

School Event Checklist



The Only School Event Planning Checklist You Will Need

A question for educators: What is the best tool to foster an enriching school environment, encourage student — and parent — involvement, and leave students and families with a good feeling about your school? Answer: Events. No matter the focus or kind of event you host, be it in-person with students and parents both in attendance or a virtual open house, events promote your school and student interaction better than anything else.

Does coordinating and executing school events feel like a daunting task? Sure, it can. But it doesn't have to. That's why we've developed this school event planning checklist.

School events — homecoming, sports, booster club fundraisers and more — are the highlights of the school year. They're the perfect reason for families and friends to come together and celebrate school success as children put on their best and show off what they have been working on.

But organizing an on-campus school event takes work. Parents and staff often volunteer their time to make events successful. We created this school event planning checklist to be your one-stop source for keeping track of everything related to school events.

Planning any school event is challenging and requires organized planning to be successful. Use this school event planning checklist to ensure you have everything covered:

- ☐ Outline Clear Event and Scholastic Objectives
- ☐ Develop a Solid Budget
- ☐ Reserve the Right Event Location for Your Event Needs
- ☐ Create an Event Promotional Strategy
- ☐ Set Up Collateral and Vendors
- ☐ Create and Deliver School Event Literature
- ☐ Develop a Contingency Plan
- ☐ Make Your Final Check



School Event Checklist

☐ Outline Clear Event & Scholastic Objectives

Setting goals is an important part of planning a school event checklist. Not only is it important to set them, but it's also important to make sure that you achieve them. While school administrators and teachers can have extensive experience organizing groups, they can face additional challenges when organizing extracurricular events on campus. Organizers can get stuck and set vague academic and student enrichment-based goals. To ensure that your goals are realistic and achievable, you need to use the SMART acronym. This acronym stands for specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely, and you should make sure every step you take in the planning process reflects that. Consider the tangible benefits that event can bring to the parent, faculty, and students when setting objectives. Some examples include:



- Raising \$10,000 for school projects
- Increasing school event attendance by 5%
- Increase parent-teacher communication
- Raise out of class reading by 30%
- Increase on-campus club attendance

Goals help us stay productive and focused. They also create an opportunity for parents to see the impact of their participation in the learning process. To reach your goals, it's important to set the right goals for what you want to accomplish.

☐ Develop a Solid Budget

Estimate how much money you will need to cover all of your event fees, taking special consideration to annual educational and recreational budgets. Setting up a spreadsheet to keep track of costs (like vendors, promotion, decorations, food, staff hours, and recreation) over time is highly recommended.



Your budget will have a major influence on all aspects of your event. Your school may have put together a book fair in the past and have decided on a set budget for wholesale or used books. You now have information that will help determine how much to spend on books, but you will also have to factor in delivery and staffing. Your budget will have a big influence on all aspects of your event.

☐ Reserve the Right Event Location for Your Event Needs

After your goals, budget, and event date have been approved by all required parties including teachers, PTA members, and the principal, you may proceed with booking your event space logistics. You will need to establish a schedule that complements the scholastic year. You have to consider campus space and size, aside from the occasional off-campus event.



There are many factors to keep in mind when considering campus and event infrastructure, the maximum number of attendees, available on-campus parking, cafeteria capacity, and more.

Since you likely will be holding this event on campus it is important to select a day where there is some breathing room between the event and the regular class schedule. Remember when putting together your school event infrastructure save some time and look in-house.

☐ Create an Event Promotional Strategy

Great marketing is the most effective way to drive attendance and boost engagement at your event. Luckily, when it comes to a school event you have a built-in target audience. Advertising your event through the students and the larger community is an essential way to start. But a methodical marketing plan will go a long way toward ensuring your school event is well announced and well attended.



The communication channels you have at your fingertips go beyond students, parents, and the faculty. Take advantage of social media, email, print advertising, and other communication channels. Remember that you don't need to post on social media weekly until at least three months before the event.

Writing a quick event marketing plan is the most effective way to get people excited about your event. Great marketing content attracts a highly motivated community, identifies your winning attractions, and increases turnout. Make sure you create a strong message that resonates with everyone.

☐ Set Up Collateral and Vendors

If you need to organize a stage, audiovisual equipment, and marketing collateral for your school event, booking these suppliers at least three months out from your event date is best. Make sure you see what resources the school and the school board have on hand. Look to the community and the parents. One of our goals is to make it easier for teachers and school administrators to arrange events.



One of our goals is to make it easier for schools to stage great events without the hassle. By booking with suppliers and event staff 72 days before the event, you give yourself enough time to work on your project and get incredibly excited about it — because going too far into a project when you're not 100% sure that the item is perfect can be disheartening!

A good suggestion is to get in nice and early! Book your dance and prom venues as long in advance as you can. And look to the resources around you to ensure that you have utilized your event infrastructure and benefited from the assets of school-held events.

