

# 'CONVERSATION TOWARD A BRIGHTER FUTURE': Edwardsville High School's New Student Ambassadors Project

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*The articles are prepared by the participants of the discussion in their own words.*



EDWARDSVILLE - The Edwardsville High School New Student Ambassadors (NSA) Project, in its second year, is off to an outstanding start with more than 60 students involved.

New students often feel unwelcome as they find themselves in situations where they do not have many friends or acquaintances. They feel isolated and have a lack of

confidence, which at times, may lead to poor decision-making. If this happens in the mind of a student or students, attendance can drop, academic achievement may be at-risk, behavioral infractions can take place. The NSA reduces opportunities for new students to fall through “the cracks”.

NSA welcomes and assists new students to their new Edwardsville High School and assures their success. NSA incorporates ideas such as a student hotline, as well as using social media, video announcements, reward incentives, rally days/weeks, and assemblies.



NSA incorporates a “Friends of the Week” or “Friends of the Month” segment in our video announcements and other social media sources where new students are introduced to the student body. With over 2500 students and staff, more than 50 clubs and activities, the majority of our students are already involved in some way...it’s overwhelming to walk into the EHS community and find a place to fit in.

By introducing them in groups, we ensure no one feels singled out, but rather, they are encouraged to engage our student body. This allows our new students to feel welcomed and also for our current students to step outside of their box and meet someone new. Social media plays a major role in communicating with our new students and make them feel more connected with the school community. They become more informed as to what’s going on, where, when and how to get involved.

All new students (including incoming freshmen) are surveyed within the first week of their arrival to EHS. This same survey is given at other times during the school year in order to determine our success. We look at their grades, school involvement, survey information and attendance to the NSA events to measure the effectiveness of our program.

New Student Ambassadors (NSA) welcome new students, build relationships with them, develop activities to foster a smooth transition into life at EHS. The goal is for new students to develop their own sense of Tiger Pride through involvement at school,

New Student Ambassadors build relationships by:

- Providing a personal tour of the EHS campus.
- Walking new students through their class schedule prior to start of school and their first couple days, if needed.
- Gifting new students with a school t-shirt.
- Sponsoring a new students breakfast.
- Inviting new students to attend sports events with them.
- Fall/Spring fun bonding events (bonfire, picnic, etc.)

New Student Ambassadors encourage EHS organizations, activities, and events to reflect the four pillars: Respect, dignity, understanding, and forgiveness

