



A Guide to a BETA Missouri



Greetings Sponsors!

This manual is intended to be used as a helpful tool for new sponsors starting new clubs in schools where chapters of The National Beta Club do not currently exist. It can also be useful to new sponsors who are taking over the sponsorship of an established Beta Club but who are uncertain about some club functions or features.

Information for new sponsors of new clubs begins on page 3. Information that may be helpful to new sponsors of existing clubs begins on page 10. The last few pages contain contact information for State and National Beta Officials who can offer help and suggestions to all Beta Sponsors. At the end of the manual you will find ideas for any Beta Club looking for new ways of fundraising or new concepts for service projects.

Whether you are starting a Beta chapter for the very first time in your school district or are taking over the reins of an active club, please feel free to utilize this manual in any way that will help you and your club grow and prosper as Betas.

What is The National Beta Club?

What does it do?

How do I get in?

Where do I start?

What now?

This guide will help you to answer all these questions and more. Missouri has been a BETA state since 1939 and is still going strong today. This manual will help new sponsors to start new clubs and will offer guidance and suggestions to sponsors of existing established clubs. Welcome to BETA.

What is The National Beta Club?

The National Beta Club began as the dream of our founder Dr. John W. Harris, a professor at Wofford College in Spartanburg, SC. Since the first Beta Club was formed in Landrum, SC in 1934, The National Beta Club has become the nation's largest independent, non-profit, educational youth organization. We are committed to recognizing and promoting high academic achievement, encouraging service to others, and developing character and leadership skills. Since its beginnings, The National Beta Club has worked with over five and a half million young people in grades 5-9 (Junior Beta Club) and grades 9-12 (Senior Beta Club). There are now more than 418,000 active members and more than 8,000 clubs in 42 states, the District of Columbia, 3 U.S. territories and 4 foreign countries. Missouri boasts nearly 150 Junior and Senior Beta Clubs statewide comprised of thousands of elementary, middle school and high school students.

Being a student-centered organization, The National Beta Club continually seeks ways to develop and nurture elementary and secondary school students by providing opportunities and experiences that enable them to demonstrate the ideals of character, achievement, service and leadership.

The mission of the Beta Club is to promote the ideals of character, service and leadership among elementary and secondary school students, to reward meritorious achievement and to encourage and assist students in continuing their education after high school.

What does it do?

The National Beta Club has been encouraging and developing leadership skills in America's youth since 1934. The ability to lead creates the conditions that enable others to be as productive and successful as they can be. One who is able to lead is able to accomplish extraordinary things by employing and maximizing his/her own strengths. The commitment to lead is vital in the establishment and defining of goals. A true leader is able to inspire trust, resolve conflicts, motivate others to their highest achievement, and most importantly be of service to others. Leadership skills can be learned and developed. The National Beta Club works with its membership to develop these skills by offering several opportunities:

- The Broyhill Leadership Conference
- State Sponsored Leadership Academies
- The John W. Harris Leadership Award
- National and State officer leadership training
- Participation in State and National Conventions
- Involvement in local and State service projects

The motto of The National Beta Club is “Let Us Lead By Serving Others.” This motto, more than simply a catchy phrase, states the philosophy upon which The National Beta Club is based. Service to others is indeed one of the most important characteristics of Beta Club membership. Opportunities to serve are found in every school and community situation, whether large or small, urban, suburban or rural. There are needs that could and should be addressed by Beta members in every school and community. Missouri Betas display creativity and ingenuity in service to their school, to their community, and to the nation.

In addition to promoting leadership skills and service opportunities, The National Beta Club encourages academic achievement through its Scholarship Program. The National Beta Club Scholarship Program offers over \$250,000 in scholarships to outstanding Beta Club members in their senior year. Over 200 scholarships are awarded each year. They range in value from \$1,000 to \$15,000. Most recently, a Senior Beta from Missouri won the top prize of \$15,000.00. In 2009, a total of 4 Senior Betas from Missouri were awarded prizes in the Scholarship Program.

How do I get in?

Let's get started! You have already taken the first step toward Beta membership by reading this manual. Getting a brand new club started is painless, relatively easy, and can be well organized in a step-by-step procedure.

Step 1: Get a Sponsor. Sponsoring a Beta Club chapter does require some time, effort, and commitment. Traditionally, this decision is made in consultation between school staff and school administration. The Beta Club sponsor can be anyone from the school's staff, faculty, or administration. The Club Sponsor is responsible for club documentation, organization, and club administrative duties. The actual 'running' of the club should be the responsibility of the student members.

