

Mock Student Forum

'Engaging with young people and getting our views is one very important way of helping to rebuild that sense of connection between us, the school and the community in which we live. It is an opportunity to feel respected and be confident that our views are being taken seriously'

- Young person, World Youth Forum



The Student Forum is held annually at the State SRC Conference.
It's a chance for students to have a say!

SRCs from each region are invited to bring *one* recommendation
to the Student Forum



Recommendations will be debated by conference participants
at the Student Forum at the conference



Any recommendation passed at the forum will be handed on to the
NSW Student Representative Council (NSW SRC) for action



WHAT IS THE LANGUAGE OF DEBATE FOR THE STUDENT FORUM?

- **The chairpersons** - These persons are in charge of the forum and ensure that forum rules are followed and decisions are made fairly using democratic procedures.
- **The mover** - *The mover reads a motion to the group and explains the reasons why it is a good idea.*
- **The motion** - This is another word for the recommendation which is to be debated. The mover says: "*It is moved that*" or "*I wish to move a motion that*"
- **The seconder** - This is a person who supports *the mover of the motion*. *The seconder says: "I second the motion"* and usually adds reasons why the recommendation should be passed.
- **An amendment** - This is an addition to the *motion* or a change in the wording of the motion. An amendment is introduced by someone *being recognised* and saying: "*I wish to move an amendment that*" Amendments require a *seconder* before the amendments can be debated. Please note that these **amendments must be voted upon before the main motion is put to the vote.**
- **Being recognised** - This term means that *the chairperson(s)* give(s) someone permission to speak. In other words, *the chairperson recognises* the speaker.
- **A show of hands** - This is used when a vote is very close. Sometimes *the chairperson* needs to count hands (*show of hands*) to indicate the result of a vote.
- **An abstention** - A person may choose not to vote for or against a motion. 'I *abstain*' means 'I don't agree or disagree.'
- **A point of order** - Any person at the forum may call for a *point of order* if he/she feels the rules of debate are being broken, for example if someone continually interrupts a speaker. *The chairperson* will decide whether the *point of order* is justified before proceeding with the debate.
- **Being in committee** - During the forum, it may be decided to *go into committee*. This means that the strict rules of debate are relaxed for a specified period of time (as decided at the time). When *in committee*, people can discuss the motion without following the 'speaker for/speaker against' rule.

WHAT ARE THE RULES OF DEBATE FOR THE STUDENT FORUM?

- The time allocated to the Student Forum will be 90 minutes.
- **A maximum of 10 *recommendations* (one per region) will be debated.**
- All speakers must address the chairperson.
- **Each person must introduce themselves and state their region.**
- *The chairperson* will read each recommendation (or motion) and then ask *the mover* to formally start the debate by *speaking to the motion*. The *mover* explains the recommendation to the forum and presents an argument as to why the forum should support it.
- **The chairperson will then invite *the seconder* to speak. He/she will explain and support the motion.**
- *Amendments* may be suggested by anyone, but an amendment must be in writing and presented to the chairperson before any discussion begins. Debate on amendments follows the same procedure as for motions. *Amendments* are voted on before the main motion. If approved, they become part of the main motion. You cannot amend an amendment.
- **The chairperson will ask the forum to vote on the amendment.**
- The chairperson will then ask for anyone to *speak against* the motion.
- **Debate will then continue, with a *speaker for* followed by a *speaker against* and so on.**
- There will be a time limit of 1 minute for each speaker and a maximum of 9 minutes debate for each recommendation.
- **Except for the mover of the motion, all speakers may only speak once per debate.**
- When there is no need for further debate or the time allocated to this debate is finished, the *mover of the motion* will have the right of reply. The right of reply means that the mover can speak once more about the motion and any amendments made to it.
- **Finally, the chairperson will call for a vote. He/she will read the entire motion (including any amendments) before a vote is taken.**
- Voting will be by voice, *Aye* - (*yes*) or *No*. A *show of hands* may be called for and all votes counted. Participants in the Forum may vote 'for', 'against' or 'abstain'.
- **'Non-students' may not vote at the Forum. They may assist with clarification of a motion if called upon to do so by the chairperson.**

All words in italics are explained in *What is the Language of Debate at the Student Forum?*

What's a recommendation?

A recommendation (also known as *a motion*):

- is an idea or suggestion to be voted on at the Student Forum
- is written in a short and precise manner
- often relates to the conference theme
- is stated in positive/active terms
- is written on the **recommendation slip**

Sample Recommendations:

It is moved/recommended that the NSW SRC encourage stronger partnerships between secondary school SRCs and primary school student leaders.

Motion/Recommendation Slip

Recommendation

Region: _____

It is moved/recommended that or *It is moved that the 2009 NSW SRC*



Recommendation

Region: _____

It is moved/recommended that or *It is moved that the 2009 NSW SRC*



Mock Student Forum

The *Mock Student Forum* is ideally used with a group of up to twenty students.

Instructions:

Allocate the following roles to students from the colour groups:

- | | |
|--|------------------------|
| - Chairperson | Conference Action Team |
| - Mover of recommendation | Red |
| - Seconder of recommendation | Pink |
| - Speaker against the recommendation | White |
| - Speaker for the recommendation | Silver |
| - Person who makes an amendment | Green |
| - Seconder for the amendment | Orange |
| - Speaker against the amendment | Yellow |
| - Person who makes a point of order | Gold |
| - 2nd speaker against the recommendation | Purple |
| - Microphones | Blue |



Non-speaking roles could include:

- Timekeeper
- Person to operate overhead projector
- Minute-taker
- Adviser to chairperson
- Person to hold the microphone for speakers



All other participants will be part of the Student Forum

Procedure:

- Ask the group to assemble as if they were at a student forum. The chairperson (and timekeeper/minute taker if these positions are used) should sit in front of the forum.
- Read through the *Mock Student Forum* with the group first
- Allocate roles to students and distribute the dialogue cards
- Act out the *Mock Student Forum*

Allow 15 minutes at the conclusion of the *Mock Student Forum* to debrief with the students and answer any questions.

