



# 10 WAYS



**NOT TO INCLUDE STUDENTS  
MEANINGFULLY IN EDUCATION  
GOVERNANCE**

# INTRODUCTION

**While including students in education governance is essential, there are several ineffective practices that can undermine this goal. These approaches can render student involvement superficial or meaningless. Here are ten ways not to include students meaningfully in education governance.**

# 1. TOKENISM

**Including a single student representative on a large board or committee as a symbolic gesture without giving them real influence or decision-making power is ineffective. This practice often leads to the student feeling isolated and their input being ignored.**

## **2. IGNORING STUDENT FEEDBACK**

**Conducting surveys or collecting feedback from students without any intention of acting on it is a common mistake. When students see no changes resulting from their input, they lose trust in the process and feel their voices are not valued.**

# **3. NOT WORKING WITH STUDENT UNIONS**

**Ignoring or sidelining student unions, which are established to represent student interests, undermines the collective voice of the student body.**

**Student unions are crucial for gathering broad student perspectives and should be actively involved in governance processes.**

# **4. PROVIDING NO TRAINING OR SUPPORT**

**Expecting students to participate in governance without offering any training or support sets them up for failure. Students need guidance on governance processes, meeting protocols, and effective communication to contribute meaningfully.**

# **5. LIMITING ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

**Withholding important information and documents from students prevents them from making informed contributions. Transparency is key to meaningful participation, and students should have access to the same materials as other board or committee members.**

# **6. OVERLOADING STUDENTS WITH RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Giving students an excessive workload or too many responsibilities in governance roles can overwhelm them or hinder their academic performance. It is crucial to balance their governance duties with their primary role as students.**



# 7. SELECTING STUDENTS WITHOUT INPUT FROM PEERS

Choosing student representatives without consulting the broader student body often results in unrepresentative voices. Students should be elected or selected through a democratic process that ensures they truly represent their peers' interests.

# **8. FOCUSING ONLY ON MINOR ISSUES**

**Assigning students to minor or inconsequential issues while excluding them from discussions on major policies or decisions trivializes their involvement. Students should be engaged in meaningful and impactful areas of governance.**

# 9.

## **CREATING HOSTILE OR UNWELCOMING ENVIRONMENTS**

**An unwelcoming or dismissive attitude from adult members of governance bodies can discourage student participation. Respectful and inclusive environments are essential for students to feel comfortable and valued.**

# 10. IGNORING DIVERSITY

**Failing to consider diversity among student representatives can lead to the exclusion of important perspectives. It is important to include students from various backgrounds, including different academic disciplines, socioeconomic statuses, and cultural groups, to ensure a broad range of views.**

# CONCLUSION

**Avoiding these ten pitfalls is crucial for ensuring that student involvement in education governance is meaningful and effective. By recognizing and addressing these common issues, educational institutions can create a more inclusive and participatory governance process that truly values student contributions.**

