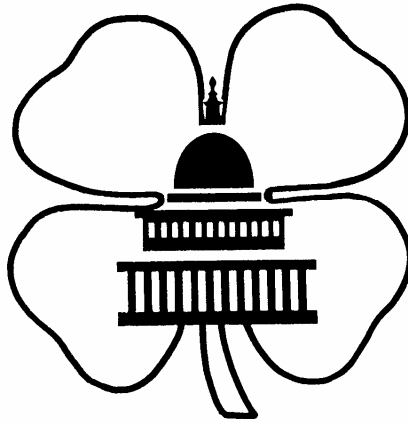




University of Idaho
Extension

4-H KNOW YOUR GOVERNMENT COUNTY GOVERNMENT DAY ACTIVITY



INFORMATION PACKET

Activity adapted by Michele Pike, Extension Educator, from materials developed by Tammy Skubina, Extension Agent, Benton County, Oregon

KNOW YOUR GOVERNMENT - COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Purpose:

- ❖ 5th through 9th grade youth will learn about county government
- ❖ 5th through 9th grade youth will participate in a mock hearing

Participants:

- ❖ 5th through 9th grade youth: may be 4-H members or youth from school districts in the county (suggest 45 youth participating, other than planning committee)
- ❖ Chaperones at the ideal rate of 1 chaperone to 5 youth
- ❖ 5 older 4-H members (8th grade and older) serving as the planning committee for this
- ❖ 4-H Extension Agent/4-H Program Coordinator/4-H Assistant

Planning Process:

- ❖ Schedule at least three planning meetings with planning committee
- ❖ Contact schools if planning to have them participate - provide basic information, number and grades of students per school invited, and date of the event. If schools won't be participating, contact 4-H clubs or County Extension offices to invite 4-H members to participate. ***This should be done AT LEAST three months in advance of the event!*** Confirm adult drivers for the event at this time, as well. 4-H leaders and chaperones should drive 4-H members due to liability concerns. It's BEST if 4-H leaders drive 4-H members.
- ❖ Make contact with County Commissioners and public officials. Ask a County Commissioner to participate.
- ❖ Make contact with Parks & Recreation office to help, especially if mock hearing will involve their agency.
- ❖ Reserve a meeting room of sufficient size and one where food and drink is allowed.
- ❖ Get feedback from the schools or 4-H clubs regarding the names of students or members and their teachers or leaders who will be participating.
- ❖ Make arrangements for microphone and speaker, tables, chairs, and a lectern.
- ❖ Make arrangements for two tour sites (ideas for sites: courthouse, jail, 911 center, Parks & Recreation Offices).
- ❖ Secure two-way radios to use for the event.
- ❖ Gather supplies (nametags, markers, evaluations, schedules, addresses and names for thank you's, 4-H information sheets, four colors of dots, fact sheets in the same colors as dots (will have lines for name, school or 4-H club, hobbies, favorite color, favorite music) pencils, US and 4-H flags).
- ❖ Work out schedule and figure out if list of materials needed is complete.
- ❖ Get the committee together to tour the sites - take notes about special considerations and special supplies that may be needed. Record names of collaborators and the roles they will have.
- ❖ Have the 4-H planning committee go through mock tours to confirm timing and logistics, and draw a map of the "best" route to take.
- ❖ Pre-order lunch (pizza) for everyone who will be involved.
- ❖ Prepare teach/leader packets (evaluations, schedules, thank you addresses, 4-H information sheets).

- ❖ Contact the school or organization who manages the facility with the room you'll be using and either get a key or make arrangements to have someone there to open the room for you.
- ❖ Have the event!
- ❖ Hand out certificates of completion to the participants at the end of the event.
- ❖ Have a meeting with 4-H planning committee members to write and mail thank you's.

KNOW YOUR GOVERNMENT - COUNTY GOVERNMENT SCHEDULE

8:00 a.m. Set up and last minute preparations

- Place the lectern at the center front of the room and test the microphone and speaker(s)
- Set up chairs for participants and teachers, chaperones, and leaders
- Set up the tables (check-in, food, head table, and any others needed)
- Distribute two-way radios to planning team members and synchronize watches. Be sure everyone is using the same two-way radio channel. Hand planning team members a schedule for the day.
- Set up flags by the lectern

