

Protect Life Michigan's Recommendations For Officer Elections

Elections can be one of the most difficult changes your group will navigate. Selecting new leaders can spell success or disaster. Here are some recommendations to make the process go smoothly!

1. Throughout the year, **keep an eye out for potential leaders** within your group.
 - a. **PRESIDENTS:** If you are going to be moving on in the near future, identify a potential replacement at least one semester in advance and let them know ASAP that you're considering them as your predecessor. You don't want to spring this role on someone unexpectedly. Giving them advance warning allows them time to think it over and prepare. You should use your remaining time in office to let them shadow and learn from you.
2. **Meet with your Campus Activist** in February or March to discuss what to look for in board members. Come up with a list of a few people who you think would be the best fit for the board.
 - a. Qualities to look for in an officer:
 - i. **COMMITMENT:** Do they demonstrate conviction about the pro-life cause? Do they regularly show up to meetings and outreach? Are they actively participating in the group activities and discussions?
 - ii. **RELIABILITY:** Do they accomplish things that are expected of them? If they commit to something, do they always follow through, or give advance notice if they are unable to follow through? Do they display organizational skills? Dependability?
 - iii. **RELEVANT SKILLS:** When thinking of the roles you are trying to fill, does this person have talents and abilities that would suit that role? (Could they comfortably lead a meeting? Encourage others to do outreach? Write group emails? Book rooms or schedule events?)
3. **Meet with your officers** to clarify roles and discuss thoughts about next year's board
 - a. Before you can elect new officers, you need to be clear about which board members are staying on, and which roles need to be filled. Some officers may decide not to stay on the board, or may switch roles on the board. You need to get all of this out in the open before you can proceed.
 - b. Once it's clear which roles are open, talk with your board about students you are considering as candidates and get their input.
4. **Approach the people you've identified** to gauge their interest in joining the board
 - a. Meet with them in person and be very intentional (inviting them to get coffee, for instance.) Let them know what qualities you see in them that make you believe they would be well-suited for an officer role.
 - b. If they are interested in a board position, you should also use this time like an informal interview--come prepared with a few questions for them about their

- pro-life views, their prior leadership skills, and (if more than one role is available) which role/responsibilities they think they'd be most suited for.
- c. Let them know you will finalize board positions and get back to them within a week or two.
5. Once you have met with all candidates, **decide on your ideal fit for each role**
 - a. You may want to bring your officers and/or your Campus Activist into this decision.
 6. **Call each candidate** and let them know your decision so they can officially accept/reject the role
 - a. It is possible that you may end up with more willing students than you have roles to fill. This is a good problem to have, but can also be awkward if you have to turn someone down. If you believe this person would still be an asset to your board, consider creating additional officer roles for them or finding other responsibilities to offer them. (Your Campus Activist can help with this!)
 7. **Announce next year's incoming officers in the next meeting!** Also, announce it in an email for those who couldn't make it to the meeting.
 8. **Transition power:** Make sure the officers are listed correctly on your school's website, that social media accounts get handed off, and that all websites and important contacts are notified about the new officers.