Mock Student Forum

Chairperson

Welcome to the Student Forum at the 2009 State SRC Conference. There are 10 items for debate today, one from each region. All of you here today have already had a chance to prepare your arguments and read the list of recommendations. We will begin with recommendation No.1. I ask the mover of the motion to speak to the recommendation.



1. Mover of recommendation

My name is ... I come from... region.

I'd like to recommend '*that all SRCs in high schools meet with student leaders from nearby primary schools at least once a term*'. This recommendation will help us build better primary/secondary links and also help students to identify and discuss any relevant issues about moving from primary school to secondary school.

2. Seconder of recommendation

My name is ... I come from... region.

I would like to support the recommendation. I'm sure you would all agree that moving from year 6 to year 7 isn't easy. This recommendation will help to smooth things for all students. It's also an opportunity for primary and secondary student leaders to talk about other issues like transport or student safety. I urge you to support the motion.

3. Chairperson

I have one amendment that has been tabled and I now call on the mover of the amendment to speak for the amendment.

4. Amendment to the recommendation

My name is ... I come from... region.

I'd like to move an amendment. I don't think we are really in a position to tell people how often they can and can't meet. My amendment will delete the words 'at least once a term' and read: '*that in the next year all SRCs in high schools meet with student leaders from nearby primary schools.*'

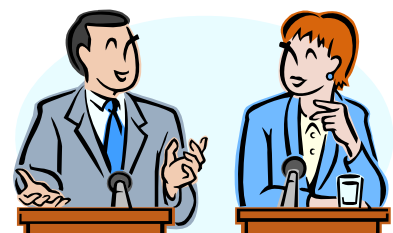
5. Chairperson

Is there a seconder for the amendment?

6. Seconder for the amendment

My name is ... I come from... region.

I second the amendment. I don't wish to speak.



7. Speaker against the amendment

My name is ... I come from... region.

I'd like to speak against the amendment, and for the original recommendation. Remember that we are making a recommendation, not delivering an order to SRCs so I believe we can still recommend 'that all SRCs in high schools meet with student leaders from nearby primary schools *at least once a term*'.

Please don't support the amendment as without the expression '*once a term*', SRCs may not take this recommendation seriously and for example, only hold one fifteen minute secondary/primary SRC meeting in the next year. This would be meaningless.

8. Chairperson

A vote will be now be taken on the amendment. Those in favour of the amendment - to replace the words '*once a term*' with '*in 2009/10*' please say Aye.

9. Audience

(Nearly everyone shouts) AYE!!!!



10. Chairperson

Those against?

11. Audience

(Only a couple of people) 'no'

12. Chairperson

Any abstentions?

13. Audience

Silence

14. Chairperson

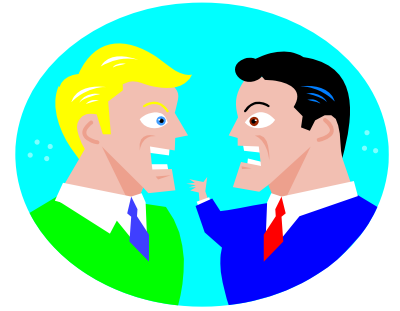
The amendment is carried. The resolution now reads 'that in 2009/10, all SRCs in high schools meet with student leaders from nearby primary schools.'

I now call on a speaker against the recommendation as amended.

15. Speaker against recommendation

My name is ... I come from... region.

I don't think we can *force* all SRCs in high schools to do what *we* want. It would be better if local SRCs decide for themselves what they want to do. I don't think it's right that we force SRCs to meet when *we* say so. I encourage you to vote against the recommendation.



16. Speaker for the recommendation

My name is ... I come from... region.
The recommendation has good and bad points and I'd like to speak about both ...

17. Point of order

My name is ... I come from... region.
The speaker can't discuss the good *and* bad points. This is a debate not a book club!

18. Chairperson

The point of order stands. We are not 'in committee' so the speaker may only speak *for* the recommendation. Speaker, do you wish to speak *for* the recommendation?

19. Speaker for the recommendation

I just wanted to say it's a good idea. (sob, sits down)



20. Chairperson

Speakers are reminded that when they speak, it is preferred that they add new information to the debate.

Any speakers against the recommendation?

21. 2nd Speaker against the recommendation

My name is ... I come from... region.
This recommendation will be too hard for SRCs across NSW to carry out so I recommend that you do not support this recommendation.

22. (The timekeeper nudges the chairperson to show that time is up).

23. Chairperson

Time for this debate has now expired.

We will take a vote.

We will give the mover of the recommendation the right of reply and then vote on the recommendation.

24. Right of reply

Thank you, chairperson. I think we have an opportunity here to make school a better place for *all* students. I urge you to support the recommendation.

25. Chairperson

We will now vote on the amended recommendation.

All those in favour of the amended recommendation *'that in the next year all SRCs in high schools meet with student leaders from nearby primary schools'* say 'Aye'.



26. Audience

(Everyone shouts) AYE!!!!

27. Chairperson

Those against?

28. Audience

Silence

29. Chairperson

Any abstentions?

30. Audience

Silence



31. Chairperson

It's unanimous! The amended recommendation has been passed.

Special note

If the amendment was not passed, the original recommendation would be voted on.