8:45 a.m. Register participants and hand out participant packets

- Have everyone sitting in chairs. Have teachers sitting with their class and leaders sitting with their 4-H club members.
- Instruct the participants in writing their names on nametags along with school or club names, and put them on. Teachers, leaders, and chaperones will need a different color than students.
- Go over the information in the teacher/leader packets with the teachers and leaders (evaluations, schedules, thank you addresses, 4-H information sheets)

9:00 a.m. Ice Breaker - Planned and run by two planning committee members, with other members taking charge of groups of participants

- Use dot colors on the nametags to put everyone into three groups. Distribute teachers, leaders, and chaperones among the three groups.
- Hand out "fact sheets" and pencils. Fact sheets should be the same colors as the dots on the nametags.
- Have participants fill in the information on the fact sheets.
- Have the participants find a person in another color group and exchange fact sheets. Participants should use the information on the fact sheets to learn something about the person they've paired with.
- Have participants stay with their new partners while they form three new groups. These groups are to sit together.

9:20 a.m. Introductions/Expectations - planning committee member

- Give a warm welcome to participants and have the planning committee introduce each member.
- Announce the schools or 4-H clubs that are participating, having each school or 4-H club stand up when it's name is announced.
- Explain the purpose of Know Your Government - County Government Day
- Explain proper conduct and expectations, such as polite behavior, being quiet when on tours and when speakers are talking, listen to and respect chaperones, teachers, and planning committee members.
- Go over the schedule for the day.

9:30 a.m. Leave site for tours

9:40 a.m. Rotation 1 (group leaders have two-way radios and watches)

- County Commissioners office, hearing room – Group 1
- Law Enforcement Building (jail tour, one half hour, and 911 center 15 minutes) - Group 2

10:30 a.m. Wrap up Rotation 1 and move to new site

10:40 a.m. Rotation 2

- County Commissioners office, hearing room – Group 2
- Law Enforcement Building (jail tour, one half hour, and 911 center 15 minutes) - Group 1

11:30 a.m. Wrap up Rotation 2 and return to check-in room

11:40 a.m. Mock Hearing Preparation

- Explain how the process will work.
- Present the issue to the participants.
- Divide the participants into the necessary groups at random, and assign them their respective roles.
- Give the groups the remaining time until 12:30 p.m. to discuss their strategy, make flip charts, and choose their representatives to do the speaking.

12:30 p.m. Wrap up mock hearing preparation

12:40 p.m. Lunch (pizza, bottled water, soda pop, fruit) - Select two participants to participate with agency personnel for the panel

1:05 p.m. Photo session

1:15 p.m. Mock hearing - pre-selected and planned issue

- Present their concerns to the relevant board (according to the issue the planning committee selected), and answer questions from the board.
- The board makes a decision (board is composed of agency personnel and the two selected youth).

2:15 p.m. Closing/Thanks/Evaluation/Certificates

2:30 p.m. Clean up

SUGGESTED AGENCY CONTACTS

County Clerk for a tour of the Courthouse

Commissioners office for a tour of their offices and a talk about what they do

Jail for a tour of the jail

Courthouse Contact for use of the County Courtrooms for the Mock Trial

Facility with room for the morning meeting before the tours

911 Center for a tour of their facility and what they do

LIST OF SUPPLIES

- Two way radios for planning committee members and chaperones
- Watches for all planning team members
- Paper hand outs
- 3 cases of soda pop and 1 case of bottled water
- 75 apples
- Green shirts, preferably with the 4-H logo, for the planning committee
- Camp brochures - planning committee should design these
- Signs for doors, i.e. check-in
- School and 4-H club signs
- At least one camera
- Maps of the routes
- Schedules
- Name tags
- Colored dots (four colors)
- Markers
- Pencils
- Evaluations
- Thank you addresses
- 4-H information sheets
- 4 or more easels
- Paper for the easels
- Markers for the easels in a variety of colors
- Staples
- Tape (clear and masking)
- Rubber bands
- Stapler
- Blank paper
- Note pads and pens for the planning committee members
- Note pads and pens for the board

BUILDING A SCENARIO

A scenario is necessary for the mock hearing for the Know Your Government - County Government project. The planning committee will be responsible for researching local issues to find out what is of concern to the citizens in the county. The planning committee will have help from the Extension office and their leaders as necessary, but the bulk of this effort should come from them.

