



Facilitator Guide

Your First Student Union or Alliance Meeting



Your first meeting does not need to be perfect.
Its purpose is to help students feel welcomed, begin building relationships, and leave excited to return.
Focus on creating a space where students experience belonging from the moment they arrive.

- 1**

Welcome (5–10 minutes)
Purpose:
Help students feel welcomed, appreciated, and comfortable.
Facilitator Tip: *Learn names and greet students personally whenever possible.*

Suggested Talking Points:
 - Welcome everyone.
 - Introduce yourself.
 - Thank students for coming.
 - Share why you wanted to begin this Student Union or Alliance.
- 2**

Getting to Know One Another (10–15 minutes)
Purpose:
Help students begin building relationships.
Facilitator Tip: *Focus on conversation rather than icebreakers.*

Suggested Conversation Prompts:
 - Your name
 - Your grade
 - Something you enjoy
 - One thing you hope our Student Union or Alliance becomes
- 3**

The Purpose of Our Student Union or Alliance (5–10 minutes)
Purpose:
Help students understand why the organization exists.

Suggested Talking Points:
 - We are building a community where students belong.
 - Students will help shape this organization together.
 - Leadership is something we develop together.
 - Our goal is to strengthen both students and our school community.

Ask: *“What do you hope this organization becomes?”*

Facilitator Tip: *Listen more than you speak. Students should begin shaping the organization from the very first meeting.*
- 4**

Creating Group Agreements (10 minutes)
Purpose: Develop shared expectations together.
Facilitator Tip: *Students are more likely to honor agreements they help create.*

Suggested Talking Points:
 - Now that we’ve talked about the kind of community we hope to build, let’s decide together what will help us become that kind of community.
 - Use the Sample Group Agreements resource.
 - Invite students to revise, combine, remove, or add agreements.
- 5**

Student Survey (10 minutes)
Purpose:
Gather student ideas to shape future meetings.
Facilitator Tip: *Students should see from the beginning that their ideas matter.*

Suggested Talking Points:
 - Explain that every response will help guide future meetings, activities, leadership opportunities, and the direction of the organization.
 - Collect surveys before students leave.
- 6**

Closing (5 minutes)
Purpose:
End with optimism and anticipation.

Suggested Talking Points:
 - Review today’s highlights.
 - Share the next meeting date.
 - Thank students for helping launch the organization.

Ask: *“What is one word you hope describes this organization by the end of the year?”*

Facilitator Tip: *Leave students excited to return.*



OPEN DECK
INSIGHT

Belonging comes before leadership.
Students who feel welcomed, valued, and heard are far more likely to return, participate, and eventually lead.
The first meeting is not about accomplishing everything.
It is about beginning a community that students will strengthen together over time.



OPEN DECK

BUILDING LEADERS. TOGETHER.

