

## Choice, Conflict, and Compromise at the County Level

### Overview

Clover County, NC has received a \$6 million federal grant for community improvement. But now, the County Commissioners must determine how to allocate these funds given all of the important issues facing their county. Before making a financial determination, the Commissioners are holding a public hearing where various special interest groups will advocate for how they believe the funds should be allocated. In this lesson, students will simulate the meeting of the Clover County Commissioners, gaining an active understanding of the importance of local government. Students will then examine youth voter apathy at the local level and brainstorm ideas on how to get young people engaged in voting.

### Grade

10

### NC Essential Standards for American History: The Founding Principles, Civics and Economics

- FP.C&G.2.1 - Analyze the structures of national, state and local governments in terms of ways they are organized to maintain order, security, welfare of the public and the protection of citizens
- FP.C&G.2.2 - Summarize the functions of North Carolina state and local governments within the federal system of government
- FP.C&G.2.6 - Evaluate the authority federal, state and local governments have over individuals' rights and privileges
- FP.C&G.2.7 - Analyze contemporary issues and governmental responses at the local, state, and national levels in terms of how they promote the public interest and/or general welfare

### Essential Questions

- How do state and local governments obtain revenue?
- How do state and local governments fund different programs or services?
- How do local government agencies balance interests and resolve conflicts?
- As a leader/stakeholder, how do you balance the interests of different parties to design and to implement an effective and lasting solution?

### Materials

- Choice, Conflict, and Compromise at the County Level PowerPoint
  - Available in the Carolina K-12 Database of K-12 Resources, here [http://k12database.unc.edu/files/2016/09/CloverCountySimulation\\_PPT.pdf](http://k12database.unc.edu/files/2016/09/CloverCountySimulation_PPT.pdf)
- Board of Commissioners Instruction handouts (attached)
- Citizen Group Instructions (attached)
  - Clover County School District, Clover County Community Health Alliance, Friends of Clover County Animals, Clover County Parks & Recreation Department
- Meeting Agenda (attached)
- Key Facts About Clover County handout
- Computers with internet access for student research (optional)
- Local Government in North Carolina textbook (optional): <http://www.sog.unc.edu/node/2426>
- Optional: Invite a local county commissioner to join your class for this simulation. He/she can offer valuable perspective and real world experience as students act out their various roles.

### Duration

- 90 minutes (time may vary depending on how much time teacher allows for simulation research)

### Teacher Preparation

Carolina K-12's lesson, "Counties and Municipalities: What's the Difference?" can be used as a primer or supplement to this lesson. It is available in the Database of K-12 Resources or by e-mailing a request to [CarolinaK12@unc.edu](mailto:CarolinaK12@unc.edu)

### Student Preparation (optional but recommended)

- Option A: Before completing this lesson, instruct students to read the "What is a County" website from the NC Association of County Commissioners. Please note that although the budget numbers are from 2006, the rest of the information is still accurate. It can be accessed, for free, from the following site: [http://www.welcometoyourcounty.org/content/what\\_is\\_a\\_county.shtm](http://www.welcometoyourcounty.org/content/what_is_a_county.shtm)
- Option B: Instruct students to read Chapter 2 of LGNC, which provides information regarding North Carolina counties) and Chapter 7 on local government budgeting available at <http://www.sog.unc.edu/node/2469>

### Procedure

#### Warm Up: What is a County?

1. As a warmup, project slide 2 of the Choice, Conflict, and Compromise at the County Level PowerPoint and ask students to brainstorm "local government" for 1-2 minutes:
  - What comes to mind when you hear these two words?
  - What do you already know about local government?
  - Why is local government important? Why should you care about local government and the officials who run your local government?
2. Quickly share the information on slides 3-5, providing a fast overview of county government in just a few minutes. After finishing slide 5, tell students that they are going to dig deep into the importance of county government and the role of county commissioners by participating in a Board of County Commissioners simulation.
  - **Teacher Option:** If you have invited a county commissioner from your county to participate, introduce him/her at this point. Ask your guest county commissioner or county official to come forward and read his/her bio to the group. Afterwards, ask him/ her to say a few words about their thoughts on why county government matters, what county commissioners do and why it's important to each of us.
3. Tell students that they will be learning more about the importance of county government by participating in a county commissioner simulation. Project slide 6 and tell students that they currently live in the fictitious Clover County, NC. Share the information about Clover with the students.
4. Move on to slide 7 and explain that Clover recently received a \$6 million dollar community improvement grant from a private foundation, and that as a community, they must now determine how to allocate the funds based on the county's needs. And who controls the budget process at the county level? The commissioners! Tell students that today, they will be participating in a meeting of the Clover County Board of Commissioners, as either a commissioner or a presenting community member, where a decision is made on how to allocate the \$6 million.
5. Divide students into five groups.
  - Group One should include 7 students; this group will be assuming the role of the Commissioners.
  - Group's Two-Five can consist of any number of evenly divided students; these groups will be assuming the roles of various community stakeholders.

