

How to use this guide to organize conventions . . .

About the Convention Model:

The Project has developed a Cluster Convention model to accommodate multiple schools and multiple levels of exchange between participants. This model incorporates the full development of the N->D->R Model as well as providing a procedural structure that develops *democratic understanding in the transition from a direct democracy, where each individual has a voice, to representative democracy where a collective decision is made*. Although there is space for minority opinions*, participants are encouraged to think through how they convince students from other schools to support their Agenda Items before attending the convention.

The Structure:

The Cluster Convention Model has been developed as a template. It progresses in five parts. Teachers are encouraged to modify the model in accordance to time, grade levels, number of schools involved, resources and scale of the event.

Approximate Time: 4 hours

Sessions:	Objectives:
Opening Plenary:	A motion is presented to support the procedures of the Convention: The Rules of Convention
*Issues Caucuses:	Students are grouped across schools according to which Agenda Items interest them most, to encourage developing a free space for discussion and a pool of common knowledge. Issue Statements are written.
School Caucuses:	Students are grouped by school to deliberate a 2-Point School Agenda
Cluster Caucuses:	Students are assigned to small discussion groups across schools to discuss and develop 3-Point Cluster Agendas
Final Plenary:	The final votes are delivered by the school and cluster representatives. Items that result in tie votes may then be debated further and another vote taken for the final Cluster Agenda.

*Educators' Notes:	Students are encouraged to research their Agenda Issues before attending a convention. Research is considered: an on-going in-class activity that includes identification and the discussion of issues.
**Teachable Moment:	In procedural processes such as the Convention, MINORITY OPINION refers to the less popular points of view that are being represented. In this case, MINORITY does not refer to ethnicity or cultural background.

Organizational Considerations:

School Levels, Time & Resources

Depending on what level of schooling the participants are at, educators may elect to improvise on how to organize a convention. The Cluster Convention Model may be reinterpreted and have different elements of it implemented according to how much time and how many participants are involved in the process.

School Level Conventions:	<p>A Five-Point Agenda is developed between two or more classes within a school: Ex. Multiple classes, 1 - 2 hours I. Opening Plenary II. Class Cluster Caucuses III. Final Plenary</p>
Cluster Level Conventions:	<p>A Five-Point Agenda is developed between two or more schools. Ex. Multiple Schools, 3 - 4 hours I. Opening Plenary II. Issues Caucuses III. School Caucuses IV. Cluster Caucuses V. Final Plenary</p>
Southeastern Michigan Level Delegate Convention:	<p>A Five-Point Agenda is developed across all schools involved in the Youth Urban Agenda Program. Each class elects 3 - 5 representatives who attend the delegate convention. The convention lasts 3 - 4 hours and is organized by the Project. Ex. Multiple Schools, 3 - 4 hours VI. Opening Plenary VII. Issues Caucuses VIII. School Caucuses IX. Cluster Caucuses V. Final Plenary</p>

* Please note that Cluster Conventions may need further planning such as: Transportation, Lunch and Assignment of Classrooms and students to discussion groups ahead of time.

Organizing a School Level Convention

Opening Plenary

Goal: *Delegates gather to hear speakers and vote in support of the procedural rules that are to be followed throughout the day.*

Time: 10 - 15 minutes

Arrangements: An auditorium or a room large enough to accommodate all participants

Organizational

- Notes:** ___ Distribute Programs and Copies of the Rules of Convention
___ Arrange to have a speaker or teacher welcome students to the convention*
___ Arrange to have two students from each school introduce the school
___ Select a delegate from the audience to read the Rules of the Convention
___ Select a speaker to read the rest of the convention schedule and to dismiss

Actions &

Outcomes:

- ___ A delegate from the floor introduces a motion to accept the Rules of the Convention
___ Another delegate seconds that Motion
___ Delegate conduct a simple majority vote (yea or nay) on whether the Motion passes

*Educators' Notes: You may request a speaker from the Project through our Speakers' Bureau.
Please refer to the Directory of Resource People provided by the Project.

Class Cluster Caucuses

Goal: *Regional Caucuses group the students in proportional cross-sections across schools. Because each school is represented in group discussion chooses three Agenda Items to support and selects two Cluster Representatives to deliver the votes during the Final Plenary.*

Time: 1 hour

Arrangements: multiple rooms or classrooms

Organizational

- Notes:** ___ One facilitator assigned to each cluster groups to encourage discussion
___ Agenda Items that are to be considered should be written down by a secretary or on a board
___ Agenda Items are then prioritized in accordance to what is deemed most important
___ Two students volunteer to propose positions for and two students against Agenda Items
___ A Five-Point Cluster Group Agenda will be voted upon
___ Two Cluster Reps are chosen by each discussion group to deliver the votes at the final plenary

Actions &

Outcomes:

- ___ Delegates collectively construct a Three-Point Cluster Group Agenda
___ Delegates collectively decide on who are their Cluster Group
___ Delegates make the transition from Direct to Proportional Representative Democracy

Final Plenary

Goal: *The original list of Issues Statements and Agenda Items are converted into a Five-Point Cluster Agenda. The votes are delivered by the School and Cluster Representatives. At the end of*

the voting procedure, all ties are deliberated upon by the audience who then may argue for, against or present their minority position before the cluster.

