and relinquish the gavel to them upon request. • May be called upon to represent the YMCA and speak about the YMCA Legislature to other groups. Perform these tasks as able. • Participate in the State Conference Closing Session. • Must attend a mandatory meeting at State Conference immediately after election. • Attend spring/summer training at the State Office. • May be asked to assist with program trainings and events.	Senior
Speaker of the House	• Have at least one year of prior experience in the program • Have attended one full program year of District and State conferences before nomination. • Must have served previously as a chair at District and State Conference. • Have at least one year of prior experience as a chair Have attended a District and State conference before nomination. • Must have been a chair at District • Must sign up to be a committee chair at State, regardless of whether they win the position or not • Be at least 16 years of age by June 15th of the election year. • Have strong knowledge in Parliamentary Procedure and experience presiding. • Have displayed leadership ability. • Be conversant with present-day problems and issues. • Attend Candidate Qualification Meeting. • Be able to speak extemporaneously in public. • ***First runner up is offered the position of House Speaker Pro Tem.	• Preside at all sessions of the House of Representatives. Must be skilled in Parliamentary Procedures. Must know the "Rules of House Procedure." • May be called upon to represent the YMCA and speak about the YMCA Legislature to other groups. Perform these tasks as able. • Must attend a mandatory meeting at State Conference immediately after election.	Junior or Senior



Speaker of the Hyde House	• Have at least one year of prior experience in the program • Have attended one full program year of District and State conferences before nomination. • Must have served previously as a chair at District and State Conference. • Have at least one year of prior experience as a chair, and have been a chair at District • Have attended a District and State conference before nomination. • Have strong knowledge in Parliamentary Procedure and experience presiding. • Have displayed leadership ability. • Be conversant with present-day problems and issues. • Attend Candidate Qualification Meeting.	• Preside at all sessions of the Hyde House. Must be skilled in Parliamentary Procedures. Must know the "Rules of House Procedure." • May be called upon to represent the YMCA and speak about the YMCA Legislature to other groups. Perform these tasks as able. • The Speaker of the Hyde House is elected Thursday night and serves under the supervision of the Hyde House adult advisor. • Must attend a mandatory meeting at State Conference immediately after election.	Freshman or Sophomore
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MIDDLE SCHOOL – Officers for Duration of Program Year

Office	Qualifications	Duties	Must meet grade level to run/hold office
Junior YG Governor	- Have at least one year of prior experience in the program - Have attended one full program year of District and State conferences before nomination. - Have at least one year of prior experience as a Attend Candidate Qualification Meeting. - Be a 7th grader in middle school. - Be able to speak extemporaneously in public. Working knowledge of parliamentary procedure. - Be acquainted with present-day problems and issues. Serve during the 12 months following the election and attend the following year's State Conference. - Possess leadership experience. ***First runner up will be offered the Lt. Governor position.	- Speak at the Opening Session of the YMCA Youth Legislature and recommend a legislative program. - Appoint any committee that they believes will improve the performance of the Legislature while in session or any committee requested by the Legislature. - Handles all youth relations with the public press with approval of State Office. - Study each bill passed by the YMCA Legislature and sign it into law or veto it. Give public veto message when relevant. - Work with State Office and other delegates to select conference dance/banquet theme. - Participate in the State Conference Closing Session. - The Junior YG Governor may be called upon for other services by the YMCA and the State Government during the year. These may include attending YMCA meetings, serving as fraternal delegate to other Youth and Government programs, and attending conferences or committees. Perform these tasks as able. - Attend spring/summer training at State Office. - Must attend a mandatory meeting at State Conference immediately after election. - May be asked to assist with District trainings. - Serve as a member of the Texas Youth and Government State Board. Must attend two meetings a year (in-person or conference call).	7 th grade
Junior YG Lt. Governor	*See Qualifications for Junior YG Governor	- Preside over the Senate during Joint Session. - Preside over the following State Conference's opening and closing ceremonies. - Appoint any committee that they believe will improve the performance of the Legislature while in session or any committee requested by the Legislature. - Serve as a member of the Texas Youth and Government State Board. Must attend two meetings a year (in-person or conference call). - Must attend a mandatory meeting at State Conference immediately after election. - Attend spring/summer officer training at State Office. - Work with State Office to select conference dance/banquet theme. - May be asked to assist with District trainings.	7 th grade

