

Starting a School Astronomy Club

Clubs have been started by keen teachers and by keen students. These comments are for both.

First you need one or preferably two teacher advisors. That spreads the work load and makes it more likely that the club will continue for years. Many people are interested in space and helping with a club will be an adventure for them. Hence try teachers of all subjects. Advisors do not have to have to be experts in astronomy. RASC resources will help.

You will need to discuss the club with the school principal. He or she will explain different procedures which will have to be followed including vetting of outsiders who might be involved with the club. In one school an enthusiastic student was told he needed 10 who would sign up. He got 30.

Then you need a room for meetings. Ideally have a room with a projector and a computer with Internet connection. You'll need money for copying etc. Once you get members, try your student council, local service clubs or local businesses.

Plan a strategy to attract members. The student leader mentioned above attracted many with his social media account of astronomy news. Others make posters, displays and creative announcements. If you can eventually buy or borrow a safe solar telescope, displays at lunch hour will attract new members.

There is probably a RASC centre (rasc.ca) or local amateur astronomy club near you. Some members of those clubs might give talks or help with activities, but they must meet the vetting standard of the school. Members of a local astronomy club might bring their telescopes to an evening star party for you and your families.

Have a wonderful time exploring the cosmos.