Give groups the appropriate attached handouts. When you provide handouts to the Commissioners, make sure you select ONE student to be the Chair of the Board. (This student has a separate instruction sheet. Ideally, this will be a student who seems to have a personality to lead the meeting, with facilitator assistance as needed.)

Each group should also receive a few copies of the meeting agenda so that everyone knows who is presenting.

6. Summarize the process and instructions out loud for all students before letting them start working in their groups:
  - **County Commissioners:** (6 commissioners and 1 chair/ 7 total) Under the Chair’s leadership, you will spend the next 15 or more minutes preparing for your County Commissioners meeting. First, introduce yourselves to one another. Then, go through the agenda to review who is assigned to present to you today. Pay attention to who they are, how much money they are requesting, and what they want the funding to go towards. You’ll notice there is not enough money to give everyone what they want! Discuss your first impression of each group’s ask (this is only guess work at this point), and think about which of the issues being presented you personally think are most important. As a Board, create 2-3 follow-up questions you might want to ask each group after their presentation. Note that you will likely come up with different questions you want to ask based on what you hear in the presentations, and that is fine – these are just questions to fall back on if needed.
  - **Citizen Groups:** Based on the group assignment you received, you will spend the next 15 minutes developing a presentation to the Board of Commissioners in which you try and convince them to allocate the funding to your desired community improvement. When your group starts, introduce yourselves, then begin brainstorming all the reasons you can offer as to why the Commissioners should see things your way. Together, you must create an organized, and motivational presentation with an argument so strong that it will convince the Commissioners to vote according to your goals and desires. Also, you should spend some time reviewing the other citizen groups that are on the agenda to present and guess what their stance may be. You might want to include some arguments against other financial requests in your own presentation.
7. Tell students they will also have the help of our special county representative to assist them. Tell them to review their specific instruction on the handout provided once in their groups, to introduce themselves, and to get started – the clock is ticking! (Once the students are in their groups, assist the county official in working with the group of students playing commissioners, as well as floating around to talk with the other citizen groups as well.)
8. Make sure to check in with the commissioners group at the start of the planning. Ensure they (especially the chair) understand how to run the meeting. Pay attention to time and provide time left warnings as students prepare.

### Conducting the Simulation

9. Once time is up, arrange the room so that the commissioners are facing the audience, and prepare a presentation area where each group will come up to face them. Introduce the activity and review expected behavior for the simulation, noting expectations such as:
  - Remain respectful at all times and encourage one another.
  - Try your best and take the simulation seriously.
  - Listen when others are speaking. Do not discuss your presentation while other groups are presenting.
  - Maintain order and professionalism throughout the hearing, whether you agree with what is being said or not.
  - No name calling, eye rolling, smacking teeth, disruptive comments, etc.
  - Have fun!

### Board of Commissioners Meeting Format

Simulated Board of Commissioners Meeting	30 minutes total
Chair calls meeting to order and gives overview	1 minute

Presentation from Clover County School District	up to 4 minutes
Follow-up questions from Board of Commissioners	2 minutes
Presentation from Clover County Community Health Alliance	up to 4 minutes
Follow-up questions from Board of Commissioners	2 minutes
Presentation from Friends of Clover County Animals	up to 4 minutes
Follow-up questions from Board of Commissioners	2 minutes
Presentation from Clover County Recreation Department	up to 4 minutes
Follow-up questions from Board of Commissioners	2 minutes
Chair leads open deliberation of Board of Commissioners	up to 5 minutes

11. Ask the Chair to call the meeting to order and conduct the simulation. After all groups have presented and been questioned by the commissioners, the chair will lead the Board of Commissioners in an open deliberation regarding the proposed budget. Each Board member will state their opinions about each of the four options, and the Board will reach a consensus about how to allocate the grant. All of this will be done out loud, with the citizen groups only listening at this point. Then, one Commissioner must motion to pass the allocation. This motion must be approved by a simple majority. If the Commissioners cannot reach consensus, in the interest of time, have the chair “table the discussion until the next meeting, so that more research can be conducted.”