Once the planning committee has found out about some issues, they may use these issues to help them in *making up* a similar issue (if they wish) that would be of concern or important to people in the community. An **example** of this might be the building of soccer fields on a piece of land just outside the community, but close to a new upscale housing development and a brand new middle school. This piece of land is next to a small year-round stream, and is located on a rural two-lane road. The community recognizes that with the growing enthusiasm for youth soccer, the number of playing fields is not enough. In this example, there are four groups who will be speaking at a Parks and Recreation Department meeting: a group of local farmers; a group of youth soccer players; a neighborhood association, and a group of students from the middle school.

- ❖ The Neighborhood Association is concerned because they moved to their upscale 5 acre ranchettes to escape the urban problems people in town deal with. They also paid a great deal to obtain their way of life, and they're worried that the proposed soccer fields will increase noise, litter, traffic congestion, vandalism, and crime. They're also concerned that the rate of traffic accidents will rise on game days, as residents try to run their errands and families arrive and exit the new soccer fields.
- ❖ The local farmers have wanted a green line instituted by the city to protect prime farmland, which this piece of land is. They don't want to see it taken out of production, as so much other land is, and being turned into turf fields, gravel, and pavement. They don't oppose more soccer fields, but prefer to see them built on land that isn't so good for farming. They're worried about the continuing loss of good, fertile farmland.
- ❖ The youth soccer players are thrilled! Getting their games scheduled has become a real problem. They'd like to see more families involved in youth soccer, enjoying family time, keeping kids off the streets, and keeping kids physically active and healthy. Soccer also helps youth build relationships with each other and with adults, and the kids know this helps keep them away from risky behaviors such as smoking and taking drugs.
- ❖ The middle school students are learning about the environment in their classes. They are concerned for the health of the stream, which is rather scenic as well as sustaining a year round flow. They are worried that greater numbers of people around the stream banks could lead to increased erosion, greater litter in the waterway, increased pollution from runoff from the parking area that will go along with the fields, and damage to young trees growing on the stream bank.

In this particular **example**, each group would have 10-12 minutes to present and discuss the issue from their viewpoint, which includes answering questions from the board. If there were three groups, they'd have 15 minutes each. The objective is to keep group testimony and the decision of the board to **one hour**. They will be provided with easels and flip chart paper, plus markers (a variety of colors should be provided). They need to be prepared to **testify or present their side**

for 5 to 7 minutes per group. The following is an outline of how the presentation should be conducted:

- Speakers (at least two (2) per group) should introduce themselves and the group they represent.
- Speakers will present a 1 to 2 sentence introduction of the issue and their group's viewpoints. Being assertive and enthusiastic without being combative is good.
- Speakers will cover 3 to 4 main points or facts that support their group's viewpoint. They may expand on these points if time allows.
- Speakers will give information that they know or hope supports their viewpoint.
- A summary of 2 to 3 sentences will complete the presentation. Speakers need to be certain to emphasize an ending viewpoint.
- Speakers will then thank the panel for listening to their presentation and ask if there are questions.

The board listening to the presentations will prepare questions for the presenters, listen to the presentations, discuss the issue, and give a decision (either to continue to take testimony at a later hearing, approve in this example the building of the soccer fields, perhaps with additional criteria, or in this example not build the soccer fields, etc.) County Commissioners will support the board's decision. The County Commissioner may ask questions and provide information from a commissioner's point of view.

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New 2005

MOCK HEARING PRESENTATION WORK SHEET

- 1) We are pleased to give testimony to _____ board today. My name is _____ and my name is _____.
We represent _____.
- 2) Our view on this issue is:
- 3) The main points we'd like to cover to support our view are:
 - a)
 - b)
 - c)
 - d)
- 4) This is the information we have to support our view:
- 5) In summary (2 to 3 points to wrap up your arguments to the board in support of your views)
- 6) Thank the _____ Board for listening to you.
- 7) Do you have any questions you'd like to ask us?
- 8) (Be sure to say "I don't know" if you don't know an answer, and include "but I can find that information and get back to you." If the information is readily available from sources used for the Mock Hearing, look it up and DO get back to them!)

KNOW YOUR GOVERNMENT-COUNTY GOVERNMENT EVALUATION

School or 4-H Club _____ Grade in School _____

1) Please circle the number that you feel best describes the Know Your Government-County Government program:

1	2	3	4	5
Not good at all	Could be better	OK	Pretty Good	Terrific!

2) List two things you learned today:

3) What was your favorite activity (beside lunch)?

4) What was your least favorite activity (besides lunch)?

5) Do you have ideas to improve future Know Your Government –County government Programs?

6) Other comments: