

PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT COUNCILS
11th ANNUAL
STUDENT SUMMIT IN HARRISBURG
FEBRUARY 28, 2008

Dear Student Council Advisor:

For the past ten years Pennsylvania Association of Student Councils has taken the initiative to bring together approximately 150 outstanding student leaders in Pennsylvania for a discussion of critical issues facing the youth of our state. This "Student Summit in Harrisburg Program" has allowed us to provide students the opportunity to dialog with a state legislator, exchange views with their peers, develop position papers on areas of interest to them, defend their viewpoints on the floor of the Pennsylvania General Assembly chamber, and to see their views shared with political leaders of Pennsylvania. This one-day in Harrisburg activity has been extremely well received by the student participants that joined us from all corners of the Commonwealth in past years. Their very positive evaluation caused PASC to agree to sponsor a similar program in 2008 in partnership with PennCORD as a major civic engagement initiative in Pennsylvania. There is no cost to the students, their faculty sponsor or parents who accompany them to Harrisburg other than lunch on their own.

The 2008 program has been changed to reflect the election of a new President of the United States along with members of Congress and the state legislature. Based on the focus on this election and the issues surrounding the political caucuses and primary elections taking place in the winter and spring of 2008, our program will allow student leaders to develop, debate and present non-partisan platform planks on eight major areas of concern to all Americans.

A copy of the schedule is included with this mailing. The major components include:

- A discussion session on one of eight critical issues concerning Pennsylvania youth.
- A work session in which students will draft a non-partisan platform plank (position paper) recommending solutions for critical issues. The student committee may develop multi-planks based the complexities of the issues that are addressed by their group.
- Lunch at the state capitol building or nearby Strawberry Square Mall at the students' expense.
- An afternoon session on the floor of the House of Representatives using the desks, rostrums, and microphones of the members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly. Student speakers will present their platform planks, debate will occur, and each student will vote expressing their personal opinion.
- The program will end with the presentation of student resolutions to representatives of the Republican and Democratic parties of Pennsylvania.

An application form and essay topics are also included in this packet. We look forward to bringing approximately 150 senior high school students together on **Thursday, February 28, 2008 (snow date, Thursday, March 13, 2008)** for this program. We have also invited the school nominees of the United States Senate Youth Scholarship Program with whom we are associated. Additionally, we would encourage you, as a PASC member school advisor, to select up to **three high school** students and an alternate (who we will invite if space allows). These students should be interested in the political process and particularly interested in the eight topics that have been selected for debate this year. **As advisors we ask that you not limit the selection to Student Council leaders, but to also recruit interested students from National Honor Society, class government, and through direct contact with your school's Social Studies department.** We hope that students in your school will be interested in attending this challenging and unique educational opportunity in one of the most impressive settings in America, the Pennsylvania capitol. Transportation can be provided by you, another faculty member or a parent.

If you have any questions about this opportunity for your high school students, please do not hesitate to email us at **PASCInfo@aol.com** or call me at 215-368-6196. Please have your school's applications postmarked by TUESDAY, January 22, 2008. Mail to PASC STUDENT SUMMIT North Penn High School 1340 Valley Forge Road Lansdale, PA 19446

PASC STUDENT SUMMIT
HARRISBURG, PA
February 28, 2008
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

8:15-8:45 Registration at the East Wing of the State Capitol Building

9:00-9:15 Opening Session

Welcome: Jim Finnemeyer, PASC Executive Director

Review of Plans and Expectations for the Day

9:30-10:15 General Work Session

- Students will be divided into groups based on the following eight political platform topics:

Curbing Crime, Education, Energy, Environment, Economic Development, Health Care, Stabilizing the Middle East, U.S. Foreign Policy: Role in the World
- A facilitator will lead a group of 20-25 students in a discussion of their issue. Students will be asked to develop two ways of solving their problem.

10:15-10:30 Break

10:30-11:45 Political Platform Plank Writing

- Each of the eight groups will be write a paragraph expressing their recommendations to the Republican and Democratic parties on each of the sub-issues they have identified in their work session.
- Two or three presenters will be selected by each of the eight groups.

11:45- 12:45 Lunch on your own/ Free Time at the State Capitol Complex

1:00- 4:30 General Session in the Chamber of the House of Representatives

- Each topic will be presented to the general body during a 20 minute block of time.
- Each group will have two or three student presenters
- At the conclusion of the presentations a question and answer session will be held on the topic.
- At the end of 20 minutes the delegates will vote to support the plank form planks presented on that topic.
- The process above will be used to reach a student opinion on each of the eight major topic areas.

4:30- 5:00 Closing Session

- Presentation of Student Opinions to representatives of the Democratic and Republican parties of Pennsylvania.
- Final Remarks and Evaluation

PASC Youth Summit
APPLICATION

NAME _____ GRADE _____ AGE _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP _____

HOME TELEPHONE (_____) _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

SCHOOL _____

SCHOOL ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP _____

SCHOOL TELEPHONE (_____) _____ FAX (_____) _____

FACULTY ADVISOR _____

FACULTY ADVISOR'S E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

_____ I need information on hotel arrangements in the Harrisburg area.

_____ I will be accompanied by _____ Relationship _____

_____ Accompanying adult would be interested in serving as one of two facilitators for a small group session. If YES, what would be your preferred topic:

_____.

I give permission for the following student to attend the PASC STUDENT SUMMIT in Harrisburg on February 28, 2008 (March 13, 2008 snow date).

Parent _____

Advisor _____

Principal _____

A letter confirming acceptance from PASC will be sent by e-mail to the student and to the faculty advisor by Tuesday, January 29, 2008. There is a limit of three student applicants per school.

Travel information, housing information, and final itinerary and locations for sessions will be forwarded in the confirmation mailing.

PLEASE DIRECT ALL CALLS OF INQUIRY TO THE PASC OFFICE AT 215-368-6196
or E-mail Jim Finnemeyer at PASCInfo@aol.com.

TOPICS FOR DEBATE AND
POLITICAL PLATFORM PLANKS

Rank in order of preference the following eight topics:

_____ **Curbing Crime**

_____ **Environment**

_____ **Economic Development**
(Transportation, Industry, Small Business, Technology)

_____ **Health Care and Social Security**

_____ **Education**

_____ **Stabilizing the Middle East**

_____ **Energy**

_____ **U.S. Foreign Policy:
Role in the World**

Select two of the topics above and write a 200 word maximum essay expressing your point of view on each of the two topics. Each 200 word essay should specifically address actions which the United States government should take to solve problems associated with the selected topics. Students typically get their first, second, or third choice. Students from the same school seldom are placed in the same group to ensure a variety of points of view and background. Please make your choices accordingly.

Share your ideas on ways in which this issue can be successfully resolved.

Submit this essay on an attached piece of paper.

**Return this application to the PASC OFFICE at North Penn High School
1340 Valley Forge Road, Lansdale, Pa. 19446
215-368-6196**

**RETURN YOUR APPLICATION, THIS FORM, AND YOUR ESSAYS POSTMARKED NO LATER
THAN TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2008**