#### **Debriefing the Simulation**

12. After the simulation has ended, have students clap to congratulate themselves then debrief using the discussion questions below. If you have invited a real county commissioner, ask them to participate in the debriefing discussion and explain how the simulation was similar and different from real Board of Commissioners meetings.
- What is your opinion of the Board’s decision? Explain.
  - Commissioners, what led you to make the decisions you made? What factors influenced you?
  - What was difficult about this situation and decision? (Talk about the fact that there were too many valid issues and only so much money. Discuss how legislators deal with problems such as this in real live governing.)
  - Are any of these issues actually issues in your own county? Explain.
  - Imagine this decision was made by your own Board of Commissioners for implementation in your own county. Would you support it? Why or why not?
  - Why is it important to consider what the opposite view might be when preparing a presentation for a Board of Commissioners?
  - If you were actually serving on a board, what other factors might influence you that were not necessarily represented in this activity?
  - Why is the work of your county commissioners, and county government in general, so important to each of us?
  - Given this importance, do you think most people are involved in county government as they should be? Why or why not?

#### **Why Should I Care About Local Elections?**

13. Move to slides 8-9 and share the information from a Knight Foundation study about voter turnout in local elections titled, “Why Millennials Don’t Vote for Mayor: Barriers and Motivators for Local Voting” (<http://www.knightfoundation.org/features/votelocal/#backstory>). Slide 8 provides an introduction to the study and slide 9 has a graph showing about local voter turnout.
14. Next, move to slide 10 and ask students to individually brainstorm a list of reasons for why they think turnout is so low for local elections, especially among millennials. Then ask them to complete the following

sentence: “I feel \_\_\_\_\_ about voting in local elections, like those for mayor or county commissioners.”  
Encourage students to use examples from their own lives or their own experiences when compiling a list.

15. After a few minutes, solicit responses from students and record their answers on the board/chart paper. Once you have a fairly comprehensive list, discuss:
  - What do these responses have in common?
  - Are there any answers that aren't included in our list?
  - Historically, voter turnout in local elections has been lower than presidential elections. Why do you think this is the case? Why do you think turnout is getting worse?
  - Why might turnout be lower for odd-year elections?
    - *No presidential election*
  
16. Share the information from the Knight Foundation about the results of their youth turnout and local elections study on [slides 11 and 12](#). Ask students to compare their responses to the responses from their study.
  - Do any of the responses from the study surprise you? Which ones?
  - Do you trust your local government? Why or why not?
  - How do the responses shown in the word cloud (slide 12) compare to your answers to the same questions?
  - Is there anything you or your local government officials could do to increase your trust in local government?
  - Do you think people have a jaded view of government because they only hear about when things go wrong? (For example, people probably don't think about trash pickup because it's so common, but if your town/county stopped picking up trash, people would notice).
  - Do you think you would care about your local government more if information about what was going on was more readily available?
  - Why might homeownership impact a person's level of engagement in local politics?
  - Do you follow your local government departments, officials, etc. on social media?
  
17. Next, move to [slide 13](#) and ask students to quickly brainstorm a list of strategies for increasing youth turnout in local elections. After a few minutes, solicit responses from students and record their answers on the board/chart paper. Once you have a fairly comprehensive list, share the suggestions for increasing youth turnout from the Knight Foundation study on [slide 14](#). Discuss:
  - Do you agree with the study's conclusion? Why or why not?
  - What are some areas of agreement/disagreement between our suggestions and the study's suggestions?
  - If you had to pick three strategies from our list, which three would you pick and why do you think these would be the most effective for increasing youth turnout in local elections?
  - What suggestions would you have for your local government officials to get more youth engaged in local elections?

## Board of County Commissioners Instructions

### Chairperson

You and your fellow board members are hearing from various groups of community members and county departments to **determine how to allocate a new \$6 million community improvement grant from the federal government**. As you listen to citizen and special interest group opinions, your responsibility is to make a decision for the common good of Clover County. While each group or department will request a certain amount of money for their projects, the Board of Commissioners may allocate the grant funds as they see fit. Keep in mind you have only \$6 million and that any money you allocate must be enough to make a substantial impact – so you'll need to prioritize the issues most important to you as a Board.

