

High School Republicans
of Texas

Guide to Starting a High School Republican Club

2012 Edition

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Paid Pol. Adv. by HSRT PAC

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Fellow Republican,

Our nation is in a time of crisis. We face an almost \$16 trillion national debt, out of control spending and liberal policies that threaten you and I's future every day. This is why we must fight. This is why we must do something about it. Our livelihoods are at stake, the very idea of the American character and the principles of our Constitution, threatened and our prospect of attaining the American dream that has attracted many through suffering and hardship to our shores, in peril. You can make a difference, and I hope this guide makes it clear how, in your community and across Texas, you can carry the torch of conservatism, of the Republican Party and of freedom and liberty to the youth of our state. After reading this guide, I hope you'll consider starting a high school republican club and joining me in fighting for our principles across this great state. Please don't hesitate to let me know any questions you might have and I wish you luck in your endeavors!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Connor Pfeiffer'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Connor Pfeiffer

Chairman, High School Republicans of Texas

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Introduction

The level of youth involvement in politics is constantly changing, especially in the Republican Party. For many years, there were just as many Republican youth as Democrats and in the 50s, 60s and early 70s, Texas and other states had large numbers of teenage Republican clubs that many current political leaders were involved in as teenagers. Sadly, with various social movements and other societal changes, teenage Republican clubs in Texas have been in dramatic decline and the last statewide federation collapsed around 2000. At the beginning of 2012, only a handful of known clubs remained in Texas despite the fact that Texas has not elected a Democrat to statewide office since 1994 and has become increasingly Republican with a state house supermajority after the 2010 elections. High School Republicans of Texas is trying to change that. We are trying to allow youth to have a say in what politicians in Washington D.C. and Austin are doing to change our lives. We want the stereotype of all youth being liberals not only broken, but soundly defeated by a Republican youth movement unseen in this state's history. HSRT has the opportunity to become the largest federation of high school Republican clubs in the nation; we just need the help of any willing teens to make that happen. Politics isn't just about the speeches and fundraisers; it is about making a difference and hopefully having fun while doing it. Political involvement for youth can offer amazing opportunities like meeting elected officials and even well-paid political jobs in high school for the extremely dedicated and talented. It isn't as daunting as you might expect to start a Republican club at your school and we hope this guide will make that apparent.

Note to adults interested in stating a HSRT club for students in their area: This guide is written in a format addressed to a student trying to start a club in their community. However, it will work just the same for your purposes, whatever they might be, in trying to get more youth involved in your area.

Why on Earth Would You Start a High School Republican Club?

At first glance, many people might think something along the lines of, “Starting a political club, why would I want to do that? That doesn’t sound fun!” It isn’t hard to understand this line of thinking; politics is an area the vast majority of teens not only have no interest in, but consequently aren’t usually involved in unless one of their parents or someone they know runs for office. So the first thing, in order to properly guide you through starting a club, is to give you a reason to put the time in to start a successful club. Here are some common reasons to start a club (these come right off our website):

- To help spread your beliefs to your peers to guarantee a great future for our nation
- To meet teens just like you across Texas who believe in the same things as you and have fun while doing it
- To give you opportunities to hold leadership positions at the local, regional or state level not otherwise available to you

Now we’ll go through each one in detail. The first reason is one of the most obvious. Many people who consider and end up starting clubs do it because not only are they dedicated Republicans and conservatives, but they care so much about it that they want to help influence fellow students to hold similar views. The other two reasons are things that many people don’t think about at first glance when they think of a political club. When you start a HSRT club, you’re not just starting something only at your school; you become part of a statewide effort in many high schools across the state. You, through HSRT events like the annual state convention, board meetings and as a member of committees or as an officer, will meet hundreds of teens who believe in and are dedicated to the same things as you! That’s the beauty of having a statewide organization. Instead of having a bunch of individual, unconnected clubs, you instead have a network of clubs across the state that all work together to achieve our common goals. The final reason is something that everyone can derive value from. HSRT is an organization with ample opportunities for anyone from any club across the state to be involved. With regional organizations, anyone can strive for leadership positions in your area of the state as regional treasurer, secretary or chairman to name a few. And at the state level, you could be anything from legislative coordinator to state chairman! There are so many positions available and opportunities to mature as a leader to any member of HSRT who is dedicated to the organization and who works hard to reach those positions. And don’t forget that your hard work will all pay off when filling out that college resume and when looking back at the difference you made in your community. Starting a club and becoming a part of HSRT is a decision you won’t regret and whether you decide to take that step and join because of one of these three reasons or your own, we hope that becoming involved with HSRT is an experience you will never forget.

What Type of Club Should You Start?

