

Yearbook Staff

RECRUITING & ORGANIZATION

Selecting Your Staff:

Before you begin work on the book, it's imperative that you bring together a group of interested, talented and responsible staff members. Carefully review the qualifications and special talents required for each staff position. Begin a campaign to recruit new members in the spring, so the staff will have all summer to plan and organize and will have the chance to participate in training workshops offered by Jostens throughout the country.

Advertise for Positions:

Use posters and the school paper and bulletin boards to advertise for applicants. If you have been unhappy with your staff make up in the recent past, maybe you need to tap a new section of the student population for applicants. Talk to interest groups such as the writing club or the English (especially honors English classes, they are full of excellent writers and motivated students) and art classes to find copywriters, designers and photographers.

Create an Application:

Develop a job application form that asks applicants for information about themselves and their time availability, and that explains the seriousness of the job. There is a sample job application in this packet that can be used as is, or modified to fit your particular needs. (Many yearbook advisers have shared this with their Newspaper advisers who have been able to use it for their recruitment needs.)

Letters of Recommendation:

Have students submit recommendations from their teachers. These are a great way to get to know students you haven't had in your own classes. Self motivation and ability to complete projects and meet deadlines are extremely important qualities in Yearbook Staffers, ask specific questions on the recommendation form. (There is a sample of a Faculty Recommendation form with this packet.)

Provide Expectations:

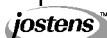
Give your applicants a list of your expectations for the yearbook class. There is outside time that is required and ad sales that are not a part of most of the classes on campus. Make sure you include any summer workshops or conventions that the staff will be attending. Spell out these expectations and have students and their parents sign it so that all are aware of the type of commitment they are making.

Interview the Applicant:

It is important that you choose kids that can work as a cohesive team. Ask pointed questions about teamwork and specific skills (ie: computer training, photo skills, writing skills, etc.) You may have an applicant that looks good on paper, but comes into the interview with attitudes and answers that don't go along with your philosophy or goals for the yearbook. When you have chosen a staff, make each member feel important and emphasize the feeling of accomplishment everyone will experience for a job well done. Stress the importance of meeting responsibilities and deadlines. Make sure staffers completely understand their duties. Emphasize the need for organization and sticking to schedules to produce a book everyone will be proud of. Remember that the main function of the advisor is to advise -- meaning you are there to say "yes" or "no", not do the entire book yourself. You should choose your staff carefully to avoid feeling like you have to do the work yourself in order to have a quality book. The editor in chief that you choose should be a person who can manage the class completely on his or her own.

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MANAGING YOUR STAFF

Staff Organization:

Once you have chosen your staff it is important to organize them in a way that you feel comfortable with. All advisers do this differently; it is important that you organize your staff in such a way that works with your teaching and organizational styles. There is a chart in the packet that outlines some of the most common ways to organize a successful yearbook staff.

Staff Manual:

Staff manuals are wonderful tools, full of answers to all the basic questions a staffer might have. If you don't have one, begin by borrowing one from another journalism teachers or advisers; then add, subtract and rework to make it your own. Format each chapter to fit in a three-ring binder so updating it annually will be a snap. Include chapters on:

- job descriptions and responsibilities
- style guidelines (fonts, point sizes, folios, etc.)
- design guidebook (column formats, use of graphics, etc.)
- content ladder/ ladder diagram
- staff directory
- policies on advertising, portraits, obituaries, book sales, grading

You can also include information such as brainstorming rules, time-management tips or specific tips for writing headlines, captions or quotes.

Performance Planning and Goals:

Consider planning goals for all aspects of the yearbook process--for the look of the book, for the content of the book, for fund raising, for relationships between staffers or staffers and editors, for the school response to the book and for judging/awards.

SMART GOALS are:

- **Specific** -- exactly what it is we want to accomplish this year
- **Measurable** -- how performance will be measured, what a good job looks like
- **Attainable** -- reasonable, based on past experience
- **Relevant** -- does it make a difference in overall performance?
- **Trackable** -- what will be the record-keeping system?

Staff Motivation Strategies:

Here are some examples of how to motivate a staff.