As **Chair of the Clover County Board of Commissioners**, you are responsible for **facilitating the meeting and** ensuring proper procedure and decorum is followed. Your duties include but are not limited to:

- calling presenting groups up (use the agenda provided for the order)
- listening to each presenting group and considering the ideas posed
- opening the floor for questions from the Commissioners after each presentation
- leading deliberations with your fellow commissioners to see if you can decide how to allocate the funds after all groups have presented
- You should also assign one of the other commissioners to be a time keeper. This commissioner should time each presenting group to ensure no one takes longer than 4 minutes. (Ask him/her to give a one-minute warning if a group gets close to their time.) He/she should also ensure that each question/answer session after the presentations does not exceed two minutes.

#### **Meeting Instructions:**

1. As a group, review the *Clover County Grant Allocation Meeting Agenda* which lists each group that is signed up to present to you today. Lead your fellow Commissioners in discussing who the groups are scheduled to present and what their request is. Think about two questions to ask each presenting group after their presentation. You will likely come up with more specific questions to ask as you listen to each presenting group, but these questions can be used as a back-up when necessary.
2. Once it is time for the Board meeting to begin, YOU, as the Chair, will call the meeting to order by greeting the council members and welcoming the citizens in attendance. You will then lead everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance. Finally, you will review the purpose of today's meeting and the decision the Council must make. Then, following the meeting agenda that you received, you will call each group up to present. Each group will have up to 4 minutes to present their opinions to the Board. Remember to assign one of your fellow Commissioners to time the presentations and ensure groups do not go over their time limit. Once the group is at 3 minutes, he/she should give them a one-minute warning.
3. After each presentation, you will open the floor for questions from council members of that presenting group. You and the Board may refer to the questions you previously created, or ask questions based on new information you heard. Remember, you need to gather all of the information you can in order to make an informed decision. (Again, the time keeper should ensure each group is questioned for no more than 2 minutes.)

Once all groups have presented, as the Chair, thank all presenters for their time, and begin an open board session in which you and your fellow members deliberate how to allocate the \$6 million in grant funds. As the Chair and board members, you may have different ideas regarding how to allocate the funds. You must work through this using respectful debate, negotiation, and compromise, and try to come to consensus within 5 minutes. (Remember, you have only \$6 million and any money you allocate must be enough to make a substantial impact – so you'll need to prioritize the issues most important to you as a Board.)

4. At the end of the 5 minutes, one commissioner will motion to approve the allocation, which must pass with a simple majority. If the Board cannot make a decision, you will need to “Table the decision until the next meeting.”

**Board of Commissioners Instructions**  
**Commissioner**

You are a member of the Clover County Board of Commissioners. You and your fellow board members are hearing from various groups of community members and county departments to **determine how to allocate a new \$6 million community improvement grant awarded to Clover County from the federal government.** As you listen to citizen and special interest group opinions, your responsibility is to make a decision for the common good of Clover County. While each group or department will request a certain amount of money for their projects, the Board of Commissioners may allocate the grant as they see fit. But remember that you have only \$6 million and that any money you allocate must be enough to make a substantial impact – so you'll need to prioritize the issues most important to you!

**Meeting Instructions:**

1. As a group, the Board Chair will lead you in reviewing the *Clover County Grant Allocation Meeting Agenda* which lists each group that is signed up to present to you today. Based on the information given, infer what you think each group's stance will be on this issue. Together, you will create at least two questions to ask each presenting group after their presentation. These questions may change based on what you hear in the presentations.
2. Once it is time for the meeting, the Chair will call the meeting to order, lead everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance, and review the purpose of today's meeting. Then, following the meeting agenda that you received, each group will have up to 4 minutes to present their opinions regarding the budget. Listen to the presentations carefully and think about the pros and cons of what each group is asking for.
3. After each presentation, the Chair will open the floor for you and fellow board members to question the presenting group. You may refer to the questions you previously created, or ask questions based on new information you heard in the presentation. Remember, you need to gather all of the information you can in order to make an informed decision.

Once all groups have presented, the Chair will lead you in an open deliberation in which you and your fellow members deliberate how to allocate the \$6 million. As the Chair and board members, you may have different ideas regarding how to allocate the funds. You must work through this using respectful debate, negotiation, and compromise, and try to come to consensus within 5 minutes. (Remember, you have only \$6 million and any money you allocate must be enough to make a substantial impact – so you'll need to prioritize the issues most important to you as a Board.)