Step 2: Set your membership criteria. The National Beta Club has some general guidelines for membership in the organization, but the individual club can set the specific requirements that are geared to that specific club and school district. The National Beta Club considers student membership as a privilege and not a right. The qualifications for membership on the part of the student shall be: (a) worthy, moral and ethical character, (b) good mentality, (c) creditable achievement, and (d) commendable attitude. The standards and means for appraising these qualities shall be determined by the administration of the school where the chapter is located. Since the purpose of the organization is to select, honor, and encourage students possessing these characteristics, it shall be within the province of the administration of each school to set up such local standards of membership as shall best serve to bring together in the chapter students who merit distinction because of these qualifications. **All students must be performing on or above grade level.** Since the National Beta Club does not set a specific grade or score for achievement, the specific letter grade average or numerical score requirement can be determined by the school's administration and the club sponsor. Local school administrators are at liberty to limit membership to certain grades. Many Junior Beta clubs allow membership for students in grade 5-9. However, some school districts choose to establish a Beta club in their elementary school for students in grades 5 and 6 and establish a Beta Club in their middle school or junior high school for grades 7 and 8 or even for grades 7-9. Many Senior Beta Clubs are established in high schools for grades 9-12 or grades 10-12.

Standards modification and Beta membership criterion falls under the jurisdiction of the Americans with Disabilities Act. According to the ADA, students with disabilities may be allowed modification, but this does not infer that standards are to be altered or "lowered" for these individuals.

Step 3: Invite students to become members. The National Beta Club offers free materials to be given to prospective members and their parents as a way of introducing them to The National Beta Club organization. The materials can be discussed with the students at an informational assembly and then sent home to parents for further review. Many schools that introduce Beta for the first time have rallies, assemblies, or class meetings to explain The National Beta Club to a large group of interested students and pass out the literature and information at that time. The literature, brochures, and informational handouts can be obtained free of charge from the website of The National Beta Club at www.betacub.org and click on the 'Start a Club' tab. You may also call the National Beta Office directly at 1-800-845-8281. More contact information can be found at the end of this manual.

Step 4: Starting the new chapter. Once you have informed the students and parents about The National Beta Club, you should organize those students wanting to become members into a meeting and plan your club's charter and by-laws. It is recommended that local clubs submit charters and by-laws to the school administration for approval. There are no specific rules for establishing a club charter or its by-laws; however, The National Beta Club website does offer samples and examples of how to word charters and by-laws for local chapters as well as the history of the Beta Club, the Creed and Mission Statement that you may want to incorporate into your club documentation. You may wish to view these examples at The National Beta Club website, and then modify them or word them specifically to your school and club. There is no need to re-invent the wheel unless you really want to!

Step 5: Collect dues. The National Beta Club does not charge any fees for charters or establishing new clubs. There is a one-time membership fee for entry into the Senior Beta Club and a one-time fee for Junior Beta Club membership. This fee is \$15.00 and is paid to The National Beta Club. This is the only membership fee the student pays to the national organization. This amount defrays the cost of (1) a certificate of membership, (2) a membership card, (3) an official pin, (4) a subscription to the members only website betaweb.org for the time the member is in school, and (5) a seal for the senior high school diploma of each student upon graduation. In addition, these funds contribute the major funding for

the operating of The National Beta Club Office. There will be no refund of membership fees after the student is certified for membership. Additional fees or assessments may be made by local clubs for purposes of carrying on their work locally. Some clubs may assess annual local club dues to cover club expenses if they choose. However, it is strongly suggested that the expense of membership in the club be kept at an absolute minimum, so that no worthy student may be excluded from membership.

Step 6: Register your local club with The National Beta Club Office. Once you have your club organized and in place, you need to register your club, yourself, and the club members with the National Beta Office. You must register at least 5 members for the new club. You can call The National Beta Club Office at 1-800-845-8281 and speak with staff in **Marketing and Development** to get the website password and materials for you to register your club. In Missouri, you may also contact your **State Beta Sponsor** for assistance. The contact information is located at the end of this manual.

Step 7: Have Fun!!!!!! Once your club is registered and established, you may wish to have a more formal induction ceremony for your new club members and new officers. Just like the documentation for charters and by-laws, The National Beta Club website offers examples and samples of various kinds of induction ceremonies. You may choose to follow any of these or feel free to create an induction ceremony of your own to fit your needs. You may also wish to establish a calendar of meeting dates, fund raising activities and service projects. There are some helpful hints, suggestions, and ideas for meetings, fundraisers, service projects, and activities on the following pages.

WELCOME!

Hints. Suggestion. Ideas. Examples.