Now that you have decided to start a club, the next question to consider is what type of club you want to start. There are two basic types of clubs: clubs in a high school and clubs not in a high school. Why these two? Since HSRT is composed of high school aged students, clubs are either in a high school, meaning they are an official club or student organization in the high school with administration approval, teacher sponsor(s) and facilities to meet in, and a student body to draw members from, or they are outside of a high school, sponsored by a Republican adult or local Republican club with meetings anywhere such as at local business, community center, local party headquarters etc. and a rough geographic area where members live. Here is a look at each type of club with its facets, pros and cons, and other helpful information.

High school clubs are officially sanctioned student organizations by the administration at the high school. In order to continue to be in existence every year, they must comply with any requirements the school has such as a certain number of teacher sponsors, a minimum level of membership, paperwork etc. However, this yields a lot of benefits. Finding a meeting place isn't an issue since they have access to their sponsor's classroom or even conference rooms or other facilities at the school. And one of the biggest benefits is the fact that since it's a school club, you have an entire student body to recruit from through a club fair, talking to friends and teachers or even just 'tabling' at lunch. Some schools will even give clubs access to a bank account through the general fund to deposit and withdraw club funds from and school events provide opportunities to fundraise. But since it is affiliated with a school, there are often additional "ground rules" in terms of what kinds of partisan activity can occur on-campus.

Off-campus clubs are formed by having an adult sponsor and meeting all the other requirements HSRT has for registering a club (more on that in the next section). It's basically a group of teenagers from a community or county getting together with adult supervision and meeting and volunteering. These clubs aren't limited by any school rules on what you can and can't do or have to go through any paperwork from a school. There is a lot more flexibility as well since you can meet just about anywhere, any Republican adult can sponsor it and you can draw members from almost anywhere whether children of elected officials or Republican club members or even just friends that can be convinced to give politics a try. However, it can often be harder to recruit members and can take more work to get going since in order to have many members, it requires having meetings that are extremely well-promoted within the community and Republican circles to have enough of a draw.

Whichever you type you decide to pick, HSRT can answer any questions you have about starting a club of either type or even further distinguishing between the two. Both are good options, it just depends on your specific situation to determine what's best for you.

HSRT Requirements to Start a Club

Below are the official requirements in HSRT’s bylaws (not verbatim) in order for a club to qualify for status as a full chapter. This is to give you an idea of what you’re shooting for when you pursue starting a club.

- **Have at least 7 members**
- **Have an elected chairman or other leader and at least one additional officer**
- **Have a club constitution or bylaws approved by HSRT**
- **Have a current (on an annual basis) club registration form on file with HSRT**
- **Have at least one adult sponsor**

The first requirement is self-explanatory. The second requirement basically states that each club must have a chairman or president (or any other title you wish to have for the person in charge) and at least one other club officer (though we recommend having more). The third requirement is something new to a lot of people. In order to ensure all the clubs are governed by an official document that everyone has access to and that outlines the structure of the club, we require each club to have a set of bylaws or a club constitution. This might sound daunting, but HSRT can provide examples from other clubs and will offer guidance on how to draft an effective constitution/bylaws later in this guide. In fact, we have an example constitution on page 24. The club registration requirement in the third bullet is just a form we require everyone to fill out so we have all the officers contact information among other things. Information on how to get this form is located in the back of this guide. The final requirement is self-explanatory as well. The rest of this guide is dedicated to outlining not only how to start a club that can meet these requirements, but also how to make sure your club is a fun and great experience for your members that will hopefully result in more than 7 members and people involved in regional or state positions.

A Note on Naming Your Club:

You club can take on an array of different names. If your club is at a high school, something like the following would work: Alamo Heights High School _____

“Republicans”

“Young Republicans”

