



Guiding students in preparing their action plan

Some ideas for chaperones.

What is an “Action Plan”?

An action plan is a project that your students develop during their time at SLC that they can implement together when they return to their school. The purpose of this activity is to encourage students to apply the leadership character and skills they are learning at SLC by serving their school and community in a meaningful way. This intentional and practical application increases the sustainability of the lessons learnt during the conference. During SLC you will have time with your students each day to work on the plan, and on the final evening your group will have the opportunity to share their plan with other schools.

Your role in guiding your students as they prepare their action plan is an important one. While it is *their* action plan, they are inexperienced and look to you for advice, boundaries and resources. It is likely that you will need to play a more direct role in initiating the process, but become less direct as it unfolds and students take ownership and responsibility. This is a wonderful opportunity for you to model for them what this collaborative, empowering style of leadership looks like.

The ideas below are an outline of how you might engage in this process. They are not offered as a list of steps to follow, but are designed as a prompt for your own creative ideas – which we would love you to share with us and other chaperones!

Before SLC

Start early and start positive!

- 1) Have your students make a list of ways that they already see God at work in their school, or the best and most unique features of their school. Encourage them to share stories of how they have experienced these things and how it has impacted them and others in positive ways. You could use the mind-map provided (or your own version of it) by having students fill it in individually on a single sheet of paper, then share ideas to create a combined version on a large poster, bulletin board or electronically.
- 2) Discuss the question: What would our school look like if these good things that God is already doing were “taken to the next level” (multiplied, amplified, magnified)? Students could add ideas to the mind-map, or create a diagram or picture of inspiring images or ideas of what their school is becoming. How might God be calling us to participate with Him in this?
- 3) Encourage the students to prayerfully choose a particular idea or image to focus on as they prepare their action plan. Try to form a challenging goal that the action plan will seek to achieve.

During SLC

Make the most of your de-brief times!

- 1) Revisit your chosen idea/image or goal and adapt or refine it based on what students are learning during SLC. Choose a completely new goal if something comes up that inspires the whole group.
- 2) Brainstorm strategies for achieving your goal. Get a variety of ideas “on the table”, then discuss the possibilities and connections between them before deciding on which strategy (or strategies) you will use. You could use the planning sheet provided, or your own version of it, to help with this.
- 3) Discuss the resources that will be required to implement your plan.
- 4) Some reflective questions to discuss before committing to the final plan:

- How challenging is this plan for us? Have we chosen to do something that is possible, but will stretch us and cause us to depend on God in new ways?
- How beneficial will this plan be if we are successful? Who will benefit? Have we chosen to do something that will meet the needs of others, or our own?
- How committed are we to this plan? Are we willing to be faithful, to persevere to see this plan through when problems or opposition arise?

After SLC

Encourage your students to follow-through on their plan.

- 1) Schedule regular meetings for a period of time after SLC to work on the plan and its implementation. It is likely that the debrief times at SLC will only be enough to sketch out your plan, so your group will need time to work together on the details.
- 2) Help your students break down their plan into smaller elements and/or steps to take, and to negotiate responsibility and accountability for different tasks.
- 3) Connect your students with others who can help them achieve their goal.
- 4) Help your students carefully plan how they will communicate their action plan with others and invite their participation.
- 5) Ask your students questions that help them reflect on and learn from the experience as they go, especially when it isn't going well.
 - What has been working well on our plan so far? Why is it working well?
 - What challenges have we faced? How have we responded to those challenges? How could we respond differently?
 - What changes/adaptations do we need to make to our original plan?
- 6) Celebrate successes with your action plan.

And one final suggestion that is so obvious it needs to be stated: "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). However you engage in this process, you and your students need God's inspiration, wisdom and enabling.

Praying for God's blessing on you and your students,

The ACSI Europe team.