

Back to School Checklist

1-2 Weeks Before Program Starts

- Calendars
 - Work on your August-September calendars because families will be all about organization the first month of school. Include big events, save the dates, program information, contact information and more!
- Parent Paperwork
 - Make changes to information that goes home to parents. For example, the Parent Handbook, fee schedules, quick info sheet, discipline policy, etc. Make sure to update years and dates!
- Themes
 - Have your fall theme chosen and begin the theme incorporation process. This includes decorations, paperwork, Club feel, etc.
- Host a Meet and Greet event
 - This will help encourage families to come to the Club to meet staff, register, find out about programs, make payments, and gain more information about the Club.
- Redecorate and Clean
 - This time is great for revamping the club! Change up your decorations, clean the years' worth of dust on the window sills, change up your bulletin boards, and spend time taking pride in your building!
- Staff Placement, Hiring, and Training
 - Hire new staff, determine the best area placement for each staff, and train all staff. It is so important to train new staff and re-invigorate returning staff. Make sure you look at the training checklist here and try your best to prepare staff for making a positive impact on members once the school year program begins. Make sure you have an outline of staff training prepared during this time too!
- Membership Work
 - Register and process members, put members into groups (i.e. by ages or schools, etc.), collect dues, contact families, etc.
- Teacher and School Communication
 - Communicate with the schools that represent your Club. Reach out to them and include important information like calendars, program information, events and more. This will start off your relationship positively in most cases! You could even host a meet and greet for teachers and get to know them better! Set up meetings with principals too if possible!
- Goal Planning
 - Make SMART GOALS for the Fall. They can include membership goals, impact goals, and more. Have staff review what went well and what could have been improved during the summer. Have a plan for keeping the good and changing the bad!
- Pick-Up Routes
 - If you pick members up after school, make sure you are working on the routes and your bus lists/rosters are up to date.
- Paperwork and Program Planning

- Have the first round of program plans dues. Create area schedules, additional program plans, master schedules, a list of big events, etc. Make sure you prepare power points and documents to train all your staff!
- Phone Calls and Orders
 - Call and confirm any beginning of the year field trips. Thank donors for their support (i.e. a business donated school supplies), make staff shirt orders, order additional Club card materials, etc.
- Schedules, Emergency, Discipline and Recognition
 - Make sure all areas have emergency procedures, schedules, recognition and discipline policies posted and ready to enforce and review.
- Supply and Maintenance Requests
 - Make sure you and your staff complete supply and maintenance requests. Schedule a day to shop for materials and fix broken items!
- Club Cards
 - Begin making Club cards for registered members so they are ready on the first day!

The Day Before Program Begins

- Answer Questions
 - This day will be filled with questions from parents, staff, teachers, etc. Be prepared to answer questions and make yourself available!
- Final Touches
 - Make sure the Club is in tip top shape and is inviting for members.
- Finalize Membership Lists
 - Finalize and share membership lists so everyone is on the same page. For example, all staff should have a list of all members enrolled in the Club. These lists also include allergies, behavior and emotional issues, etc.
- Finalize Bus Routes and Rosters
 - Make sure staff and drivers have this information ready to go!
- Staff Plans
 - Because program plans do not start until later, make sure staff have high-yield, fun activities for kids. Play get to know you games, talk about programs, and have fun!

The First Day of Program

- Get to Know Members
 - Try to greet every member as they sign in! Make members feel welcome and safe! High fives, fist pumps, pats on the back!
- Go Over Expectations and Discipline Policy
 - It is important to start off tough and let members know that you mean business. Go over expectations and the discipline policy. Do not speak for 5 minutes straight about it because members will not focus and soak in what you are saying. Instead try making the experience fun. Staff could act out correct and incorrect ways to behave, etc.
- Encourage Safety
 - Make sure you let members know that the Club is a safe place. Tell them about your bullying policy and who they can go to if they feel threatened, in danger, or unsafe!
- Host a Welcome Assembly
 - You can host this in a larger area of the club, like the gym. Play a large group game (click [here](#) for a list), go over expectations, and talk about Fall events!

- Staff Introductions
 - Make sure you go over names and positions of all staff
- Excite Members
 - Tell members about some exciting, fun happenings at the Club!

First Week of Program

- Learn Kids Names
 - Learn at least 5 new kids names each day!
- Director Walk Arounds
 - Spend time in areas with members and staff to ensure everyone is doing well. This also lets kids know who you are and shows that you are available for staff.
- Ensure Expectation Overview
 - Make sure staff are going over Club expectations and procedures each day of week one!
- Program Sign Ups and Information
 - Tell members and families about the Clubs and programs members can join.
- Excite Members
 - Tell members about some exciting, fun happenings at the Club!

First Month of Program

- Host a Back to School Bash or Open House
 - By now, members and families are in the swing of things. Hosting a back to school bash is so much fun and gets people excited about the Club. Click [here](#) for information about hosting your own back to school bash!
- Begin Programming
 - I like to spend the first couple of weeks getting members in the swing of things, having them sign up for programs, and getting them to know the staff! At this point, staff members can begin their programming. Programming begins with a Program plan! Click [here](#) for a template!
- Teacher Appreciation
 - This can really help improve relationships with teachers and schools! Bring little notes or small gifts to recognize teachers. If you start your own teacher of the month program, recognize the winner during this time!
- Identify Staff Problem Areas
 - Observe staff during the first month. Identify their strengths and weaknesses. Help provide solutions or suggestions for their challenges. For example, if you notice a staff is having trouble getting members quiet, offer some solutions like incentives or a quiet signal. At your staff meeting make sure you have a time for staff to discuss their needs.
- Identify member problem areas
 - Observe members and identify members you notice as needing additional support. For example, if a member is always getting in trouble in the gym for rough-housing, come up with a plan with gym staff. This member might need a schedule to follow or time away from the gym. At your staff meeting make sure you have a time for staff to discuss their needs regarding members.
- Make Necessary Changes
 - If you notice something isn't working, come up with a plan for changing it.
- Plan a Staff Outing
 - This is a great idea for staff unity and bonding! Go bowling, go to dinner, have a late night at the Club with staff only! Spend fun time together.