“Teenage Republicans” with TARS as the abbreviation

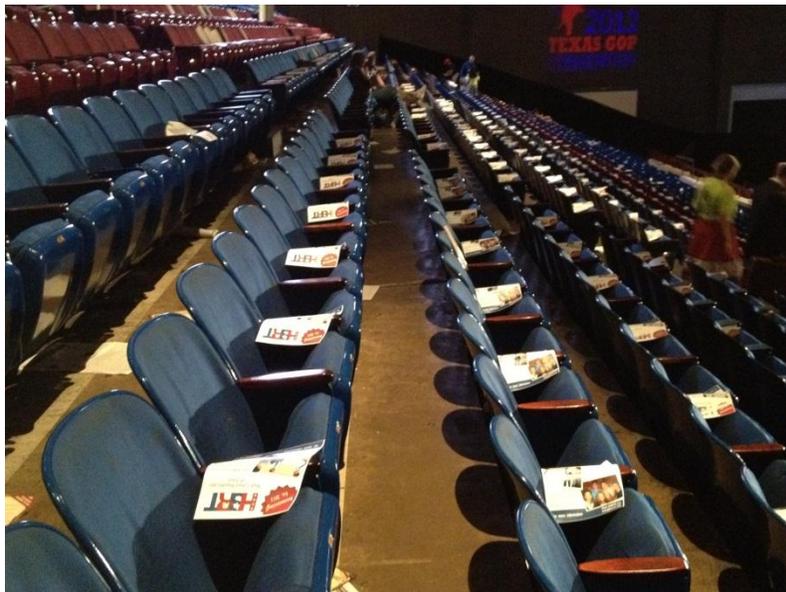
If outside of a high school, then name it after your county, town or region of a city or county and then use “High School Republicans” or “Teenage Republicans.” If you don’t like any of these, come up with your own title and run it by HSRT for feedback.

Getting Down to Business: Starting a Club



Now that you have been introduced to the different types of clubs, HSRT's requirements and have been given reasons why you should take this on, this next section will concentrate on providing advice and guidance on getting your club off the ground. This section will be divided into two parts for most topics, one for each type of club in order to be comprehensive. The best time to start a club is usually during an election year. People are already fired up about the November elections and this always makes recruiting easier; however, this doesn't mean you should not start one if you're in an off year. In fact, getting your club organized and going before an election year rolls around will make you and your members more effective in the election cycle because you don't have to worry about getting your club off the ground and can focus more on volunteering and helping Republicans up and down the ballot. For on-campus clubs, the best time to start is always at the beginning of a school year. Many schools will only let you start a club then and there are usually opportunities like a club fair or homecoming festivities to help with recruiting, but that doesn't mean that you can't try mid-year. Off-campus clubs can be started whenever.

Another important part of this process is involving your local Republican party. Get the contact information for your county party and let them know you're starting a high school Republican club and want to get involved. They'll be happy to hear from you and can prove to be a valuable resource to help with recruiting, volunteer opportunities, getting speakers and so much more! They want to hear from you, they are always looking for more young people to get involved!



Finding a Sponsor

One of the important decisions/tasks early on is finding an adult sponsor for the club. Sponsors can be invaluable to the success of your club and are required in order to supervise the club's activities.

On-Campus Club Sponsor

A sponsor for an on-campus club is almost always a member of the school's faculty as often required in the school's rules for student organizations. In selecting a teacher, keep some of these things in mind:

- You want a teacher who would be a good sponsor. They need to be organized, somewhat familiar with the school's process and rules for clubs and, of course, willing and hopefully excited to sponsor your club.
- The teacher should be a Republican, except in cases where you're unable to find a willing Republican teacher in which case a neutral government teacher or somebody like that would work.
- If possible, try to find a teacher who isn't sponsoring that many other clubs or might, because of what they teach, have more time available so they're able to spend enough time on it to make your club successful.
- Make sure it is someone you are comfortable with i.e. don't select the teacher you hated when you took their class if you've had them before.
- Pick someone who isn't a control freak. You don't want an adult micromanaging your student club! You want someone who will supervise, but still lets you run your club and keeps it student-run.
- If you can't find anyone completely ideal, do the best you can. Basically, don't let sponsor problems deter you from starting your club.

Since prospective sponsors might want to know what they're responsibilities are as a sponsor, here is a sample of what you might tell them to answer that question:

Club sponsors are the official adult supervisor of the club. They are in charge of ensuring the club is in compliance with all appropriate school rules and are a resource for the club's leadership to help make the club successful.

Off-Campus Club Sponsor

Off-campus club sponsors are Republican adults in the community in which the club encompasses. They are the supervisor of the club in its activities and help the club in securing meeting locations, dealing with finances and parents and connecting the club to local Republicans. In selecting a sponsor, keep these things in mind:

- You want someone who is a dedicated Republican willing to put in the time to make the club successful. Ideally someone who is active in the local party, very organized and well-connected.
- Make sure it is someone you and your members are comfortable with!
- Pick someone who isn't a control freak. You don't want an adult micromanaging your student club! You want someone who will supervise, but still lets you run your club and keeps it student-run.
- If you can't find anyone completely ideal, do the best you can. Basically, don't let sponsor problems deter you from starting your club.
-

Sponsors are an important part of the club, so take the time to find a good one. The nice part is there are many adults out there who would be happy to help a youth club and really want to help youth get involved in the party!

Recruiting

Finding members is another important step for obvious reasons and you should begin recruiting as soon as possible. To start, talk to your friends. See if any of them are interested in politics and if not you can invite them to some of your meetings to get hopefully get them interested. After that, the two types of clubs diverge in terms of recruiting.

