

How To: Retain Membership in the Second Semester

As Winter sets in and the second semester starts, membership in your school's Key Club can begin to decline. That first round of exams hits students hard and once they make their way back to school after Winter break, Key Club may not be a priority for them anymore. However, in this How-To Guide we hope to give you ideas on how to keep your membership strong in the second half of your school year!

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- Incentivizing attendance at meetings
- Staying connected with your club
- Stressing academic and professional benefits



Make your Meetings Worth the Time

In order to keep your club's membership up you have to make club meetings an event that members feel is worth going to.

Part of the reason members stop attending meetings is that they feel like they are all the same. Instead of having your President speak the whole time, divide up announcements and activities among your other board members! Members will be less likely to zone out if one person isn't the one talking the entire time.

Members are more likely to attend meetings if they are given an incentive to go, and like most people, members are not likely to pass up free snacks. Take turns with your board members in bringing snacks to meetings that members can have. Even if members only come for the food, they are more likely to participate in events if they are attending all the meetings.



If it is okay with your advisor and club board, consider offering credit hours for showing up to meetings. Your members will be more inclined to attend your meetings if they know they can knock out a credit hour or two for showing up- and your meetings will inspire them to do your service projects as well!

Next time you have a meeting, consider these tips and hopefully you'll have less zoned out eyes and greater attendance at your events.



Stay Connected with your Club



In order to keep your membership steady throughout the year, it's important that you keep in contact with your club members- and there are so many fun ways to do so!



- Start a club newsletter! Once a month your club can put together a small newsletter including dates and information about upcoming events, recaps of previous events, and details about everything Key Club.
- Create a Key Club group chat! As long as there's rules to the group chat and everyone is involved it can become a fun way to communicate with your members. You can use this group chat to promote events, share ideas and talk to each other.
- Advertise meetings and events on your school's morning announcements! It's good for members to get a reminder first thing in the morning and can be more accessible than a group chat.
- And, as always you can send out group emails to your members in order to remind them of upcoming dates and to promote service projects. This more "traditional" method is useful for conveying the specifics of an event and adding attachments such as flyers or directions.

As long as you keep your club informed of all the opportunities you can give them, you're sure to keep your membership up!

Stress Academic and Professional Benefits

One thing that you should consistently emphasize to your members is how good Key Club looks on your college applications. Community service is almost expected of applicants by universities, and it's often hard to stand out--unless you're part of an international organization that has knocked out neonatal/maternal tetanus in dozens of countries. Admission officers know Key Club, and they know how much time and effort we put into making this organization one of the largest and most effective service clubs in the world. And having that experience will definitely set you apart from other students.



Key Club not only has that aspect of service, but it has a huge focus on leadership in your community. Things like dressing for an event, banquet manners, time management, how to write official emails and letters, fundraising, confidence--all things that you might not pick up in high school, and thus definitely help you stand out from other applicants. Imagine going into an interview with a Harvard alumnus without the knowledge you've gained from Key Club. How would you sit? What would you wear? How would you even approach the idea of the meeting in an email? These small skills make a world of difference in your applications and interviews.

Additionally, you should emphasize the scholarships that Key Club provides. There are three Key Club International scholarships, and \$12,000 in scholarships offered by the Kiwanis Carolinas District. Local Kiwanis clubs also offer scholarships to college-bound Key Clubbers. The requirements are all pretty simple: you must be a Key Club member in good standing with Key Club International. That means your club cannot owe any dues or late fees. Check to see how you're doing, and research your options at www.keyclub.org or www.carolinakiwanis.org.

Remind your members that they are incredibly important! Our organization of over 260,000 members would be nothing if it weren't for the hard work and service that club members accomplish every day!