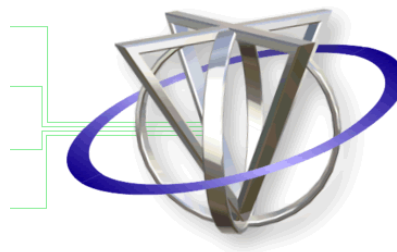


# Guidelines for Starting a Club



## Background

The student activities program (called “8<sup>th</sup> period”) has been an integral part of the school day at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST) since its inception. This unique time provides students an opportunity to explore new interests or socialize with friends in supervised activities. Many of the same activities and clubs that traditional schools offer are found at TJHSST, as well as some that can only be offered because of the unique technical laboratories and nature of the school.

## Clubs

A club is a meeting of a group of individuals for a specialized purpose. By regulation, all clubs must be student-initiated and student-run under the supervision of an FCPS sponsor. All activities and clubs at TJ must be sponsored by a TJ staff member or FCPS-employed coach responsible for their management. All clubs must go through the FCPS approval process and are thus subject to all FCPS regulations.

## Starting a New Club or Activity

- 1) Check with the 8<sup>th</sup> Period office to determine if a club similar to the idea you have in mind has been previously approved at your school.
- 2) *FCPS will not approve any club application that is an extension of an outside organization and no outside organization may have any authority over a FCPS club or students.*
- 3) If you get approval to proceed, ask a current TJ staff member to be a faculty/staff sponsor. *Note: By regulation, all clubs must be student-initiated and student-run (under the supervision of the sponsor)*. It is necessary that a staff sponsor each activity and be present at each meeting / activity (for example: competitions, bake sales, car wash).
- 4) Complete the **application packet** which consists of a:
  - a. Contact/Info sheet
  - b. Cover sheet
  - c. Application
  - d. Constitution
  - e. Student Interest form
  - All forms must be typed or computer-generated, with the exception of the Contact/Info and the student interest forms.
  - Make sure the application is complete and includes the typed name and *hand-written initials of the sponsor*. The 8<sup>th</sup> period coordinator will get the approval of the DSA and Principal.
  - *Note that if fundraising or financial donation is listed as a primary objective/activity of the club, the application will be returned for edits (due to regulations regarding fundraising and donations).*

- Do NOT list specific fund-raising activities or field trips on the application - be generic. Indicate that any/all fund-raising or field trips will comply with FCPS regulations and local school policies and approval processes, including having the sponsor present.
  - There must be a constitution. Your club may use the template provided by FCPS or create your own format. It should include elements such as the responsibilities of the officers, how officers are chosen, and how officers can be removed from office. Any questions about the content of the constitution should be directed to the 8<sup>th</sup> Period Coordinator.
  - The student interest form must include a list of current students interested in participating
- 5) Return your completed application packet to the 8<sup>th</sup> period office (room 106).
  - 6) All new club/activity applications must be submitted before the last day of the first quarter. New club paperwork will not be processed until the existing clubs have sponsorship.
  - 7) The forms will be reviewed by the Director of Student Activities, School Principal, and the FCPS Director of Student Activities and Athletics.
  - 8) Upon approval, a copy of your application packet will be returned to your school's Activities Office and your school's finance office. The 8<sup>th</sup> period office will alert your sponsor and the student leader. The sponsor will need to contact the Finance Office to set up a finance account when needed. In order to raise or spend funds, clubs must have an active account in the finance office.

## **Glossary**

Activities Office: Also known as the Athletic Office, Supervises all student activities and athletics at the school level, including clubs and activities; located next to the main gymnasium.

Constitution: A document that clearly states the principles and mission of a club, as well as club policies in regards to membership and officers.

Director of Student Activities (DSA) for FCPS: Responsible for directing and coordinating student activities and athletics in Fairfax County, as well as providing financial oversight of all centrally funded student activities; the final step in the club approval process; a position currently held by Mr. Bill Curran.

Director of Student Activities (DSA) for TJHSST: Responsible for directing and coordinating student activities and athletics at TJHSST; a position currently held by Mr. Rusty Hodges.

Eighth Period Coordinator: Responsible for coordinating the eighth period program at TJHSST

Sponsor: A TJ faculty/staff member or FCPS coach responsible for the activities of a given club.