(New Sponsors/New Clubs)

For new clubs, Sponsors may want to hold elections of officers prior to the first club meeting. Many small clubs (less than 10 members or so) choose to use the student offices of President, Vice President, and Secretary-Treasurer. Larger clubs that have more members may choose to offer the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter, Historian, and Chaplain. Clubs can establish the best combination of student offices for their individual chapter.

When holding meetings, whether at the Junior Beta or Senior Beta level, most clubs find it helpful to have the students conduct their meetings according to Robert's Rules of Order. While not a requirement, using parliamentary procedure helps the club meetings stay organized and focused. It is good practice to allow the student officers to run the meetings as much as possible. This builds leadership and organization skills and allows the sponsor to serve as a monitor/guide for club meetings.

Most club meetings focus on topics such as service project ideas, fund raising events, club responsibilities, and general club business items. Clubs may choose a variety of service projects targeted to different goals. Many clubs mix projects that serve their school with projects that are meant to help their local communities. There are no regulations governing Beta service projects. Most clubs choose projects that work with the time available for service work. Some clubs work on a variety of different service projects throughout the school year. There are some examples of service projects listed at the end of this manual.

Beta Clubs hold fundraisers during the school year to help finance some service projects and to help fund the club's planned activities. Once each year, Missouri Betas gather at the Missouri State Beta Convention to elect state-wide student officers and to compete in a variety of academic, talent, and artistic competitions. The Missouri Junior Beta State Convention is currently held in Poplar Bluff in early December of each year, while the Missouri Senior Beta State Convention is held in Branson in mid-March of each year. Many clubs use their fund raising activities to cover the cost of attending these conventions. There are

some examples of fund raising activities listed at the end of this manual. All clubs should obtain administrative approval prior to any service project or fund-raising event.

Each club sponsor is free to choose the schedule and frequency of club meetings. Meetings may be scheduled monthly or bi-monthly at times, or may be changed to weekly during times of fund-raising events, service projects, or convention preparation. Smaller clubs may choose to hold meetings in the Sponsor's room while large clubs tend to hold meetings in the school gymnasium or cafeteria. Meetings are usually after school or sometimes brief meetings can be held during lunch time.

Once clubs establish a schedule of meetings, projects, and events, members can begin to gain the benefits that Beta offers and to "Lead by serving others."

Conventions

Junior Beta Convention:

In December of each year, the Junior Beta Clubs across Missouri gather in Poplar Bluff to hold a one-day convention. The sight is chosen each year by Missouri Beta's governing body – The Missouri State Beta Council. The State Beta Council is made up of 12 school administrators chosen from schools that currently have active Beta Clubs. Missouri's State Council has a variety of administrators representing schools that have Junior Clubs, Senior Clubs, or both. The State Council administers Missouri Beta at both the Junior Beta and Senior Beta levels and helps to coordinate the individual state conventions in Missouri.

At the Junior Beta State Convention, the current State Sponsor and State Sponsor-Elect work to organize a variety of academic, artistic, creative, and talent competitions. Also, each year at the convention, students from various clubs choose to campaign for one of five state-wide student offices. At the Junior Beta Convention, students may campaign for President, Vice President, Secretary, Reporter, and Chaplain. The campaign consists of a candidate's campaign speech, a campaign skit to support the candidate, and actual meeting the student voters and verbally campaigning for votes. The complete Missouri State Junior Beta Convention Bulletin can be found online at the National Beta website as well as on Missouri Beta's website at mobeta.org. The bulletin lists all the competitions available and the entry procedures and deadlines. The Missouri Junior Beta State Convention is open to all Junior Betas in Missouri, their sponsors, chaperones, school personnel and parents.

Club sponsors should make it a priority to obtain the current convention bulletin at the beginning of each school year. Since the entry deadlines occur within just a few months after school starts back each year, sponsors should make sure to note the entry deadlines for the competitions in which their students wish to compete. It is always a good rule to print off the convention bulletin, note the deadline dates, and pay special attention to the rules concerning each competition. Some events are open to all students at the convention, while others are limited. Sponsors should strive to get entries sent in as quickly as possible.

Senior Beta Convention:

The Missouri State Beta Council selects the site and date each year to hold the Senior Beta Club Convention. Currently, the Missouri Senior Convention is held in Branson in March of each year. The Senior Beta Convention is a two-day convention held on Friday and Saturday. At the Senior Beta State Convention, the current State Sponsor and State Sponsor-Elect work to organize a variety of academic, artistic, creative, and talent competitions. Also, each year at the convention, students from various clubs choose to campaign for one of three state-wide student offices. At the Senior Beta Convention, students may campaign for President, Vice President, and Secretary. The campaign consists of a candidate's campaign speech, a campaign skit to support the candidate, and actual meeting the student voters and verbally campaigning for votes. The complete Missouri State Senior Beta Convention Bulletin can be found online at the National Beta website as well as on Missouri Beta's website at mobeta.org. The bulletin lists all the competitions available and the entry procedures and deadlines. The Missouri Senior Beta State Convention is open to all Senior Betas in Missouri, their sponsors, chaperones, school personnel and parents.