4. At the end of the 5 minutes, one commissioner will motion to approve the allocation, which must pass with a simple majority. If the Board cannot make a decision, you will need to "Table the decision until the next meeting."



## Clover County School District

Your group represents the **Clover County School District**, which serves 20,000 students and employs approximately 800 teachers in fifteen schools all across Clover County. Your goal is to **convince the board to allocate all \$6 million for teacher salary supplements and renovations to outdated school buildings and facilities.**

### Your Argument

North Carolina pays some of the lowest salaries for teachers in the nation, and is consistently ranked at the bottom (41<sup>st</sup> and 42<sup>nd</sup> lowest, in recent years) in terms of state teacher pay. On average, teachers across the state make at least \$10,000 less per year than in other states. This has become a major problem in Clover County in particular, as the 2014-2015 rate of teacher turnover in Clover County was 20%, compared to the state average of 14.48%. While teacher pay is determined and set by the state's General Assembly, counties can utilize local funds to offer salary supplements to teachers. As representatives for the Clover County School District, you strongly believe utilizing these funds to provide salary supplements for teachers will help attract and retain high quality educators.

In addition, many of the schools throughout the county were first built in the 1950s and have barely been updated since. This has resulted in buildings that are old, outdated, and practically falling apart at the foundations. Beyond the sheer unattractiveness of these schools, they are lacking modern day technology and comfort. Students deserve to learn in comfortable, climate controlled, safe, and modern buildings. Thus, your group wants to also allocate part of the \$6 million to improving and updating several of the oldest schools.

### Start Planning!

1. Work together to develop a 2-4 minute presentation to Board of Commissioners.
  - a) Considering the information provided about your stance, brainstorm the various arguments you can present as to why the Commissioners should allocate all \$6 million to Clover County education, particularly teacher salary supplements and school building improvements. The information provided is only a starting point – you should add to it with your own ideas and arguments. Be creative, but realistic.
  - b) Your final presentation should begin with an introduction and overview of your stance regarding how the \$6 million in grant funds should be spent. Clearly state why the funds should be allocated to the Clover County School District.
  - c) Answer the following questions in your presentation...
    - Why do you want board members to allocate **\$6 million in grant money to education?**
    - How will devoting the funds to education improve life in Clover County? Who will benefit and how?
    - Why should the Commissioners vote to allocate the funds in this way, instead of to the other areas of need argued for today by other county stakeholders?
  - d) End with a convincing conclusion that will make the Commissioners remember your presentation and want to allocate all \$6 million to education.
2. As you develop your presentation, consider what the other presenting groups might say in their presentations. Be prepared to argue why voting in accordance with your beliefs will have more of a positive impact on Clover County than what those opposing you are requesting.
3. You should also anticipate what questions the Commissioners might have of you so that you are prepared to answer “on your feet.”

4. Select 1-2 group members to present your views to the Board of County Commissioners. The rest of the group will be responsible for assisting in answering questions the Board will ask you after your presentation is finished.

**Use the space below to brainstorm your ideas:**

## Clover County Community Health Alliance

Your group represents the **Clover County Community Health Alliance, an association of health department officials and practicing medical professionals.** Your goal is to **convince the board to allocate \$5 million to build a new health clinic for underserved members of your community.**

### Your Argument

Clover County has a large population ineligible for Medicaid (health insurance for low income individuals), as well as growing elderly and immigrant/refugee populations who face unique challenges. Two medium-sized hospitals serve the region, but there is no outpatient health clinic to perform routine primary care services. This is a huge problem, since Clover County faces a variety of growing public health issues. For example, in the past two years, over 30% of children and 45% of senior citizens did not receive flu vaccinations. Moreover, approximately 34% of residents are overweight or obese, making Clover County the tenth most obese county in North Carolina. To help address these and other health issues, the clinic will provide free routine primary care services – such as sick/well visits, immunizations, and simple blood work. The clinic will also offer educational workshops on nutrition, maternal health, and disease prevention. This project is expected to create 40 permanent staff positions, including medical professionals, patient care workers, and administrators. The \$5 million in grant money is essential to open the clinic and ensure Clover County's overall health improves. Nothing can be more important than ensuring a healthy, quality life for the babies, children, adults, and senior citizens in Clover County.

