

Fun Fosters the Future: Students as Advocates

Advocacy is an important part of the health of any program, but it can be approached in a way to maximize the time and energy already being poured into making the program itself vibrant for the students enrolled. This workshop will help participants create a plan for advocacy focused on one ready group of volunteers: the students. By hosting activities that highlight the Classics and, wherever possible, tie into wider school events and calendar, the teacher can foster camaraderie among the students and show the interconnectedness of the Classics to all aspects of the school and the world. Whether the students are drawn from current courses, Latin Club, Junior Classical League, or Eta Sigma Phi, the visibility will foster interest and, one hopes, raise enrollments. The events themselves produce promotional material with a quick write-up and photos for the school or local newspaper. If these activities are done at the college level and the students are willing, they should provide the name of their hometown newspapers so that the report can be sent there as well.

One activity will be highlighted, the annual *Liberalia* festival held at The Walker School in Marietta, GA (see appendix). The planning, funding, and implementation of such a high-profile event at other schools will be the focus of this portion of the workshop. Then, other ideas will be developed with the participants in the context of their individual situations. The activities discussed contain Classical content, provide outreach to other departments, and promote the Classics within the wider community. The hope is that administrators and parents will thus see the vibrancy of your program and better understand the value of the Classics in the curriculum. Participants will leave with manageable ideas that they could implement realistically within the context of their own programs.

A handout with some of the logistical necessities of publicizing the events will be

provided. What permissions are needed? How does one write up the event quickly in a way likely to be accepted for publication by the paper? What offices on campus might want this material for their publicity efforts?

Appendix: *Liberalia* at K-12 independent school

Each year, the World Language program at a K-12 independent school hosts a series of celebrations throughout the year that highlight the cultures of the various languages offered in the Upper School. The goal of these festivals is to provide students of all languages access to culturally relevant foods, games, clothing, and other realia associated with the various languages and cultures taught across the school. The Spanish students have a fall Fiesta, German students host Oktoberfest, French students celebrate Mardi Gras, and Latin students put on a *Liberalia* festival in March. The festival is planned and run by the Latin students, funded by the club, and invites middle and upper school students to attend during one of three lunch periods. Activities include pin the dagger on Caesar, dormouse toss (a sort of carnival game), make a signet ring, Roman board games, visit the Sibyl to learn your future, mythology photo booth, Nero's snowcones, and the all-important gladiatorial contest. While the festival lasts only one day, the planning and hosting of the festival give Latin students tremendous pride and investment in the program, while simultaneously reaching out to future language students in the middle school. Publicity for this event is made not only within the school but also in the local paper.

Here are some of the other ideas to be offered for discussion with participants. The audience will be allowed to choose which ideas they would like to develop first:

- Produce a float for homecoming.
- Chalk the sidewalk with Latin and Greek phrases for Alumni Weekend.

- Creative classroom projects to display in the halls for Family Weekend.
- Help students rehearse and perform a song in Latin for local talent night.
- Host an Ides of March celebration with red food (red velvet cake, jelly filled donuts, etc.) and a viewing of Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar."
- Have national test results announced at Honors Convocation or publicized in school reports of student honors.