Time: 20 - 30 minutes

Arrangements: An auditorium or a room large enough to accommodate all participants

Organizational

- Notes:** ___ An overhead, or a chalkboard listing all the issues is presented before the forum
___ As delegates deliver their votes, it may be ticked off beside the Agenda Item (Yea & Nay or individual votes)
___ Once all votes are collected and tabulated, debate may occur if any of the Agenda Items reach a tie for the first five positions.
___ Issues Statements are easily accessible and read to students to initiate debate.
___ Two students may present arguments for and two students against Agenda Items.
___ Minority Positions may be presented for Agenda Items that result in a tie.

Actions &

Outcomes:

- ___ To construct a Five-Point Cluster Agenda to present at a later delegate convention.

Organizing a Cluster Level Convention Opening Plenary

Goal: *Delegates gather to hear speakers and vote in support of the procedural rules that are to be followed throughout the day.*

Time: 25 minutes

Arrangements: An auditorium or a room large enough to accommodate all participants

Organizational

- Notes:** ___ Distribute Programs and Copies of the Rules of Convention
___ Distribute Name Tags and Cluster Caucus Assignments
___ Arrange to have a speaker or teacher welcome students to the convention
___ Arrange to have two students from each school introduce the school
___ Select a delegate from the audience to read the Rules of the Convention
___ Select a speaker to read the rest of the convention schedule and to dismiss

Actions &

Outcomes:

- ___ A delegate from the floor introduces a motion to accept the Rules of the Convention
___ Another delegate seconds that Motion
___ Delegate conduct a simple majority vote (yea or nay) on whether the Motion passes

*Educators' Notes: You may request a speaker from the Project through our Speakers' Bureau. Please refer to the Directory of Resource People provided by the Project.

Issues Caucuses

Goal: *Issue Caucuses bring all of the students interested in a given issue area together to work out common definitional statements on each issue. These statements become the pool of common information on which all further debate and voting are centered. Minority positions can develop where there are disagreements over definitions. Students are encouraged to choose caucus meetings that interest them most.*

Time: 45 minutes

Arrangements: multiple rooms or classrooms

Organizational

Notes: ___ To assign 1 - 2 discussion facilitators to encourage discussion, per Caucus session

___ To have facilitators collect Issues Statements and Minority Issues Statements at the end of session. (These statements may be referred to during the Final Plenary)

Actions &

Outcomes: ___ Delegates convert or merge common issues into Agenda Items

___ Delegates build consensus around issues across different schools

___ Delegates construct a collective Issues Statement that articulates why their Agenda Items should be supported

___ Delegates develop Minority Issue Statements that articulate the difference in their positions

School Caucuses

Goal: *School Caucuses regroup delegates by school to consider the Agenda Items that have been reframed as Issues Statements during the Issue caucuses. Students collectively decided which Items they are willing to give their votes for as a school. Two school representatives are selected to deliver the votes during the final plenary.*

Time: 35 minutes

Arrangements: A hall or classroom that accommodates all participants from one school as a whole

Organizational

Notes: ___ Teachers and facilitators are assigned to each school group to encourage discussion

___ Agenda Items that are to be considered should be written down by a secretary or on a board

___ Agenda Items are then prioritized in accordance to what is deemed most important

___ Two students volunteer to propose positions for and positions against Agenda Items

___ The final vote on the two Agenda Items may be counted or left to majority (yea or nay) voting

___ Two school reps are chosen by the class to deliver the school votes at the final plenary

Actions &

____ Minority Positions may be presented for Agenda Items that result in a tie.

Actions &

Outcomes: ____ To construct a Five-Point Cluster Agenda to present at a later delegate convention.

Procedural Rules for a Convention

Convention Rules

*Procedure: Rules of the Convention

- ⇓ All votes will require a motion by one delegate, and a second by another delegate from the convention floor (audience).
- ⇓ The vote will be taken by representatives from the School Representatives and Cluster Representatives.
- ⇓ The votes will be tallied before the delegation.
- ⇓ If a tie results after the voting process, the issue may be challenged by two or more delegates debate against the issue on the floor.
- ⇓ After debate, a vote will be taken on the floor to break the tie.
 - ➔ The Vote will be by voice, yea/nay.
 - ➔ If there is any question about a voice vote, a show of hands will be asked.
 - ➔ If a question still remains, the vote will be conducted by a roll call of each participating class/school.

Opening Plenary: Adopting the Rules of the Convention

This procedure will be read to the floor.

***Educators' Notes:**

A delegate will make a motion from the floor to accept the Rules of Convention.
A second delegate will second that motion.
The Rules of Convention will be put to the floor for a yea or nay vote.
If there is any question about a voice vote, a show of hands will be asked...
