

Fine Arts Leadership Tips

Recruitment

- Start earlier than you think you need to. I begin promotion in November.
- Create an interest form using Google Docs to gather information such as emails, parents' emails, availability, and preferred categories.
- Focus on personal, face-to-face recruitment.
- Incorporate Fine Arts elements into youth services, such as having past presentations perform at youth events or hosting a student testimony night.
- Depending on your group's interests, consider holding auditions or a recruitment day.

Gathering a Leadership Team

Coaches

- Begin recruiting coaches as early as possible.
- Establishing a strong leadership team is essential for successfully managing group categories.
- Identify strengths and talents in those around you; professionals are not necessary, but committed leaders who treat Fine Arts as a ministry are vital.
- Clearly communicate the need for leaders. Seek out young adults, former Fine Arts students, parents, other church leaders, etc. The miracle is in the house!
- Once you have a leadership team in place, hold a coaches meeting and provide a coaches manual before auditions or practices start.
- Cultivating a strong and positive Fine Arts culture begins with the coaches and leadership.
- The coaches need to have the right heart behind Fine Arts. They should be there to pour into the students and develop their ministry gifts. If their sole goal is winning, they are not fit to be coaches.
- Your Fine Arts program can only grow if you have enough leaders to support its expansion.

Administration

- Designate a point person for administrative tasks. If this isn't you, find someone organized to assist.
- Do not shoulder the weight of the entire program alone; it cannot be sustained by one person alone.

Communication

- Begin an email list as soon as you start gathering contact information. Add students and their parents to the list. I use groups on Outlook to manage the email list and use it for all communications. You can also use GroupMe.
- Hold a parent information meeting to communicate dates, requirements, registration deadlines, and expectations.
- Create an introduction packet for Fine Arts to distribute at the meeting and via the email list. Include important dates and locations. This packet will serve as a reference for students and parents throughout the season.
- Assume they have no idea what they are doing. Over-communicate everything.

- Set earlier due dates for your group than the district deadlines. I recommend setting the registration and non-presenting category submission deadlines a week earlier to accommodate students who may be "late."

Culture

- Regardless of group size, maintaining a non-toxic culture is imperative.
- The coaches should treat practices like a ministry and a small group. The students will prioritize what the coaches prioritize. If the coaches are exhibiting toxic behaviors, the students will too. Always point them back to the real reason behind what Fine Arts is about.
- "Multiple teams but one heart" Even if there are students competing against each other within the church, always encourage them to support each other rather than compete against each other.
- There is no such thing as healthy competition. It always turns into unhealthy competition!
- Competitive attitudes can undermine the spiritual aspects of Fine Arts.
- There is zero tolerance for negative attitudes or gossip.
- Do not hesitate to remove students from groups if they create a toxic environment.
- Have all students sign a code of conduct. Lay down ground rules at the beginning. Consistency and commitment are incredibly important for group categories.
- Ensure all participants sign a liability form in case of injuries.

The code of conduct we use:

By participating in Fine Arts through Dream City Church, I am agreeing to their code of conduct. I agree to never gossip or stir dissension between my fellow Fine Art students and coaches. I agree to always be respectful to my coaches and teammates, aiming to keep my attitude positive and uplifting always. I agree to keep the spirit of Fine Arts in my heart as I compete, remembering that this is a ministry to develop my God given talents. I agree to follow the dress code in practices and in my performances. I also agree to stay consistent with my attendance, always communicating with my coaches if I need to miss a practice for group categories. I agree to not have more than 3 absences for group category practices. I understand that failing to adhere to the code of conduct could result in my place on any Fine Arts team being reconsidered.

Nationals

- After districts, I create and distribute a new packet containing all details regarding nationals. Additionally, I host another parent meeting as there is a lot of additional information that families need to know about nationals.
- If you need a lot of rooms reserve a block of rooms using the national Fine Arts housing form well in advance; it fills up quickly. Make hotel accommodations early and release rooms if not all are needed.
- Plan fundraisers to help students cover the cost of their nationals' trip (e.g., hosting a showcase with an offering at the end, organizing a dinner theatre, selling bagels on Sunday mornings, etc).
- Book flights right after districts. We purchase tickets for our youth staff then inform families which flight we will be on

If you have any questions or want me to forward you the materials I have created for Fine Arts, you can email me at kesquibel@dreamcitychurch.us