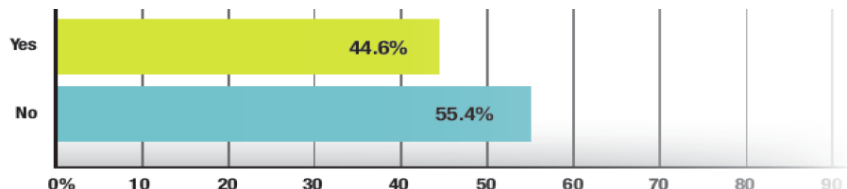


CrowdFunding

CrowdFunding is the practice of funding a cause by seeking donations from the public over the internet. It has become a popular way to raise money for community and humanitarian causes, personal medical expenses, disaster relief, business capital - and education. According to a survey taken several years ago by the Ohio Auditor of State, less than 50% of school districts allow CrowdFunding to generate additional education resources.



There are liabilities and risks associated with CrowdFunding.

- Legal
- Financial
- Reputational

Risks from CrowdFunding include:

- Student confidentiality
- FERPA and IDEA bar disclosure of confidential information that could include the identity of a student without the consent of the parents. If the district fails to adhere, we risk losing federal funding. A CrowdFunding campaign could inadvertently violate these provisions by using a classroom photo that makes it easy to identify students. Also, a narrative may not provide clues about age, location, learning disability, personal characteristics, or information about family members that ***make it possible to identify a student***.
- Any time a staff member uses the name, logo and other symbols of a school district, the school has a vital interest in ensuring the campaign does not reflect badly on the school.

Financial controls and accounting

- Ohio revised code governs the receipt and disposition of money that is collected on behalf of a public entity. ALL money must be deposited with the treasurer within a specified time.
- Public employees (teachers/liaisons) are prohibited from soliciting or accepting any compensation or donations for private use.
- Materials must go **directly** to the school or the district office, not to the staff member who proposes the CrowdFunding campaign. The board will support the campaign as long as the purposes are lawful and do not undermine the authority of the school board. Also, campaigns are not for materials provided by the district or not in line with district curriculum.
- Unless the district documents the cash donation & materials they are considered theft and misuse.

Plain Local response to CrowdFunding

- Board policy & guidelines after consideration of benefit to students
- Application process with approval, before submission of donation requests
- Website information on CrowdFunding
- <https://www.plainlocal.org/about/administrative-departments/treasurerco>