

# HOW TO START A CAF CLUB IN YOUR HIGH SCHOOL



EMPOWERMENT THROUGH SPORTS  
**SCHOOL PROGRAM**

Many students enjoy being in clubs because they give them an opportunity to spend time with their friends, participate in activities they find fun, and it looks good on college transcripts.

Before you start a CAF club, check to make sure your school doesn't already have a similar club.

You can do this by looking at your school's student handbook or asking your academic adviser.

## ► **STEP ONE: Define the CAF Club's Purpose and Goals**

Figure out the purpose of the club, what activities do you want members to take part in, and what goals do you have for the club?

Other questions to think about:

- Why do you want to start a CAF club?
- What is the purpose?
- What will club members do during meetings?
- How often will the club meet?
- Where will the club meet?
- What are the goals of this club?
- Who will be the club advisor?

Having thought out purpose and goals will be important when presenting to school administrators and help with recruiting members

## ► **STEP TWO: Register the CAF Club with Your School**

Most high schools require clubs to go through a process to become school-approved. This may be as simple as filling out a form, or it may require discussing the club with teachers or school staff. Without school approval, you likely won't be able to have club meetings or post information at school, which can make it difficult to recruit members, learn how to properly register your club and make it official. If you're not sure how to do this, ask your academic adviser, a teacher, or someone at the school office. Your student handbook may also have information on registering clubs.

**Your school may also require you to write bylaws for the club**, which will explain what the purpose of the club is, how people can join the club, if and how club elections will be held, and more. If your school does require you to write bylaws, they will often give you a template to fill in to make the process easier.

## ► **STEP THREE: Spread the Word**

Once you have received approval, **it's time to recruit members.**

Mention CAF club to your friends and students you think will be interested. If your school allows it, create and post flyers a week or two before the first meeting that state the club's name, purpose, and time and date of the first meeting. Try to make these flyers eye-catching and interesting. Reach out to the Challenged Athletes Foundations for some images you can use on your flyers.

## ► **STEP FOUR: Hold Your First Club Meeting**

**Don't try to do too much at your first meeting;** your goal should be to introduce the club and answer any questions people may have. Introduce yourself, state what the club's purpose and goals are, what members will do, and any potential ideas you have for future activities and events.

Have a list where potential members can write their e-mail addresses to stay informed on future club news.

At the end of the meeting, let members know where and when the next meeting will be held.



## ► **STEP FIVE: Assign Duties and Plan Events**

At one of the first few meetings, you should assign leadership roles to help keep the club running smoothly.

Common officer roles include:

- **President:** Leads and supervises the club with help from other officers.
- **Vice President:** Fills in when the president is not available.
- **Secretary:** Takes notes during meetings, maintains club records, keeps members updated on club news and events.
- **Treasurer:** Manages the club's budget and expenses

Hold elections or nominate people to fill these positions. Once you have your club organized and a leadership structure established, start planning activities for club members. These activities can take place during club meetings or at special events outside of meetings. Potential ideas to consider include bringing in a CAF guest speaker, planning club outings, organizing fundraisers, and hosting discussions or lectures.

## ► **STEP SIX: Establish a Budget**

Most clubs require some money to stay running, even if it is only a small amount to cover printing costs and snacks. Some clubs may need a much larger budget if they use a lot of materials or go on trips.

Your treasurer should develop a budget that gives a rough estimate of the expenses your club will expect to have. Things you may want to have in the budget include printing fees, food and drinks, travel expenses, gifts for guest speakers, and any materials you may need.

Schools often provide stipends to official clubs, and this may be enough to cover your expenses. If not, consider fundraisers or club dues to raise enough money to keep the club active.

## ► **STEP SEVEN: Keep Your Club Going!**

Now that you have your club up and running, it's important to make sure it lasts. Keeping your club around for the long term will ensure that more students get to enjoy it, and it will also look more impressive to colleges because it shows that you can commit to something and have the skills to keep a club running long-term.

To keep your club going, make sure you continue to follow the above steps and recruit new members, assign leadership roles, stick to a budget, and plan activities and events to keep your club exciting. It can also help to have a special event at the end of each year, whether that's a party, weekend trip, or important guest speaker. Doing this will give members something to look forward to and help keep people interested in the club.

### ► **FINAL TIPS TO KEEP IN MIND**

- Starting a club is a lot of work, so make sure you have enough time to devote to it before you begin the process.
- Don't try to do everything all at once. It's okay to start small and have your first few meetings focus mostly on getting to know each other and brainstorming ideas.
- Encourage group members to voice their opinions, and make sure you listen to their ideas. Taking multiple viewpoints into consideration will help your members enjoy the club more and can give you great ideas for future activities.
- If there are similar clubs or organizations at your school or in your community, you may want to consider working with them. This can help spread the word about your club, help members meet new people, and give you more options for interesting activities.



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