



Carry The **F.L.A.G.**

CARRY THE LOAD EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM



WHO ARE YOU CARRYING?

F.L.A.G. CLUB

HANDBOOK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Why a F.L.A.G. Club?	1
How it Works	2
Step-by-Step Guide	3

WHY A F.L.A.G. CLUB?

The acronym F.L.A.G. stands for “Fly, Lower, And Gather.” F.L.A.G. Clubs are open to students who are enrolled in the 4th through 12th grades.

The flag of the United States—also known as “Old Glory”—represents everything that is good about this country. It represents Freedom. It represents Courage. It represents Hope.

- Red represents Hardiness and Valor.
- White represents Purity and Innocence.
- Blue represents Vigilance.

Countless men and women have served under her colors, and countless men and women have died defending her.

The F.L.A.G. Club program was created to educate our youth of the history of the American Flag and the sacrifices made to honor it. F.L.A.G. Club students will learn how to properly Fly, Lower, And Gather the United States Flag and will serve as their school’s Flag Crew throughout the school year: raising the flags each school day morning, and lowering and properly storing the flags each school day afternoon.

Through F.L.A.G. Club meetings and activities during the school year, students will

- learn proper etiquette of the United States Flag
- learn important information about our nation’s heroes and their sacrifices for our freedom
- learn the history of our Flag and many patriotic holidays.

Ronald Reagan, who served as the 40th President of the United States from 1981 to 1989, once said, “Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction.” We must teach each generation of children both the value and the price of freedom. We must instill in them a patriotic spirit, and a proper respect for our country, our flag, and the sacrifices that have been made by men and women throughout this country’s history in order to protect our freedom.

That’s why F.L.A.G. Clubs are important! And that is what we hope to accomplish on your school’s campus by supporting your efforts as a F.L.A.G. Club Sponsor or Community Volunteer.

Thank you for volunteering your time to serve in this capacity! You will make a difference in your student's lives—and consequently in the ongoing cause of freedom and patriotism—by your service.

HOW IT WORKS

Here is an overview of how the F.L.A.G. Club will work on your campus.

- The F.L.A.G. Club Sponsor (a teacher or school faculty member) is responsible for the organization and implementation of the F.L.A.G. Club on each campus.
- The F.L.A.G. Club Sponsor will receive support from **Carry the Load** (the parent organization for F.L.A.G. Clubs).
- Enlisting the help of a Community Volunteer will assist the Sponsor in:
 - providing one or more trainers to teach students the proper techniques for raising, lowering, and folding the flag;
 - obtaining necessary handbooks, support materials, and practice flags; and
 - scheduling and planning and end-of-year Awards Ceremony to recognize the students' achievements.
- The Sponsor will recruit students to participate in the F.L.A.G. Club.
- The F.L.A.G. Club Trainer will train students in proper flag techniques and flag etiquette.
- Students will be scheduled on a rotation basis to raise and lower the flags each school day.
- F.L.A.G. Club meetings will be held on a regular basis (ideally once a month).
- An Awards Ceremony will be held at the end of the school year to award students for their F.L.A.G. Club achievements.

SPONSOR STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

This Step-by-Step Guide and checklist will help you, the F.L.A.G. Club Sponsor for your campus, successfully plan and implement the F.L.A.G. Club on your campus. Please read this guide thoroughly and follow its steps carefully to ensure success.

STEP ONE:

- Have a planning meeting.

Goals for this meeting:

- Make a list of potential F.L.A.G. Club student members and develop a recruiting strategy. The goal is to have a minimum of 25 students per campus. Your initial recruits can help you recruit other students.
- Discuss whether or not you want to recruit additional F.L.A.G. Club Sponsors. If so, make a list of potential Sponsors and develop a recruiting strategy. (Only one Sponsor is required, but you are welcomed and encouraged to recruit one or two other teachers or faculty members on your campus to serve alongside you as Sponsors.)
- Make sure Sponsor(s) and Community Volunteer have each other's contact information, and discuss preferred contact methods.
- Develop a preliminary F.L.A.G. Club schedule for the school year. These dates can be tweaked later as needed. Things to schedule:
 - Application deadline. Students must turn in their completed applications and photo release form by the second Monday in September. This will give you plenty of time to review all applications, select your F.L.A.G. Club members, and notify them of the first training meeting.
 - Training Meetings. You will need to schedule four to six after school training meetings for students to learn proper flag techniques and flag etiquette.
 - Regular Club Meetings. You will need to schedule regular F.L.A.G. Club meetings, ideally once a month, throughout the school year.

STEP TWO:

- Recruit

- Make a list of 5 potential students. Challenge them to recruit 5 more students.
- Students (be sure to collect application and photo release from each prospective F.L.A.G. Club member)
- Recruit an additional Sponsor or Community Volunteer if desired.

STEP THREE:

- Order materials and supplies.

Email contact@carrytheload.org to order the following or visit www.carrytheload.org education to download handbooks:

- Student Handbooks (enough for each student to have a copy, plus a few extra)
- *The American Patriot's Handbook*
- *The U.S. Flag Code & Guidelines*, booklet and poster
- Training flags (3' x 5' flags that students can use for training, courtesy of WoodmenLife)

STEP FOUR:

- Hold training meetings to teach the students to Fly, Lower and Raise the Flag. Also, discuss proper flag etiquette.

At the final training meeting, work with students to schedule weekly flag raising and lowering crews through the first regular club meeting (or perhaps a couple of weeks past the first club meeting to give yourself some breathing room).

STEP SIX:

- Hold regular F.L.A.G. Club meetings.

These were scheduled during your planning meeting. Ideally, the F.L.A.G. Club should meet once a month during the school year, but this can be adjusted as necessary.

F.L.A.G. Club meetings should consist of the following activities:

- **Educate.** Help the students review the Curriculum questions and answers. Other educational activities could include reviewing and discussing the Flag Code, presenting information about upcoming patriotic holidays, bringing a speaker in to address a pertinent topic, etc.
- **Practice.** Allow students to practice unfolding and folding the flag.
- **Schedule.** Prepare weekly flag raising and lowering schedules for four to six weeks out.
- **Plan.** Discuss plans for any upcoming F.L.A.G. Club activities.

STEP SEVEN:

- Take lots of pictures!
 - Throughout the school year, take lots of pictures of your students Flying, Lowering, And Gathering your school's flag(s).
 - Take lots of pictures at your F.L.A.G. Club meetings and any other flag-related activities in which your students participate.

- If your school has a yearbook, submit some of these pictures for inclusion. Also see about having the F.L.A.G. Club listed in the yearbook.
- Share some of your pictures with Carry The Load for possible use on our website and/or social media using #carrytheload, as well as publicity through the local newspaper.
- **IMPORTANT:** Be sure to have all F.L.A.G. Club members sign a photo release at the beginning of the year (see sample form in the “Forms” section of this handbook).

STEP EIGHT:

- Plan your end-of-year Awards Ceremony.
 - Submit a list of your student’s names to Carry The Load to receive your Citizenship Award certificates by the end of April. Plan to award these certificates at your school assembly or a private ceremony.