

TRANSITIONING LEADERSHIP

As the school year comes to an end, many GSA leaders worry about what will happen to the GSA club once they are gone. It is important to create a strategy for passing the torch of leadership so that your GSA stays strong for future years. Your long-term goal is to keep your GSA active in the fight against homophobia and transphobia in schools. An effective student club needs strong leadership every year. So, regardless of your club's leadership structure (such as officers, senators, executive committee, etc.), you will have a short-term goal every year of finding a reliable and passionate group of individuals to lead the club. Then, you will need to develop a strategy that looks at the situation within your GSA club and at your school, and plan how to best train new leaders.

Identify Your Resources

What are your strengths? Your challenges? Who is currently involved? Is there a teacher who will be the club's advisor next year? How many graduating seniors currently lead the GSA? What about younger students in lower grades? Are students generally apathetic at your school about the GSA, or do you have an engaged base?

Identify Your Potential Leaders

Look around your GSA meetings. Think about the participants in your events this year, such as Day of Silence. Are there students who will be at school next year who are interested in a GSA leadership role? Maybe there are students in the GSA who would make great leaders, with some coaching and training, but they feel unsure or unaware of their own leadership potential. Remember that EVERY new member can potentially become a leader of your GSA!

- **Train new members** in the rules, history and projects of your GSA.
- **Spread out responsibility** to all members throughout the school year, not just at the end.
- **Take turns facilitating meetings** so everyone knows what it feels like to be up front and prepare you for a possible leadership role.
- Specifically **ask younger GSA members to facilitate** meetings throughout the year.
- **Network** with other organizations on and off campus.



Select Your New Leaders Early!

Many GSA clubs select their new leadership in the middle of each school year, rather than at the beginning. The advantage of holding elections at the beginning of Spring semester is that your new leaders can be trained and mentored by your outgoing leaders. And when the new school year starts, your new leaders are already trained and practiced at being leaders.

Train Your Leaders

Develop a mechanism for your outgoing leaders to train your incoming leaders. Here are some tips:

- Have summer outings to continue the GSA momentum and build connections.
- Have leadership trainings where all resources will be transferred (club constitution, summary of past events).
- Invite all GSA leaders to participate in events, so that everyone knows what's going on.