On- Campus Club Recruiting

For on-campus clubs, recruiting is limited to students at your high school; however, high schools also provide a great medium to recruit members from. When you're registering your club with the school, check to see if they have any type of a club fair where all the different clubs have tables and students can walk around and learn about them. If your school does, be sure to get information on it and participate! Make a flyer to hand out, have a clip board and pen with sign-up sheets to take down names, emails and phone numbers and do anything else creative you think of like decorating the table or making signs/posters. If your school doesn't, ask if you can set up at a table during lunch or before/after school in a central location to talk to people about your club. You can also check to see if there is anywhere you can put up flyers to promote the club and its meetings. After that, you schedule an informational meeting (if there was a club fair, contact everyone who signed up about the meeting) and promote it and go from there (more on that in the next section).

Off-Campus Club Recruiting

For off-campus clubs, you have more options in terms of recruiting. You can draw members from as far away as they're willing to come and everyone can be from a range of high schools or homeschooled. If you know kids in your community who would be interested, contact them. If any of your parents or family are in any local Republican clubs or are involved in the party, see if you can talk to clubs about getting their teenagers involved in your club. Your sponsor can also be a big help in this area if they're a member of any clubs or have any Republican contacts. You can also check to see if government teachers/high schools in your area might be willing to put up or distribute a flyer for your club. And be sure to utilize any other types of publicity you can or do anything else you think of to promote your club! After that, you schedule an informational meeting and promote it and you go from there (more on that in the next section).

The First Meeting

After identifying people interested in joining the club and finding a sponsor, the next step is having your first meeting to tell people about the club and why they should join. The key to a successful first meeting is promotion and persuasion. If no one knows about the meeting, then you're just wasting your time and though you'll still accomplish something if even a few people show up, you want the highest turnout possible for obvious reasons. But once you get people to the meeting, you need to make it worth their time and effective for recruiting. So this is where persuasion comes in. You want to familiarize everyone with yourself, the sponsor and what the club stands for and will be doing. Give the prospective member a reason (or hopefully multiple reasons) to join and become active in your club. "What is in it for them?" is a question you need to answer repeatedly in the meeting. Lastly, since this is a political club, you need to break down the stereotype many people will likely immediately form about your club, which is that it is only for people who really keep up with politics and won't be that much fun. Talk about how, though you'll be doing political stuff, it can be fun in a political club getting involved with friends. And, of course, bring up the possibility of pizza parties after volunteering at an event, how cool it is to meet powerful people, how getting involved in the club looks good on a resume etc. Just like how in political campaigning you want to hit people multiple times (making multiple contacts) and give them multiple reasons to vote for someone, give your prospects multiple reasons to join and continue to emphasize the benefits of membership and involvement consistently throughout everything your club does. Keep your members motivated! Here are some good ideas for a first meeting:

- After introducing yourself and the sponsor, go around the room and have everyone introduce themselves and say a few other things like what grade they're in, why they came to the meeting, a fun fact etc. A good icebreaker can go a long way!
- Talk about how the club is not only just a local club, but part of the High School Republicans of Texas and National Teenage Republicans. You'll be surprised how much state and nationwide associations mean to people.
- Discuss what Republicans stand for if your audience isn't familiar with our party's positions.
- Have some kind of food or drink (like cookies or soda or something like that) for people to have at the beginning.
- Have a written agenda for the meeting and make copies for everyone. Also, put your contact information on it so they can get in touch with you.
- Take down names and information (name, email, phone etc.) for everyone that attends. Also ask what the best way to contact them is.
- Talk about perspective activities and events to give them an idea of what you're going to be doing.
- Find out what times work best for people to have meetings.

Below is an agenda Alamo Heights HS used for their first meeting in 2011:

AHHS YR First Meeting Agenda

Introduction

Introduce Sponsors of the club

Detailing the Club

- Objectives
- Affiliations (Bexar County GOP and National TARS)
- Potential Activities
- What we stand for (Republican Party Ideals)
- Meetings (How often, different types such as debates, discussions etc.)
- Community Service
- Important Dates/Info on 2012 Elections
- Misc.

Soldier Ride Info

- November 12
- Part of the Wounded Warrior Project
- Helps injured veterans
- Need as many people as possible
- We'll probably be handing out water or something like that

Howdy Night

- Need ideas
- Ask for ideas
- Discuss ideas
- Sign up for shifts

Ask if anyone is interested in being an officer

- Describe process
- Take questions

T-Shirts

Any Questions?

