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Resource Guide:

**PSAB Junior Council Person Program:
Promoting the Future of Local Government**

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Overview

- Local Government in Pennsylvania
- The Need to get Young Adults involved
- History of the PSAB's Junior Council Person program
- How to begin and support a JCP program in your community
- How to keep JCP members "actively" involved
- Supplementary information

Local Government in Pennsylvania

- Pennsylvania is comprised of 2,563 municipalities (Cities, boroughs, townships and 1 town)
- There are 958 boroughs in Pennsylvania
- There is not a specific focus set on Pennsylvania local government in schools across the state
- There is an increased need to help interested youth learn more about local government and spark an interest for their potential involvement in the future

The Need for the Junior Council Person (JCP) Program in Pennsylvania

- 75% of Pennsylvanians are born in the Commonwealth (3rd highest behind MI and LA)
- PA is experiencing a high "out" migration of residents ages 25-34. In the latter half of the 1990's as the sixth most populous state, Pennsylvania ranked 9th in losing residents ages 25-34
- In the next ten years Pennsylvania's 60 and older population is expected to be 25% of the total population

History of the Junior Council Person (JCP) Program

- Started in 1999 with the belief that the outreach of both the community to the youth and the youth to the community can build boroughs toward the future
- Program has been successful across the state, allowing many high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to learn the structure and procedures of local government

How does the JCP Program work?

Guidelines
- Must be a Borough Resident
- Must be a High School Junior or Senior
- Must take an "Oath of Office"
- Must serve a one to two-year term to coincide with the school year
- Must attend monthly borough council meetings, budget sessions and any other "special" meetings
- Must be seated on the council, participating in any and all business
- Must observe all borough council meeting rules
- The can NOT:
  - Vote
  - Attend "Executive" Sessions

Getting Started

1. Borough Council needs to pass a resolution to participate in the JCP Program
2. Approach local high schools and make principals, teachers and students aware of the program
3. Interested students should write a letter of interest to borough council
4. Borough council selects most qualified students

Things to think about when starting a JCP Program in your Borough:

- Find students who are more "likely" to stay in the borough after high school or college
- Are there similar programs in the community (fire department, school board, etc.)
- Set realistic expectations for the JCP member. Many of the students are involved in other activities, but you want to maximize their experience and keep their interest peaked

Things to think about when starting a JCP Program in your Borough:

- If there is more than one "qualified"student, find opportunities for everyone to get involved
- Do you have time to mentor JCP members? Will you be able to help JCP members understand the issues that are going on in the community?
- Is council open to listening to the feedback of the JCP member? Can you make their opinions and views count?

During Meetings

– Have the JCP keep a binder of meeting minutes and agendas
– Have the JCP take notes on issues that interest them during the meetings and encourage them to ask questions and dig "deeper"
– Utilize the attached Junior Council Guide to help JCP members understand the issues during the meetings. This guide poses "challenges" that will guide the JCP's learning process.
– Make sure the JCP understands how an agenda is composed, Roberts Rules of Order and the Borough Code
– Ask the JCP to provide a short monthly report on what is happening with the local school board and student government. This will help the JCP "connect" to the borough council.

How to expand the JCP Program in your Community

- Make sure your JCP members know that they are representing their community demographic and urge them to get feedback and opinions from their peers
- Introduce the JCP Program as a "senior" project at the high school to fulfill a graduation requirement

How to expand the JCP Program in your Community

- Set parameters and benchmarks for the program
  - Have JCP attend meetings with borough officials outside of council meetings
  - Include them in parades and festivals
  - Have the JCP do outreach with younger students or at community events (make them feel involved)

What can Borough Officials do to promote local government in the community?

- Encourage schools to bring local government officials into the classroom
- Provide information to local schools regarding local government
- Treat students as citizens
- Promote youth voting programs in your community
- Promote local government councils

Links of Interest

Pennsylvania Borough Code (via DCED Local Government Law Library)

http://www.newpa.com/get-local-gov-support/local-government-law-library/index.aspx

Junior Council Member Guide

www.boroughs.org/jcp

Roberts Rules of Order

www.robertsrules.com

For more Information:

- Visit www.boroughs.org and click on the JCP link