In-School Club

4-H Officer Election Guidelines

Every Alabama 4-H in-school club needs leaders, and a good way to get leaders is by having youth elect them. At the beginning of the program year, spend some time discussing what makes a good leader with youth. You might want to think about such things as regular participation, past 4-H club membership, ability and willingness to serve as an officer.

By setting standards for officers, your youth can avoid a popularity contest in the election of officers. The best leader of your club might not be the most popular person or the best athlete.

Tell youth that the 4-H Club will have three officers: A President, Vice President, and Secretary.

Define the role of each officer:

- **Secretary**: Responsible for keeping accurate minutes (fancy way of saying notes) of all meetings. The secretary will be prepared to read these minutes at the next meeting and handle all club correspondence.

- **Vice President**: Responsible welcoming new members and providing encouragement to existing members to stay active and involved. The Vice President works closely with the president and must preside at meetings in the absence of the president.

- **President**: It is your duty to call the meeting to order, preside and direct the business meeting. Encourage all members to take an active part in the club, and to represent the entire club. The enthusiasm and effectiveness of the 4-H Club depends on how well the President carries out his/her responsibilities.

Take nominations from the floor for each office (You will have to explain that youth will be learning parliamentary procedures as part of the election process – Parliamentary procedures are rules that are used to conduct meetings). It is best to nominate and elect officers one at a time. Once all officers are elected, the induction ceremony can take place (An induction ceremony is not mandatory).

After you get a couple of nominations for a position, ask the group if there is a motion to close the nominations. **(A motion to close the nominations requires two-thirds vote of those present and voting).**

If the club does not have by-laws outlining how the vote will proceed, there are several things you can do:

- Show of hands
- Standing vote
- Secret ballot
- A simple majority will elect individual officers.

Usually, when more than one nominee is being voted on, the names are voted on in the order in which they were presented (or nominated) to the group.

Newly elected officers are usually installed with a special ceremony conducted during a regular meeting.

The person reading the requirements asks each officer if he or she understands the duties of the office to which they are elected, and if they will accept the responsibilities of the office. This should be a time when all members pledge their support to the newly elected officers of the club or group. For some suggestions on holding an installation ceremony for in-school 4-H clubs, go to Installation Ceremony for New In-School 4-H Club Officers.