This agenda isn't perfect and would need to be spruced up a little if it were handed out to meeting attendees, but it kind of gives you an idea of what a first meeting can look like.

After the meeting, talk to the people who attended and get an idea of what they thought of the meeting and the club. From there, start planning for the next meeting. Here are some things you should do after the first meeting:

- Compile the information from meeting attendees into an electronic spreadsheet so you have the information saved and easily accessible to keep them informed about club events.
- Create a Facebook Page for the club and invite everyone who came to the meeting and any other interested people to 'LIKE' it. Pages are useful in getting your name out to the

public and promoting your club. Unlike a group, pages are completely public and serve as a great public relations tool to keep members and supporters alike informed about your activities.

- Create a Facebook Group (a closed group) and invite everyone who came to the meeting and any other interested people to join. Facebook Groups are a great way to keep members informed about the club without the information being completely public. Ideally you want to have both a page and a group.
- Find out who is interested in being an officer for the elections at the second meeting.

After talking with people who attended the first meeting and using what you learned at that meeting, set a date and time for the second meeting.

The Second Meeting and Beyond

The second meeting, like the first meeting and every meeting you ever have, needs to be well-promoted. Encourage people from the first meeting to each bring a friend along and spread the word to people they know about the club and promote it in all the same ways as you did the first meeting (if that was successful of course). At the meeting itself, you should ideally elect officers and approve your bylaws along with starting the normal flow of things at a meeting like having discussions on current events or talking about upcoming volunteer opportunities for instance. For officer elections, give each candidate a little bit of time to speak and then vote, either on pre-printed ballots or on scratch paper ballots. Have a deadline to 'file' to run in advance so you know who is running and what to expect. For the bylaws, ratify them by a 2/3 margin (the typical margin for any type of bylaws or constitution in organizations). Writing bylaws is covered in a later section. After this meeting, you are well on your way to a successful club. Once you have more than seven members, fill out HSRT's club registration form and send it in to register as a chapter.

To recap, you first need to find a sponsor and begin recruiting members. Once you're confident in those efforts, secure the necessary permissions and hold your first meeting, promoting it like crazy to make it successful. After that, have your second meeting, elect officers and approve your bylaws and you're off and running.

Club Organization and Activities



As part of forming your club, you need to decide how your club will be organized and how it will function. This takes the form of your bylaws/constitution, which, like the U.S. Constitution or the constitution or bylaws of any entity, will establish how your club will operate, what officer positions you'll have, what the officers are required to do etc. You will have many options in this respect and this section is meant to familiarize you with many of these options and inform you how to translate these determinations into sections in your bylaws. Having detailed and well-written bylaws is very important and will definitely pay off down the road should questions arise, which is why HSRT requires it in order to form a chapter. An example constitution will be included at the end of the section. In addition, this section will cover meetings and activities and the different things your club can do such as volunteering for campaigns, hosting guest speakers, having a fundraiser etc. Good programming is essential to a successful club and this section should give you an idea of what good programming truly is.



Officers

Every club needs officers to form an executive board that runs and directs the activities of the club and HSRT requires at least 2 officers, a leader (chairman or president) and one additional officer. After this, however, you have a lot of leeway as to how you organize the club. First, you basically have two different sets of nomenclature to work with; your club leader can have the title chairman or president. Clubs have it both ways, though it is the opinion of many that chairman is better for a political club/organization and sounds more official and professional for a teenage club; however, there are many differing opinions out there and it is up for you to decide. The typical club has the following organizational structure:

Chairman (President): Chief executive officer of the club.

Vice Chairman (Vice President): Assists the chairman and takes over in their absence.

Secretary: Keeps the records of the club, including attendance and the minutes of meetings.

Treasurer: Handles the finances of the club.

Some clubs add a press secretary or public relations person as a 5th officer as well. For smaller clubs, you probably just need those 4 positions, which pretty much covers the different duties and responsibilities officers have. However, if you feel that your club needs more officers, you can add positions (appointed by the chairman or elected) like executive director, multiple vice chairman with each focusing on a particular area etc. All this needs to be included and outlined in your bylaws.



Alamo Heights HS Chapter's 2012 officer election totals on the board in the background.

Committees

Another important part of a successful club is getting members involved through committees. Committees are a great way to allow more people to get involved in making the club successful and help take some of the workload away from the officers. For really small clubs, committees might not be as feasible since you're limited in terms of membership, but for a little bit larger clubs (maybe 15 members or so) and on up, they are a must. Some types of committees you might have are membership, programming, publicity, fundraising, campaign, social, community service etc. Committees usually come in two basic forms with a committee chairman appointed by the club chairman or elected by committee members: a committee composed of any interested club members (no limits on membership) or committee members appointed by the chairman or executive board with membership ranging anywhere (including the committee chairman) from 4 to even 10 or more people. Committees can meet before or after regular club meetings or separately and basically are assigned tasks within their area by the chairman and executive board and carry them out with their approval. In your bylaws, you should establish guidelines for committees and list the standing or permanent committees your club will have and can optionally include a provision allowing the chairman to create temporary committees (usually for special events or to try out the idea of having a committee in a specific area).

