

AMPLIFY TOOL: Teacher Talk

Teachers control whether your STEAM club happens or not. But they're busy, overwhelmed, and hear a hundred requests every week. This toolkit shows you how to pitch your idea so they actually want to say yes.

Understanding What Holds Teachers Back

Teachers have real concerns. Here's how to address them.

When they say: 'I don't have time'

Your response: 'I'll handle everything. You just need to be present for meetings and sign paperwork. I can show you exactly what I'll manage versus what I need from you.'

When they say: 'We don't have the budget'

Your response: 'I found three grant opportunities we qualify for. I'll write the applications if you review them. Or we could start with free materials.'

When they say: 'The principal won't approve it'

Your response: 'What if I draft a proposal and get 30 student signatures first? Then would you review it and tell me if it's strong enough?'

When they say: 'I don't know enough about robotics/coding'

Your response: 'You don't need to be the expert. We just need an adult supervisor. I can handle the technical stuff or find mentors.'

The 3-Minute Pitch That Actually Works

Teachers don't have 20 minutes to hear your dream. They have 3 minutes between classes. Make them count.

Minute 1: Name the problem

'Tons of students here want to do robotics but there's nowhere to do it. I talked to 30 people who said they'd join if we had a club.'

Minute 2: Propose a simple solution

'I want to start a robotics club that meets twice a week after school. We'd just need a room and an advisor.'

Minute 3: Show you're serious and make it easy

'I already researched how to do this. I wrote a draft proposal and found funding sources. I'm not asking you to do the work. I'm asking you to support it. Can you just look at my proposal and give me feedback?'

When and Where to Have This Conversation

Good times:

After class when no one's waiting

During their office hours (ask first)

Right after you did something that impressed them in class

Bad times:

Right before class starts

When they're clearly stressed or rushing somewhere

The week before grades are due

First or last week of school

What to Bring With You

One-page proposal showing you've thought this through

List of interested students (proves there's demand)

Examples of similar clubs at other schools

Possible funding sources you researched

Specific ask (what exactly you need from them)

If They Say No

Ask why. 'What's your biggest concern?' This tells you if it's fixable.

Ask for help anyway. 'Who else might be able to help?' They might suggest another teacher.

Ask about timing. 'Would this work better next semester?' Maybe it's just bad timing.

Thank them. 'I understand. Thanks for listening.' Leave the door open.

If They Say Yes

Get it in writing. Email them a summary of what you discussed and what happens next.

Do what you promised. If you said you'd organize everything, actually do it.

Keep them updated. Quick weekly emails showing progress.

Thank them often. They're doing you a favor. Show you appreciate it.



Common Mistakes to Avoid

Expecting them to do all the work while you just show up

Being vague about what you actually want

Not having a backup plan if they can't help

Getting defensive when they raise concerns Giving up after one person says no

Your Teacher Pitch Plan

Teacher I'll approach first:

Why I'm asking them:

What I need from them specifically:

My 1-sentence pitch:

Their likely concern and my response:

Backup teacher if they say no:

Next Steps

Got your pitch ready? Check out these other STEAMvocate toolkits:

Your STEAM Team: Find the right supporters

Action Mode: Turn conversations into concrete steps

Student Voice Starter: Frame your message clearly