Also, when your school is holding a large event, you will need to have an idea of competitive beverage vendors and local vendors. You will likely make some of your marketing literature in-house and at school but in many cases, print shops can be your best friend.

Some campus events can require you to look for guest speakers and artistic performers. It's important to see who you can pull from the campus community and who might have to be found elsewhere.

Look to the resources around you to ensure that you have utilized your event infrastructure and benefited from the assets of school-held events.

Create and Deliver School Event Literature

School event managers have to keep a lot of things in their heads. You can get through the chaos by using existing scheduling structures and avoid making a mistake from the start. Looking at the monthly school calendar is a good practical place to begin. Basing your event schedule on this calendar is ideal and will save you time.



Event planning resources are documents you can distribute to act as a reference point during your event and they include marketing materials, calendars, and of course your itinerary. Any marketing materials for the event should be reviewed early and deployed near the time of the event.

Develop a Contingency Plan

Event managers have to keep a lot of things in their heads. Sometimes you're surrounded by chaos, and it can be hard to keep track of everything that is going on, but often the best way to avoid making a mistake is to be organized from the start. Event planning resources are documents you can distribute to act as a reference point during your event. Event planners need to create comprehensive event management resources.



Event management resources are documents that you can distribute to your attendees or volunteers. Site maps will help you and your attendees know what amenities will be located at different places around the venue and which locations have larger capacities to accommodate more people. Run schedules allow you to pre-plan when different stages of an event will happen without planning them all out yourself.

As organized as you may be in your everyday life, sometimes large events can become complicated. Event organization documents that you should use are site maps and schedules so that your attendees or volunteers can know where everything is located with a large-scale event (such as an open house). Site maps are important if you hold a wide-open event with multiple pathways and locations. They are also ideal for showing bathrooms, water fountains, and the information desk area. With larger events, a schedule will help you keep track of each activity throughout the day that needs to take place perfectly, like each activity separately occurring at each location throughout the venue at a standard time.

Make Your Final Checks

You're almost done! Double-checking is a major part of planning a school event. It's the week before your big school event, and this is one of the most important weeks in your school's illustrious history. To make sure you have success, there are a few details you will definitely want to check off your list before everything goes down. For example:



- Check the weather if it's an outdoor event.
- Make sure parents have been contacted.
- Reach out to vendors.
- Make a reminder of their roles at the event for participating students.
- Make sure to check the status of student and parent volunteers.
- Meet with faculty to discuss plans.

You need to make sure that every member of the team, from student and parent volunteers to teachers and faculty, knows where to be and when. This also goes for any guest speakers or entertainers. This is the best way to control the unpredictable things that can characterize a school event.

The Day of the Event

Teachers and administrators know that every successful event follows a detailed plan that is effectively communicated. Preparation is the most important thing to focus on. To run an event smoothly, have your own organization's staff working alongside attendees, suppliers, and supporting speakers, helping you with the venue setup and day-to-day activities.



On the day of the event, you must:

- Communicate schedule changes by keeping key faculty personnel informed.
- Provide clear instructions, schedules, and event maps to attendees.
- Check signage.
- Assure smooth execution of the day's agenda in accordance with anticipated time frames.
- Check-in with vendors and suppliers.
- Check-in with speakers and entertainers.

As you know, one of the most important parts of planning a campus event is creating a timeline to deliver everything promised on time. To help student and parent attendees know what to expect during the day, make sure that this timeline is posted throughout your venue or provide attendees with a timetable to be filled out upon arrival, so they all have access to the same information.

Also, while they're arriving and before your event starts:

- Use directional signs to guide people straight to your registration desk.
- Throughout the course of the day, regularly check in with your faculty team members and any speakers, invited guests, and sponsors you may have involved with your school's planning.

This will help you determine if any difficulties are developing or other concerns need attention.

Conclusion

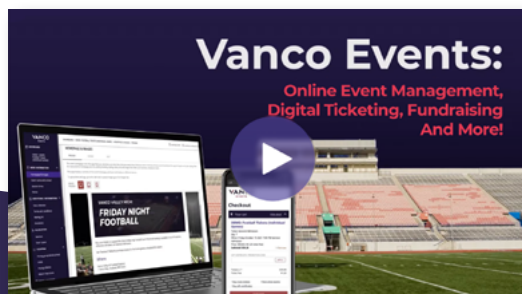
Planning is the first step in staging an amazing school event. By outlining your goals, you can develop a budget that matches your means and agenda. Make sure to look at your school's infrastructure for things like staging areas, promotional and marketing efforts, and whatever other resources your campus has on hand. Look for outside support, in terms of making event literature and obtaining extra resources, as needed, but always remember your budget. Finally, make a clear contingency plan and do your final checks to ensure you have everything in its right place.

Use this checklist as a guide to organize a memorable event. You now have what you need to wow students, impress parents, and reach your goals!

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