Meetings

Something imperative to the success of your club is meeting often so people remain involved. In order to help make this happen, some club have included in their bylaws provisions requiring monthly meetings and other provisions regarding meetings. This isn't absolutely necessary, but is definitely an idea to consider. But when you do meet, what should you do?

The number one rule of meetings is don't waste people's time. Not only does that discourage people from remaining involved, but it also does them a disservice when they could be doing something that is a better use of their time. That being said, it is important that your meetings are fun and interesting to your members and there are a number of different things you can do at meetings to accomplish that. One good meeting format is having a guest speaker. An agenda for a meeting with a speaker might look like this:

AHHS YR February Meeting Agenda

Welcome/food

Attendance Sheet and importance for Officer Elections (sign up)

YR-YD Debate (sign up)

FB Party (Sign Up):

Friday, March 2, 2012 – Facebook & Twitter Party, 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at the home of County Commissioner Kevin & Sandi Wolff, 204 Sir Arthur Court, Castle Hills TX 78213.

Selling Pizza Rolls (sign up): Need six people for 3/19, 3/20, 4/9 & 4/10

Big Bob's Night (sign up): Saturday, March 24 from 6-9

Speaker Straus fundraiser on March 6 (sign up)

Block walking for Speaker Straus (sign up)

Rosa Campaign Opportunities (sign up)

Donna Campbell, Guest Speaker

Left over t-shirts

Summer opportunities for resume etc.

Answer questions

Update on Redistricting, and the GOP in general

Misc.

A lot of the so called 'business' of the meeting, like talking about upcoming events and opportunities, should be done before the speaker so, in case the speaker goes long, you still get it in. If the meeting is during a meal, then you can do something like selling pizza or getting a local women's club to donate sandwich trays and people eat while you go through business. Other things that can be good components of a meeting include discussing something in the new or recent events, talking about the Republican party, explaining something in the political process, having an ice cream social or other social event before or after the meeting, having someone from the local GOP train club members on Get Out the Vote (GOTV) effort, community service etc. The possibilities, as cliché as it sounds, are really endless for meetings. Just make sure you make it worthwhile for your members.

Some additional tips:

- For any events or activities, have a signup sheet at the meeting so you have a list of people to contact about it later instead of just mentioning it and then struggling to organize it later.
- Always take attendance by passing around a signup sheet.
- Schedule meetings well in advance and remind people when you schedule it, about a week out and a few days before. Creating a Facebook event can be helpful as well and inviting all of your members.
- Take pictures of the meetings! It is a great way to document what your club does and just like how photos are being used in this guide, it can be a great recruiting tool.
- If you host a speaker, let them know ahead of time how much time they will have and hold them to it so it doesn't mess up your meeting schedule.
- Don't meet much longer than an hour as a general rule (except in special circumstances) and keep people engaged throughout.
- Don't have the chairman do all the talking, let other officers some handle parts of the meeting and if the committees did something, let the committee chairman talk about what they did.
- Eventually make a pre-meeting checklist to make sure you don't forget things you need for the meetings (like pens and clipboards for signup sheets, a notepad to write down anything that comes up you'd like to revisit etc.).
- Make sure your secretary takes good minutes of the meeting so you know, in the future, what actually occurred as opposed to what you planned.



Now that you have an idea of some of the important components of your club's bylaws, take a look at this example from our chapter at Alamo Heights High School (Please note: this is an edited version of their constitution that makes several changes that are currently pending approval by the club):

Alamo Heights High School Young Republicans Constitution

As Amended, _____

Founder: Connor Pfeiffer, Class of 2014

Co-Founder: Simon Barnett, Class of 2014

Article I: Objectives of the club

- To represent Republican students in the Alamo Heights High School student body.
- To educate students and members of the community about the ideals of the Republican Party and about the political process.
- To aid local and national Republican candidates to victory in elections.
- To demonstrate Republican ideals through community service.

Article II: Affiliations

The Alamo Heights High School Young Republicans is recognized as a chapter of the National Teen Age Republicans and High School Republicans of Texas.

Article III: Official Principles

The official principles and platform of this club shall be the same as the Republican National Committee and associated organizations.

Article IV: Membership

All Alamo Heights High School students are eligible to be members of this organization.

