



Starting an After-School Ensemble Planning Worksheet

Use this comprehensive worksheet to guide your planning process as you develop your after-school ensemble program.

Proposal: Talking to Your Administration

What kind of group are you proposing?

Choir, Orff, Recorder, Ukulele, Ballet Folklorico, Theater, Folk Dance, Guitar, Musical Theater, etc.

Do you need supplies for this group? Instruments? Equipment?

How many kids are you hoping for? How many will you accept?

Who is the group open to? Grade Levels?

Will it be an auditioned group, or can anyone join? Is it by invitation only?

What is your goal with the group? Perform for the community? Compete?

Will they get fed at your rehearsal? Who will provide snacks?

Time Commitment and Scheduling

What days are rehearsals?

What times are your rehearsals?

Do you need to work around other clubs, sports or a bus schedule?

Do you need to let facilities know? Lights? A/C?



How will you communicate with members? How about parents?

Will there be a cost associated? If so, what happens if a student cannot afford the participation fee?

Will you travel?

What Ifs

Consider how you will handle these potential situations:

- ...a student doesn't get picked up on time
- ...a student doesn't come to rehearsal
- ...a student gets in trouble at school - do they get to continue?
- ...a parent has complaints
- ...a student wants to quit
- ...there is drama within the group

Proposed Policies

Develop policies for the following areas:

- Behavior/Code of Conduct
- Grades/Academics
- Moral Character
- Equipment Rental
- Travel Permission
- Social Media/Yearbook/District Media release
- Allergies, Emergency contact, pertinent medical information
- Parent/Guardian contact information

Organization

Audition or Orientation Packet

- Short explanation of what the ensemble consists of and what they will be doing
- Paperwork for the audition or general information for you as registration for the ensemble
- Parent contact information
- Parent and Student contract



- Proposed schedule

Welcome Packet - for students who are IN the group

- Letter to the Families, include your contact information
- Communication information - email addresses, communication apps, etc.
- Official schedule
- Handbook or list of expectations, with signed acknowledgment
- Media Release (or similar per district)
- Allergy and Medical Information, Emergency Contacts
- Parent Permission
- T-shirt sizes or uniform sizing
- Optional: Volunteer form or Donation form

Helpers for Student-to-Adult Ratio

Talk with parents, PTO volunteers, fellow teachers, high school students, and local college students. Make sure they are district-certified/background-checked as needed.

Folders and Music

- Will your kids have folders? Do they provide a certain folder or will you have one for them? Do they need pencils?
- What is your system for music? How do they turn in their music? What should it look like?
- Does the music stay in the rehearsal space or can it travel outside the room?

Semester or Year Schedule

- Include dates you are having rehearsals and dates you are NOT having rehearsals
- Put the date of your performance in multiple places!

Uniform

- What will they be wearing to your rehearsal? Do they need special shoes or dance attire?
- What will they wear to performance? Are you providing the uniform or do they provide the uniform?
- If the family is providing the uniform, give several options and examples they can choose from
- If you are providing the uniform: Where are you getting them? Who is paying? Where will they be stored? When will you hand them out? Will performers have to clean and return them?



Money

- If you are collecting money, who does it go to?
- Do you need to write receipts? If not you, who?
- Where is that money stored overnight?
- What is your district's money handling policy and have you been adequately trained?
- Have you talked to PTO/Principal about providing scholarships for families who cannot afford the fee?

Recruitment

Start Early!

As soon as you are approved, start spreading the word.

Advertise

- Social media posts on district/campus pages
- Send a note home physically, a QR code home with information, or post in your LMS

Answer Questions

Always list your email so any questions can be quickly answered. Provide the front office and administration with copies of all information.

Talk to Kids

- Use social times like lunch and passing periods to talk to kids about the group
- Seek out kids who would be great additions but may not immediately jump on the opportunity
- Post on social media, create flyers, have announcements made - EVERYBODY should know about your group!

Auditions

- If you are holding auditions, how will they run?
- What will you do with students who do not make the group? Can they be utilized in other ways?
- Are you prepared to talk to the child or parent if they are not selected for your group?
- Using a standardized rubric for auditions is suggested so auditions are fair and unbiased

First Rehearsal

- Will you take attendance? How?
- Will you have helpers or officers? How will you select them? What will they do?



- What is the schedule for the rehearsal? What are the procedures?
- Make it fun but musical - create a healthy balance of get-to-know-you games and musical activities
- Start with an instant success like a canon or partner song
- Folk dances, mixers, or games from music class are great ice breakers

Concert

- Where will the concert be?
- What will the kids wear?
- Do you expect the music to be memorized or not?
- Will you perform with recorded music, live accompaniment, or a mixture of both?
- Make sure you know how to use your AV equipment and test it several times
- If using a live musician, communicate with them as soon as you know you need them
- Perform for the school or just for families?
- Do you want to invite the community to your show?
- Before, during, and after the show, thank everyone who made this possible

Tips

- Never message a student without another adult. Add a parent or other staff member to the text chain
- Always carry a binder full of contact information, student information, allergies/medical information, and permission slips
- Always be precise in communication. This eliminates headaches and confusion
- Be fair and equitable when making decisions. Give everyone a chance to be in your ensemble
- Have policies and procedures in place and be prepared to enforce them
- Always say thank you. No one has to do anything to help you, but when you are gracious and appreciative, help comes knocking just when you need it!