### Start Planning!

1. Work together to develop a 2-4 minute presentation to Board of Commissioners.
  - a) Considering the information provided about your stance, brainstorm the various arguments you can present as to why the Commissioners should allocate \$5 million to healthcare in Clover County, particularly by funding the construction of a new free health clinic. The information provided is only a starting point – you should add to it with your own ideas and arguments. Be creative, but realistic.
  - b) Your final presentation should begin with an introduction and overview of your stance regarding how the \$6 million in grant funds should be spent. Clearly state why \$5 million of the funds should be allocated to the creation of a free health clinic.
  - c) Answer the following questions in your presentation...
    - o Why do you want board members to allocate **\$5 million in grant money to healthcare**?
    - o How will devoting the funds to healthcare and the creation of this clinic improve life in Clover County? Who will benefit and how?
    - o Why should the Commissioners vote to allocate the funds in this way, instead of to the other areas of need argued for today by other county stakeholders?
  - d) End with a convincing conclusion that will make the Commissioners remember your presentation and want to allocate \$5 million to healthcare.
2. As you develop your presentation, consider what the other presenting groups might say in their presentations. Be prepared to argue why voting in accordance with your beliefs will have more of a positive impact on Clover County than what those opposing you are requesting.
3. You should also anticipate what questions the Commissioners might have of you so that you are prepared to answer “on your feet.”

4. Select 1-2 group members to present your views to the Board of County Commissioners. The rest of the group will be responsible for assisting in answering questions the Board will ask you after your presentation is finished.

**Use the space below to brainstorm your ideas:**

## Friends of Clover County Animals

Your group represents the **Friends of Clover County Animals, a partnership between the Clover County Animal Services Department and the Clover County Humane Society.** Your goal is to convince the board to allocate **\$4 million to construct open a new no-kill animal shelter with a spay/neuter clinic.**

### Your Argument

The two existing shelters in Clover County are not large enough to handle the increased need for animal care. Within the past year, Clover County Animal Control had to euthanize 270 stray animals (36% of which were puppies and kittens) due to lack of shelter space and declining demand for adoption. Local Animal Control has also recorded a 20% increase in the number of homeless animals brought in with rabies during the past two years. Finally, spay and neuter services remain important for long term animal health, including reduced cancer risk and prolonged life span. This shelter will offer space for over 300 animals, including outdoor play space for the animals and large, comfortable inside areas. The shelter will also engage in community outreach to promote animal adoptions, and provide comprehensive medical care including a spay/neuter clinic with reduced fees. This project is anticipated to create 20 permanent staff positions (including veterinarians, shelter assistants, and administrators. Without the grant, constructing this clinic will be impossible.

### Start Planning!

1. Work together to develop a 2-4 minute presentation to Board of Commissioners.
  - a) Considering the information provided about your stance, brainstorm the various arguments you can present as to why the Commissioners should allocate \$4 million to the construction of new no-kill animal shelter, including a state of the art spay/neuter clinic. The information provided is only a starting point – you should add to it with your own ideas and arguments. Be creative, but realistic.
  - b) Your final presentation should begin with an introduction and overview of your stance regarding how the \$6 million in grant funds should be spent. Clearly state why \$4 million of the funds should be allocated to the Friends of Clover County Animals.
  - c) Answer the following questions in your presentation...
    - o Why do you want board members to allocate **\$4 million in grant money to the welfare of animals?**
    - o How will devoting the funds to Friends of Clover County Animals improve life in Clover County? Who will benefit and how?
    - o Why should the Commissioners vote to allocate the funds in this way, instead of to the other areas of need argued for today by other county stakeholders?
  - d) End with a convincing conclusion that will make the Commissioners remember your presentation and want to allocate \$4 million to an animal shelter and clinic.
2. As you develop your presentation, consider what the other presenting groups might say in their presentations. Be prepared to argue why voting in accordance with your beliefs will have more of a positive impact on Clover County than what those opposing you are requesting.
3. You should also anticipate what questions the Commissioners might have of you so that you are prepared to answer “on your feet.”
4. Select 1-2 group members to present your views to the Board of County Commissioners. The rest of the group will be responsible for assisting in answering questions the Board will ask you after your presentation is finished.