- Staff awards
- Staff birthday celebrations
- Deadline parties
- Holiday celebrations
- Secret Pals
- Staff ID cards
- Field Trips
- Staff t-shirts
- Classroom decorations

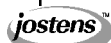
Editor Training Tips:

- Give and get definitions. Make sure **everyone** understands what needs to be done.
- Ask questions to be sure staffers know what their assignments are and how they are to do them.
- Set a good example. If you work hard, so will they.
- Provide training opportunities and workshops for the staff.

Make it a goal of all editors and seniors on the staff to continually train in leadership, business skills and effectiveness. Check the library or bookstore for titles like *Coping with Difficult People* by Robert Bramson, *You Can if You Think You Can* by Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, *One Minute Manager* by Kenneth Blanchard, *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Steven Covey and *Leadership and the One Minute Manager* by Kenneth Blanchard.

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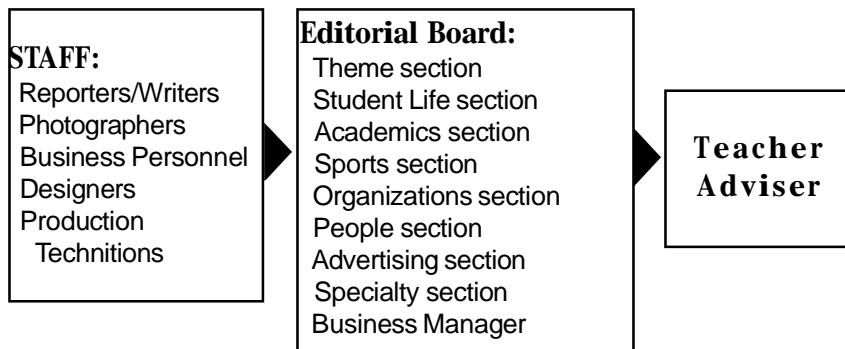
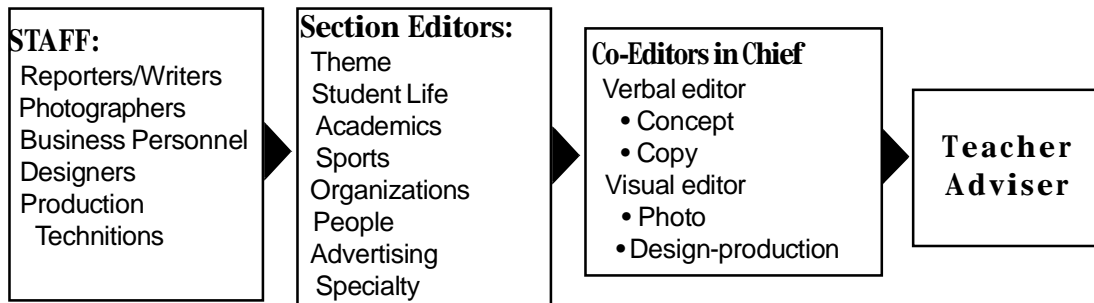
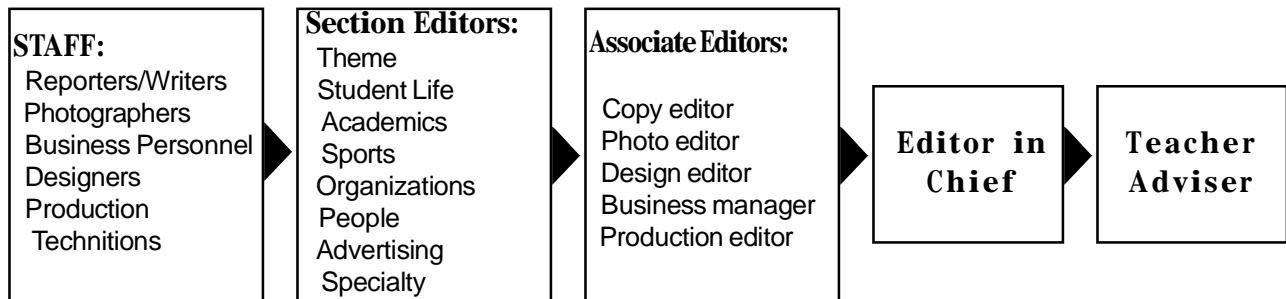
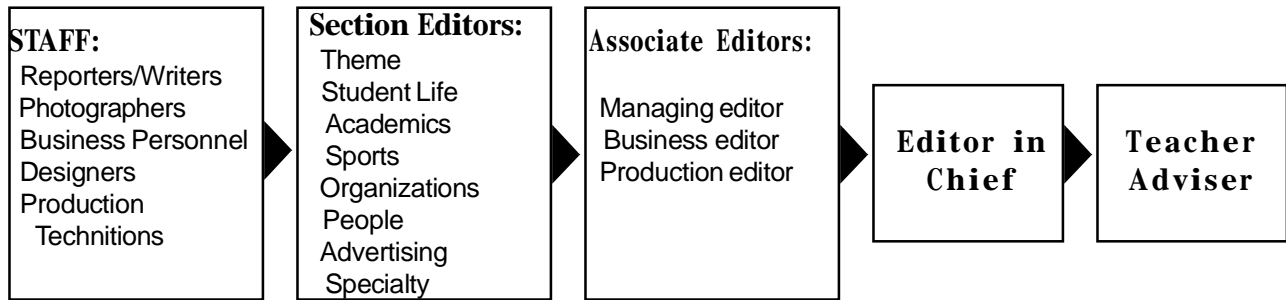
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ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS

