

NFTY'S GUIDE TO TYG ELECTIONS



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ELECTION PROCEDURES FOR THE TEMPLE YOUTH GROUP

Inspired by NFTY's policies for North American Board elections

Before the Election

1. Candidates must submit an "Intent to Run" form to his/her TYG advisor no later than 2 weeks before the election is scheduled to take place. Each candidate must submit a list of qualifications (1 page maximum) and the Intent to Run form.
2. No campaigning or electioneering of any type is allowed.
 - a. Any candidate who publicizes, or has friends publicize for him or her, shall be disqualified at the discretion of the TYG advisor and president. This includes oral, written, or social media campaigning.
3. Host a Meet the Candidates session (if appropriate) to give delegates the chance to ask questions of the candidate.
 - a. [Check out NFTY's guide to Running a Meet the Candidates session](#)

Election Procedures

- Elections will occur in gavel order as expressed in your TYG's constitution.
 - Example: President, Programming VP, Social Action VP, Religious and Cultural VP, Membership VP, Communications VP, Chair Positions, etc.
- The particular position shall be announced before the candidates speak. If there are multiple candidates for a position, all candidates for the position will be asked to leave the room and go to the isolation room. Have an adult in the isolation room as supervision and support for the candidates.
- Candidates will be called in alphabetical order (by last name) to deliver their speeches.
 - There should be no noise, including clapping, after each speech.
 - Each candidate will have 3 minutes to address the delegates. Presidential candidates will have 4 minutes each.
 - At the conclusion of the first candidate speech, that candidate will go to the isolation room and the next candidate will give their speech. This process will continue until there are no more candidates for a particular position. At the conclusion of the speeches, ballots will be passed out.
- Once the ballots are collected, the President and TYG advisor will count the votes in private.
- Special circumstances that may arise:
 - If there are three or more candidates running for a position, a primary election will be held in which each delegate may vote for any one candidate, abstain from voting, or vote "no". If one candidate gets a majority that that person shall be elected to that office. In a case of more than two candidates, where no majority is reached, the two candidates with the most votes shall enter into a run-off.
 - In any run-off, voting delegates shall not be held to their previous votes.
 - In the event that there is a tie in a final election, the chair (President) will cast the deciding vote.
 - If a candidate does not win, he/she may drop down but only once. Candidates must indicate to which position they would possibly drop down on their Intent to Run form. This information is not made public to the voting delegates.

- In the event that an office is not filled at elections, the newly elected Board along with the President will appoint the officer.

DROP DOWNS

A drop down is when any person who does not win an election choose to drop down to a position in a lower gavel order than their own. Therefore, the candidates for President who don't win can drop down to any one other position, the Programming Vice President (PVP) can drop down to any position other than President, etc. These must be indicated before the election in your Intent to Run form.

There are a number of compelling reasons in support of this policy:

- A candidate sometimes feels strongly for two positions and would gladly serve in either
- A candidate may also be qualified for a different position from that for which they run
- The delegates may feel that the candidate has the leadership and skills to serve the TYG board in a number of capacities

The downside to drop downs is that it is an unfair reality for those who have spent much time preparing to run for a particular position. (Remember, many teens choose to run on a number of factors including their experience, ability, and competition.) At times, teens may drop down for the “wrong” reasons. If you choose to allow drop downs, it is important that the TYG advisor oversees the candidate’s decision.

MEET THE CANDIDATES

Goals:

1. To provide the delegates/participants an opportunity to learn more about the candidates and their positions.
2. To challenge the candidates with specific, pertinent and concrete questions.
3. To help the delegates/participants decide on which candidate to support.

Procedures

Meet the candidates can be done a few different ways:

1. The candidate stands in front of the whole group and participants ask questions of them. We recommend setting a time limit of 10 minutes per candidate (or 5, depending on the number of candidates and total time allotted for this program).
2. If you have a larger group and want to make this process more intimate, you can split the participants/delegates into smaller groups. The candidates will rotate amongst the groups and answer questions that the participants/delegates have. In this situation, we recommend 5 minutes per candidate.
3. Use pre-written questions, submitted by the TYG advisor, President, and/or participants of the youth group. Each candidate responds to each question.

Guidelines for Meet the Candidates Questions

- Don't make it about personal issues one might have with the candidate.
- Do make it about what the person is running for.
- Don't ask questions that are off-topic; it won't help with the limited amount of time or help you get to know the person better.
- Do ask questions that help you understand the leadership style of someone who wants to be your leader
- If it ever feels like the questions are getting inappropriate or off topic, advisors and clergy have every right to change the questioning.

Optional – Position Papers

Candidates for NFTY's North American Board submit 1-page position papers that introduce their leadership platform to the voters. If you want to have your TYG board candidates submit position papers, here are some guidelines:

- A brief introduction about yourself
- The direction you'd like to see the TYG go in overall
- Specific ideas, recommendations to improve the TYG in the context of your role

Submit position papers 3-7 days before the election so that you/your advisor can review them.

SMALL CONGREGATIONS AND TEMPLE YOUTH GROUP (TYG) ELECTIONS

When it comes to leadership and your TYG, what's most important is having active and committed leaders, regardless of the size of your youth group. Here are some suggested guidelines for how you might adapt the NFTY youth group board model and elections procedures for your small TYG.

[Use this in conjunction with the Elections Procedure document.](#)

Plan a special election meeting. At least 2-4 weeks out from elections, host a special elections meeting to engage potential voters (your members!) in the process. This gives you the opportunity to engage them in other activities before elections to ensure that your voters are invested and connected to the process of choosing their leaders.

If you have teens who want to run but have never attended a youth group event before, this can be a good opportunity to connect with them and help them articulate their goals more clearly. You can also set the expectation that if teens want to run for board, they must be part of this special elections meeting. Choose what feels right for your youth group.

Electing Your Leadership

If 0-5 members attend, potential positions include (if possible):

- President
- Programming Vice President (PVP)
- Social Action Vice President (SAVP)

If 6-12 members attend, positions include:

- President
- Programming Vice President (PVP)
- Social Action Vice President (SAVP)
- Religious & Cultural Vice President (RCVP)
- Membership Vice President (MVP)

SAMPLE INTENT TO RUN FORM

NAME _____

POSITION SOUGHT _____

DROP-DOWN POSITION (IF APPLICABLE) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ST _____ ZIP _____ CELL: _____

EMAIL _____

PARENT (S)/GUARDIAN NAME (S) _____

PARENT PHONE _____

PARENT(S)' EMAIL _____

I have read the job description for all of the board positions and the additional responsibilities of the position for which I am running. I understand the job requirements and, if elected, I will devote the considerable time and energy necessary to fulfill my responsibilities.

_____ Date _____

Signature of Candidate

PARENTAL CONSENT: *Parents: please read the following information very carefully.*

Your daughter/son is applying to run for the position of _____ (or in the event of a drop down) on the Executive Board. Responsibilities and expectations of all officers include, but are not limited to, attending:

- Attending monthly Executive Board meetings
- Planning meetings for several Events
- Attending All Events
- Spending a considerable amount of time on the telephone, on the computer, and at the congregation.

I have discussed the above obligations and the specific job description that the office entails with my daughter/son, and I hereby give permission for her/him to be a candidate for that position, or any other office to which s/he may "drop down" and be elected, on the Executive Board.

_____ Date _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian

TO THE CANDIDATE: Return this form, along with your one page of qualifications, no later than 2 weeks before Elections. NOTE: You must *verbally* inform your TYG advisor of your intent to run by 4 weeks before Elections.