Use the space below to brainstorm your ideas:

## **Clover County Parks & Recreation Department**

Your group represents the **Clover County Parks and Recreation Department**, and your goal is to **convince the board to allocate \$3.5 million to build a new youth center and park.**

### **Your Argument**

It seems that young people in Clover County are constantly complaining that there is “nothing to do.” In fact, the 2015 *Clover County Community Survey* identified a lack of community activity space as the greatest concern for youth. Meanwhile, the arrest rate for youth crime has increased from 3% to 6% within the past five years; most crimes include vandalism, burglary, and drug possession. The county also experiences a high rate of “youth flight,” with many young people leaving the county after high school and not returning.

To help counteract all of these issues, your group is requesting \$3.5 million of the grant to build a new youth center and park. The center will include a computer room, dance studio, and game room; outdoor recreation facilities will include a basketball court, soccer field, and baseball diamond. This center will create three full-time programming positions, and five part-time support staff and maintenance positions. Your group passionately believes nothing is as important as this investment in the youth of Clover County.

### **Start Planning!**

1. Work together to develop a 2-4 minute presentation to Board of Commissioners.
  - a) Considering the information provided about your stance, brainstorm the various arguments you can present as to why the Commissioners should allocate \$3.5 million to the Clover County Recreation Dept., particularly for the creation of a new youth center and park. The information provided is only a starting point – you should add to it with your own ideas and arguments. Be creative, but realistic.
  - b) Your final presentation should begin with an introduction and overview of your stance regarding how the \$6 million in grant funds should be spent. Clearly state why \$3.5 million of the funds should be allocated to the Clover County Parks and Recreation Department.
  - c) Answer the following questions in your presentation...
    - Why do you want board members to allocate **\$3.5 million in grant money to Parks & Recreation?**
    - How will devoting the funds to the creation of a new youth center and park improve life in Clover County? Who will benefit and how?
    - Why should the Commissioners vote to allocate the funds in this way, instead of to the other areas of need argued for today by other county stakeholders?
  - d) End with a convincing conclusion that will make the Commissioners remember your presentation and want to allocate all \$6 million to education.
2. As you develop your presentation, consider what the other presenting groups might say in their presentations. Be prepared to argue why voting in accordance with your beliefs will have more of a positive impact on Clover County than what those opposing you are requesting.
3. You should also anticipate what questions the Commissioners might have of you so that you are prepared to answer “on your feet.”
4. Select 1-2 group members to present your views to the Board of County Commissioners. The rest of the group will be responsible for assisting in answering questions the Board will ask you after your presentation is finished.

Use the space below to brainstorm your ideas:





## Clover County Grant Allocation Meeting Agenda

### I. Welcome

### II. Public Hearing on Grant Allocation

#### 1. Clover County School District

- The school district is requesting \$6 million to increase local teacher salary supplements and renovate facilities originally built in the 1950s. The district serves 20,000 students with 800 teachers across 15 schools.

#### 2. Clover County Community Health Alliance

- This group is requesting \$5 million to open the county's first free public health clinic for underserved populations. The clinic joins two medium sized hospitals in the county.

#### 3. Clover County Animal Network

- The Animal Network is requesting \$4 million to build the county's third animal shelter. This shelter will have a total capacity of 300 animals, plus a full veterinary and spay/neuter clinic.

#### 4. Clover County Parks & Recreation Department

- The Parks and Recreation Department is requesting \$3.5 million to build the county's first youth center. The center will feature indoor programming space as well as outdoor athletic fields.

### III. Open Deliberation on Grant Allocation

## Key Facts about Clover County



- Clover County is located in the central piedmont region of North Carolina and is home to two towns (Town of Dogwood and Town of Pine Tree) as well as a number of suburban townships and unincorporated areas.
  - Clover County Population
    - ❖ 2013: 142,300
    - ❖ 2015: 145,400
  - The median age of Clover County is 29 years old. The median household income is \$39,700 and the unemployment rate is 6.2%.
  - The Clover County School District serves 20,000 K-12 students in 15 schools. The other main educational institution is UNC-Dogwood, which serves 6,100 residential and 1,200 commuter students.
  - Medical facilities include two regional hospitals, one at UNC-Dogwood and the other in the Town of Pine Tree area.
  - Public transportation is readily available in Clover County. Each city or town includes a bus station, and the Town of Dogwood features an Amtrak station. The neighboring county is home to a medium-sized international airport.
  - Clover County was recently rated one of the Top 20 most environmentally friendly counties in North Carolina by the Department of Environmental Quality.
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