These are sample yearbook staff organizational charts. They show the flow of responsibilities leading to the editor-in-chief and adviser. Adapt one of these charts to fit your staff's structure and capabilities.



Yearbook Staff

APPLICATION

Name: _____ Current Grade Level: _____

Address: _____ Phone #: _____

Please circle the appropriate answer to the following questions:

Yes No Are you willing to make the yearbook one of your priorities next year?

Yes No Are you willing to work after school and occasionally on weekends to meet deadlines?

Yes No Would you be willing to accept a leadership role involving additional responsibility and commitment?

Yes No Do you enjoy interviewing and writing?

Yes No Are you proficient/comfortable on the computer?

Yes No Would you be willing to learn to work with the yearbook computer program?

Yes No Can you properly use a 35mm camera?

Yes No Would you be willing to learn to take better photographs and attend extra curricular activities to take photos?

Yes No Are you willing to sell business and personal ads for the yearbook?

Yes No Do you work well with others in a "team" like atmosphere?

Describe a personal strength that you feel would make you an asset to the staff.

List the other activities you plan to be involved in next year.

Along with this application, please submit 2 teacher recommendation forms. One from your English teacher, and the other from any subject area.

With #1 being the most appealing, number the following jobs as you would find them most interesting:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Writing | <input type="checkbox"/> Layout/Design |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organizing | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computers | <input type="checkbox"/> Business Management |

With #1 being your first choice, number the following sections of the yearbook as your choice for assignment:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student Life | <input type="checkbox"/> Academics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sports | <input type="checkbox"/> Clubs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individuals | <input type="checkbox"/> Advertising |

Yearbook Staff

APPLICATION PAGE 2


What was your favorite part of last year's yearbook?

What would you like to see included in the yearbook that doesn't usually appear in the book?

In the box below, please write a short article on a topic that you would like to see appear in the yearbook. Facts may be fictitious, and quotes can be made up.

Please list your schedule for the current semester so that the Yearbook Staff can contact you if needed. Thanks

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TEACHER

RECOMMENDATION

Student Name: _____ Current Grade Level: _____


Please check the appropriate answer to the following questions:

- Yes No Does the student prioritize their assignments?
Yes No Does the student put forth their best effort in all assignments, not just the ones they like?
Yes No Has this student taken on leadership roles and responsibilities in your class?
Yes No Does the student show talent in the area of writing?
Yes No Is the student proficient/comfortable on the computer? (answer if applicable)
Yes No Does the student show a willingness to learn new things and try new ways of doing things?
Yes No Does the student put forth extra effort without being asked?
Yes No Does the student meet deadlines without exception or excuses?
Yes No Does the student follow directions well?
Yes No Does the student work well with others in a "team" like atmosphere?

List the activities/classes in which you have worked with this student.

Please write a short recommendation for this student. Include any personality traits that you feel would make this student an asset to the yearbook staff. It is important for yearbook staff members to be energetic and outgoing, as well as students with superior writing skills and motivation. We are looking for students who will go the extra mile and make the yearbook a priority in their schedule. Insights into these traits, and any others you feel are important, would be a great help to us. Thank you.

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