Club sponsors should make it a priority to obtain the current convention bulletin at the beginning of each school year. Although the entry deadlines occur in January of each year, sponsors should make sure to note the entry deadlines for the competitions in which their students wish to compete. It is always a good rule to print off the convention bulletin, note the deadline dates, and pay special attention to the rules concerning each competition. Some events are open to all students at the convention while others are limited. Sponsors should strive to get entries sent in as quickly as possible. Also, at the Senior Convention most clubs wish to stay in the official convention hotel. While this is not a requirement, it does allow Betas from different clubs to meet and network with each other. The hotel reservation form is included in the online Convention Bulletin and should be submitted as quickly as possible in order to ensure a club's rooms at the hotel. The Convention Bulletin also provides a checklist for sponsors to help make sure all items are covered and planned for prior to arriving at the convention.

Contact Information

Listed below is the contact information for Beta Officials at the state and national level. These are the people to ask questions or submit comments.

The National Beta Club Office:

- Barbara Anderson: Senior Beta National Sponsor
1-800-845-8281
banderson@betaclub.org
- Judy Cummings: Junior Beta National Sponsor
1-800-845-8281
jcumings@betaclub.org
- Joan Burnett: Marketing & Development Director (new clubs)
1-800-845-8281
jburnett@betaclub.org
- Karen Gilliam: Marketing & Development Coordinator (new clubs)
1-800-845-8281
kgilliam@betaclub.org
- Amy Summers: Marketing & Development Coordinator (new clubs)
1-800-845-8281
asummers@betaclub.org
- Melody Cooper: Membership Director (established clubs)
1-800-845-8281
mcooper@betaclub.org
- Leigh Mason: Senior Beta Membership Coordinator (established clubs)
1-800-845-8281
lmason@betaclub.org
- Eva Carley: Junior Beta Membership Coordinator (established clubs)
1-800-845-8281
ecarley@betaclub.org

**Missouri State Beta Club Officials
2009-2011**

- Mr. Jerry Hobbs: Chair, Missouri State Beta Council
Superintendent – Cole R-I Schools
jhobbs@cole.k12.mo.us
- Ms. Trish Lewis: Missouri Senior Beta State Sponsor
Bourbon High School
lewist@mail.warhawks.k12.mo.us
- Mrs. Laurie Buffington: Missouri Senior Beta State Sponsor-Elect
Southern Reynolds County High School
lbuffington@ellington.k12.mo.us
- Mrs. Jenny Whisnant: Missouri Junior Beta State Sponsor
West Plains Middle School
jwhisnant@mail.wphs.k12.mo.us
- Mr. Shaughn Doyel: Missouri Junior Beta State Sponsor-Elect
Missouri School for the Blind
sdoyel@msb.k12.mo.us

SAMPLES. EXAMPLES. SAMPLES. EXAMPLES. SAMPLES. EXAMPLES.

Service Project Ideas:

- ✓ paint fire hydrants and street signs for community
- ✓ present a Veterans Day program for community
- ✓ collect items for flood/disaster relief/food bank
- ✓ support Ronald McDonald House
- ✓ make fruit baskets for elderly
- ✓ participate in March of Dimes March for Babies (walkathon)
- ✓ adopt a family for holidays
- ✓ coordinate blood drive with local blood bank
- ✓ participate in Adopt a Highway campaign
- ✓ collect used eyeglasses for the Lions Club
- ✓ assist local Head Start program
- ✓ volunteer with Habitat for Humanity
- ✓ establish tutoring service for peers
- ✓ plant flowers for community beautification program
- ✓ send encouraging mail to military personnel
- ✓ clean an elderly neighbor's driveway after a snowfall
- ✓ start a recycling center at school

Fund Raising Ideas:

- Sell items such as pizzas, donuts, school supplies, etc.
- Hold raffles
- Silent auctions of donated items
- Operate school concession stands
- Open a school store during breaks and lunch
- Host pancake breakfasts or spaghetti suppers
- Hold trivia night events
- Host a school dance
- Carwash (always popular, but seasonal)

These ideas are listed to give new sponsors suggestions for possible service projects or fundraising events. Feel free to add your own or have your club members get creative and come up with original ideas for your community. BETA brings out the best in people!!