Junior YG State Affairs Forum Chair	• Have at least one year of prior experience in the program • Have attended one full program year of District and State conferences before nomination. • Must have served previously as a chair at District and State Conference. • Be a 7th grader. • Have attended the State Conference and participated in the State Affairs Forum section at least once prior to year of nomination. • Attend Candidate Qualification Meeting. • Be able to speak extemporaneously in public. Have displayed leadership ability. • Be conversant with present-day issues and problems. • Able to serve during the 12 months following election and attend the following year's State Conference. • Have strong knowledge of parliamentary procedure and experience presiding as a committee chair at past District and/or State Conference.	• Preside at all joint sessions of State Affairs Forum, running sessions in an organized manner. Must know the procedure for presiding in State Affairs Forum. • Assist Section Leaders in the successful running of the section. • May be called upon to represent the YMCA and speak about the YMCA State Affairs Forum section to other groups. Perform these duties as able. • Attend spring/summer officer training at State Office. • Must attend a mandatory meeting at State Conference immediately after election. • May be asked to assist with District trainings.	7th grade
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MIDDLE SCHOOL – Officers for Duration of State Conference

Junior YG President Pro Tem of the Senate	• Have at least one year of prior experience in the program • Have attended one full program year of District and State conferences before nomination. • Must have served previously as a chair at District and State Conference. • Have strong knowledge in Parliamentary Procedures and experience presiding as a Chair of Clerk at a past District and/or State Conference. • Have displayed leadership ability. • Be conversant with present-day problems and issues. • Be able to speak extemporaneously. • Attend Candidate Qualification Meeting. • Have not previously held this position.	• Preside at all chamber sessions of the Junior YG Senate. Must be skilled in parliamentary law. Must know the "Rules of Senate Procedure." • May be called upon to represent the YMCA and speak about the YMCA Legislature to other groups. Perform these tasks as able. • Receive aid and advice from the Lieutenant Governor and relinquish the gavel to them upon request. • Must attend a mandatory meeting at State Conference immediately after election. • May be asked to assist with District trainings.	8th grade
Junior YG Speaker of the House	• Have at least one year of prior experience in the program • Have attended one full program year of District and State conferences before nomination. • Must have served previously as a chair at District and State Conference. • Have strong knowledge of parliamentary procedure and experience presiding as a Chair or Clerk at a past District and/or State Conference. • Have displayed leadership ability. • Be well-versed in present-day problems and issues. • Be able to speak extemporaneously. • Attend Candidate Qualification Meeting. • Have not previously held this position.	• Preside at all chamber sessions of the Junior YG House. Must be skilled in parliamentary law. Must know the "Rules of House Procedure." • May be called upon to represent the YMCA and speak about the YMCA Legislature to other groups. Perform these tasks as able. • May be asked to assist with District trainings.	7th or 8th grade

PLATFORM DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

Know How to Write Effective Talking Points – *"If you build it, they will come."*

What if they when they come, you have nothing to say?

It is not enough to plan a meeting to talk about your issues with lawmakers, policymakers, bureaucrats, or the media. You have to have something to say when you get to the meeting. Successful advocates get around this problem with a secret weapon: talking points.

Talking points are a short list of arguments in support of a particular position, a set of remarks, which are carefully planned and written down before a meeting. Effective talking points organize and focus your thoughts so you will deliver your arguments effectively and concisely.

Meeting with strangers can be scary. With good talking points in your hand or briefcase, you will feel more confident and be better prepared to handle your meeting. Writing effective talking points is easy if you remember the following helpful guidelines:

Define your main message. Why are you meeting in the first place? To break the ice and get acquainted? To advocate for a specific solution? To learn more about issues and how your audience can help you solve certain problems? To discuss a specific problem in your community? Once you know *why* you are meeting, the rest of the talking points may easily fall into place.

