**Various Thoughts on Leaders Club BY Leaders:**

1. Leader’s Club is a sprit, mind, body leadership development club. The goal is to meet on Thursday nights and teach them how to be leaders in spirit, mind, and body (so we will have Christian-ish devotions, fitness . . .etc.) and then provide a wealth of volunteer opportunities in the YMCA (afterschool, MSM, sports, swim lessons, big events . . . etc.) and outside the YMCA (Habitat for Humanity, Relay for Life, nursing homes, community events . . . etc.) for them to apply the things they are learning on Thursdays.
2. We are NOT a beta/key club. The whole goal is not volunteer service but personal development. We use volunteering to become better leaders.
3. We are NOT a young life group. Having a place to belong that inspires you is important but we need to do more than build healthy relationships and challenge kids to be better people. Leaders must teach specific leadership skills (i.e. organization, communication, motivation, problem-solving, physical fitness, servant leadership . . .etc.).
4. We are NOT a youth group. We are Christian influenced (and not ashamed of it) but one of the great things about the Y is it is a place where all teens can grow and become better. Trying to strike this balance is a difficult but worthy goal.
5. Systems; things that are in place to help us be what we should be:
   1. Volunteer requirements: we ask all leaders to sign a document at the beginning of the year committing to volunteer 125 hours during that school year. Our constitution requires a minimum of 50 to stay in the club. This is a challenging but reachable number for teens who devote themselves to meeting goals. Part of the theory is to show teens that they are capable of accomplishing big things when they set their minds to it.
   2. Logging hours: we take attendance at MSM (by the MSM coordinator) and meetings (by the Secretary) and I keep track of all those hours. Any volunteer service done at the Y outside of that must be logged in the blue Leaders book in my office. They are allowed to get 45 of their 125 hours in events that are not official Leader’s Club activities (things like cleaning up parks, serving at animal shelters, volunteering at church . . . etc.) but these things must: 1) be approved by the club advisor first to ensure that it is a valuable thing and 2) not be credited by another organization (like a key/beta club).
   3. Fitness requirements: we require teens to do 6 hours of fitness per month to encourage them to stay active.
   4. Exec board: see our constitution for descriptions. Ideally there is nothing that the club advisor alone does but there are execs to help with/do everything.
   5. Mentor/Manatee tradition: we assign returning leaders to mentor new members (their manatees) to give all new leaders a point of contact and a place to ask questions.
   6. Fitness: we do fitness every meeting. We alternate back and forth between a 5-minute, simple activity (every one do three sets of 15 push-ups . . .GO. or something like that) to a longer, 20-minute activity (mile run and cool-down, circuit training, zumba . . . etc.).
   7. Devotions: are done twice a month. Most clubs take 5 minutes per meeting for devotions but we have found that we can do more if we take 10-15 minutes every meeting and really dig deep into a topic.