Article V: Officers

Officers shall be elected for the following school year at the last meeting of this club during May of the previous school year with the exception of the 9th Grade Representative, who will be elected at the beginning of the school year for which they would hold the position. All members are eligible to vote for officers regardless of class or age. All members are eligible to run for office regardless of class or age as long as they have attended 50% of the meetings of the club (with the exception of members voting for the freshman class representative at the beginning of the year) of that calendar school year as determined by the Secretary or have participated in an adequate number of outside activities and projects in combination with the number of meetings attended. It is at the discretion of the chairman and the sponsor as to what this alternate requirement is. Officers must attend all meetings unless they have a reasonable conflict that the chairman is notified of within one day of the meeting or if an emergency comes up.

The officers of the club shall be the following:

- **Chairman:** The chairman shall be the president and chief executive officer of the organization. He/she shall preside over all meetings. The chairman is responsible for assigning officer duties and appointing officer positions when necessary. The chairman shall also be an ex-officio member of all committees.
- **Vice-Chairman:** The vice-chairmen shall, in case of the absence of the chairman, perform the duties of the chairman. He/she shall be the chairman's chief assistant and shall

perform any other appropriate duties assigned by the chairman. The vice-chairman shall also be an ex-officio member of all committees.

- Secretary: The secretary shall keep the records and proceedings of the organization. He/she shall take attendance at each meeting and activity, keep the minutes of the meetings and any other appropriate duties assigned by the chairman.
- Treasurer: The treasurer shall keep all the financial records of the club. He/she is responsible for paying the bills of the club out of the club account, keeping track of fundraising, advising the chairman on the finances of the club and any other appropriate duties assigned by the chairman.
- Press Secretary: The press secretary shall be responsible for recruiting new members, managing the public relations of the club and any other appropriate duties assigned by the chairman.
- 12th Grade Representative: The 12th Grade Representative represents the senior class to the club officers and shall be charged with dealing with senior members, encouraging attendance and any other appropriate duties assigned by the chairman. Only seniors may hold this position.
- 11th Grade Representative: The 11th Grade Representative represents the junior class to the club officers and shall be charged with dealing with junior members, encouraging attendance and any other appropriate duties assigned by the chairman. Only juniors may hold this position.
- 10th Grade Representative: The 10th Grade Representative represents the sophomore class to the club officers and shall be charged with dealing with sophomore members, encouraging attendance and any other appropriate duties assigned by the chairman. Only sophomores may hold this position.
- 9th Grade Representative: The 9th Grade Representative represents the freshman class to the club officers and shall be charged with dealing with freshman members, encouraging attendance and any other appropriate duties assigned by the chairman. Only freshman may hold this position.

The faculty sponsors of the club shall have final say on decisions made by the officers and the members to make sure that everything this club does is within the rules of the high school and the law. The chairman and/or vice chairman shall be responsible for communication with the high school administration and high school faculty; however, if the chairman finds it appropriate, he may delegate certain communications with the administration and faculty to another officer.

If it is the determination of the chairman that an officer has violated the conditions herein by not adequately performing the duties of their office, the chairman may move for the removal of the officer from office. If the sponsor and the majority of the officers (not including the accused) agree, a majority vote of the members present at a meeting may remove the officer from office. The chairman shall appoint an interim person to occupy the post until the next officer election. If the chairman is the officer in question, a majority vote of the officers shall bring the issue to the club where a majority of those present at a meeting may remove the chairman. If the chairman is removed, then the Officers shall elect a new chairman to serve until the next officer election.

Article VI: Committees

The Chairman, with the approval of the sponsors, may establish special committees, in addition to the standing committees, that are responsible for certain activities or initiatives of the club. The Chairman shall, at the beginning of each school year, appoint the chairman and members of

the standing and special committees for that school year. Special committees can be created at anytime during the school year, but end unless recreated for the next school year. All members are eligible to be members of committees. Committees shall work by adopting plans for their assigned task that the chairman then uses, with the help of the committee members, to run an event or initiative. The standing committees shall be the committees on Fundraising and Community Service.

Article VII: Meetings

The club shall not meet less often than monthly. A sponsor shall be present at all meetings. All meetings shall have an agenda approved by the chairman. Committees can meet following the regular meetings or can meet separately.

Article VIII: Amending the Constitution

- Amendments must be put in writing
- Amendments must be approved by the sponsors, the majority of the officers and the chairman.
- The amendment must then be approved by a 2/3 majority at a meeting where more than 1/2 of the clubs members are present.
- The Secretary shall certify that this process was followed properly in order for the amendment to be added.

