Program 5: Teen Advisory Board Meeting

Your library has a TAG that meets one time a month after school during the school year. The meetings run for two hours and they are co-led by two librarians. Bags of chips and sodas are available for the teens to eat during the meeting. Anyone in middle or high school can come to the meetings. There is no registration and no requirement to come each month, so while there are some regulars, the membership varies each month. There can be anywhere from 15-25 people at a meeting.

The teens sit around a large table in the library’s Board Room. There is no assigned seating, and the members tend to sit with their friends. Even so, they are not cliquish, and are friendly and welcoming to new attendees.

The agenda of each meeting is pretty similar. You always start out with introducing new attendees followed by member news (birthdays, trips, college acceptances, etc.). Then the librarians talk about teen events held at the library since the last meeting and upcoming teen events. Upcoming events for the group (like a field trip or other special activity) are also discussed at this time. There are no set rules for how members speak in the group, but they are asked to listen to each other and not to interrupt each other. Some raise hands, others don’t.

After the introductory activities, there is a fitness or movement break for about ten minutes. This consists of something like a giant “rock, scissors, paper” tournament, or a game of beach ball volleyball or something similar.

After the movement break, each meeting has a main activity, and that is the part that differs each month. Sometimes it is a guest speaker. At other times, like the December meeting, the teens work as a group to decorate the children’s room for the winter holidays. The main activity could be deciding on the theme for the library’s teen summer
reading club, or discussing whether or not to show the latest teen blockbuster movie at the library.

After the main activity, members who volunteered to do so at the last meeting present a booktalk to the group. Then, volunteers are selected to do booktalks at the next meeting.

The meeting ends with the members having the opportunity to select teen ARCs to read from an assortment placed on a front table. They tend to run up and grab these in a mad rush.

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