Keep your talking points short and sweet. Think bulleted lists, rather than novels. Instead of writing hundreds of points, which may confuse or bore your listener, come up with exactly three main points to support your case. Then, develop those points with supporting arguments or evidence. Ideally, your talking points should take up no more than a page.

For instance, if you want to talk to school board members about why they should adopt a part-time enrollment policy for homeschoolers, your main talking points might look something like this:

I support school board member No name's proposal to allow part-time enrollment for homeschoolers in No name County because:

- *Part-time enrollment would benefit the No name County homeschooling community in general.*
- *Part-time enrollment would benefit me specifically.*
- *Part-time enrollment would benefit the No name County public schools.*

Then you would list examples and arguments to back up each point. In this case, you would give specific examples of why the part-time enrollment policy would benefit each party involved.

Put your best foot forward. Write down all your talking points, then organize them so the strongest ones are presented first and most persuasively.

Stick to the point. Only use arguments that directly support your case. Get rid of any arguments or pieces of supporting evidence that are less relevant and not a good fit. Avoid bringing up other issues that are unrelated to your concern or to this particular situation.

Provide specific examples that support your argument. Highlight concrete ways your selected problem impacts the community or how your solution would benefit it. Anecdotes about individuals personally affected by the issue can be very effective. Give concrete examples of how your selected problem is affecting the community and/or how the community would benefit from your proposed solution.

Keep your remarks professional. Avoid naming individuals or assigning blame. Stick to the facts and maintain a neutral tone. For example, you could say, "Some parents report difficulty communicating with the superintendent's office," rather than detailing negative experiences with staff, even if true.

Presenting is about influence. The purpose of a presentation is to change minds. If your goal is not to change minds, perhaps you should consider a different approach and use of your time and resources.

Ideas alone don't change minds. Your stories and passion do. Storytelling is one of the most effective strategies in advocacy. Use your experiences and the experiences of your community to your benefit.

Emphasize win-win solutions. Show how your solutions will benefit your constituents. Win-win solutions are more likely to be acceptable to your audience and more likely to be implemented.

Repetition helps your message stick. Great marketers and speakers use catch phrases to ensure their message sticks the audience's mind. For example, MasterCard's "There are some things money can't buy. For everything else, there's MasterCard" is memorable because they were consistent in adding it to their marketing. In addition, notice that the actors repeat it the same way every time. You never hear them say, "There are some things that cash won't buy you. For the rest of the stuff, there's MasterCard." No. It is said the same way every time. Exact repetition helps the listener remember.

Great speakers do the same thing, focusing on a message and repeating a catch phrase. One of the most famous examples is Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I have a dream" speech. "I have a dream" is the main talking point and catch phrase, and he said it nine times during the speech.

King wanted to get a message across. Therefore, he repeated his key phrases to ensure that they made it into the audience's mind. In addition, like MasterCard actors, he repeated the phrases exactly, not changing a single word. King understood that great speaking is first and foremost about getting a message across to audiences, who are often distracted. Repeating a catch phrase without any changes helps mitigate distraction.

During your presentations, think about using catch phrases. They can be as simple as "Teens need a reason to believe" or "Young people will get involved when we young people are valued." Be sure that you repeat the key phrase the same way several times. That way, you will be sure that your message gets across.

Your Mission: Write talking points on an issue that you're passionate about, using these guidelines. Organize your arguments with the strongest presented first and seek feedback to improve your points!



CANDIDATE PLATFORM FORM **Sample** (submit with electronically)

Use this form to develop your platform (issues, talking points, and supporting points) as you consider running for office.

Issue #1 _____ Catch Phrase: _____

1. Talking Point: _____

- Support:
- Support:
- Support:

2. Talking Point:

- Support:
- Support:
- Support:

3. Talking Point: _____

- Support:
- Support:
- Support:

Call to Action: _____



Issue #2 _____ Catch Phrase: _____

1. Talking Point: _____
 - Support: _____
 - Support: _____
 - Support: _____
2. Talking Point: _____
 - Support: _____
 - Support: _____
 - Support: _____
3. Talking Point: _____
 - Support: _____
 - Support: _____
 - Support: _____

Call to Action: _____