This constitution is by no means perfect, but it can give you an idea of how bylaws should be structured and some other necessary provisions not mentioned in this guide such as establishing a process for amendments, an affiliations article, a membership article, an official beliefs article etc. Another thing you'd need to add is a ratification article at the end stating what is required to approve the bylaws by the club. An example ratification article could be the following:

Article IV: Ratification

This constitution shall stand approved when a 2/3 majority of those present at a meeting of this club affirm it.

Before you submit your constitution to your club, have your sponsor and other founding members look over it for typos or any changes. If you want additional examples of bylaws or constitutions or need help drafting your club's constitution, contact HSRT for help.

Outside Activities

Outside of meetings, high school republican clubs are very active. Outside activities and events are generally either political or community service oriented or social activities.

Political

As a political club, obviously high school republican clubs are going to be very politically active. Things you might do include working at local party headquarters answering phones, doing data entry or anything else they need, volunteering for Republican candidates by block walking, phone banking, helping at campaign headquarters or staffing events, and doing things in the community or on campus like a voter registration drive, hosting a candidate forum or debate, debating your school or community's Young Democrats club, attending local Republican events, writing letters to the editor or anything else you can think of. In order to facilitate this, form a strong relationship with your local Republican Party and the opportunities will begin to come. You never know, you might even get to meet the Lieutenant Governor or the chairman of the Republican Party of Texas. Getting your club really politically involved can be very rewarding to you and your members and extremely helpful to local Republicans.

Community Service

A good high school republican club not only is very politically involved, but also does community service. You might wonder, how does community service tie into a political club? Well, it does because as Republicans, we care about our communities and those who are less fortunate and there is no better way to show that than through service. It is part of who we are as Republicans and your club should make an effort to participate in community service projects at least several times every year.

Social Activates

While "Social Activities" might be a rather unimpressive name for having fun, social activities are things your club does just for the heck of it. Possibilities might be getting together after school at a local restaurant to do homework or talk politics and current events, having a pizza party after a long day of volunteering at party headquarters or for a candidate (if you're lucky, the county party or candidate might even offer to fully pay for your pizza party or social event out of gratitude), or having one of your meetings at someone's house with a pool and then going swimming afterwards. There are really a lot of options here and a lot of fun can be had through social activities.

Fundraising

It takes money to run anything these days and your club will be no different. There will be costs from buying meeting refreshments, getting t-shirts and printed material made, event costs etc. And even though a lot of this will be covered by your members paying for those shirts or the food, the more money you have, the less you have to charge and the more things you can do like offering scholarships to attend an HSRT state convention, having free food at meetings or doing stuff at your school like buying a new U.S. flag for the flag pole or getting custodians gift cards at Christmas to give a few examples. Here are some possible fundraising ideas:

- Get a local restaurant to donate a percentage (usually 10-15%) of sales from a day or during a certain window on a day to your club. You then encourage all your club members and friends along with local Republicans to eat there.
- If your school has any type of fair where you can sell stuff, set up a booth and make some money selling food, drinks, or have an activity or something like that.
- Solicit donations from local Republicans.
- Charge member dues.

A Note on Club T-Shirts:

Every club should have a club t-shirt for members to wear around to get free publicity and for people to wear at club functions. It doesn't need to be complicated; most shirts just have the club name and/or logo on the front and then a quote or slogan on the back. T-shirts are also an easy way to fundraise. If it cost you \$8 a shirt, then charge \$15 and if you sell a fair amount of shirts, that's a lot of money for your club. However, when you're dealing with shirt places/websites that you can get shirts made from and dealing with money and club members, keep a few things in mind:

- Always get a proof before it prints!
- Get prices from multiple places to find the best price.
- Get orders from club members before buying the shirts, but also order some extras in a variety of sizes to accommodate new members and in case people might want multiple shirts.
- Collect money upfront on anything like this so you can pay for everything.

Conclusion

After reading through this guide, hopefully you have gained a better understanding of how to start a high school Republican club. There are undoubtedly ideas, tips and steps left out that you may encounter in starting or running your club; however, hopefully this guide gives you a good enough idea of what to do and expect that you can be successful. If you have any additional questions, please contact HSRT (contact information is below).

Additional Information and Forms

- The Club Registration form is available on our website under chapter resources.
- HSRT's most up to date bylaws is also available on our website under chapter resources.
- If you want additional information on a specific area like meeting ideas and planning or how to get your club more involved in local politics, contact HSRT to see if there is a separate guide for that area and if not, we can make one for you.
- We also have push cards, flyers and other promotional materials we can send you to hand out when you're recruiting.
- HSRT can also help with finding community service opportunities or can help get your club a good speaker as well.

Contact Information:

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