

Mapleton Public Schools

Fundraising Handbook

Welcome to the Fundraising Handbook! This guide is designed to help you transform creative fundraising ideas into successful events that energize the community, unite people, and raise essential funds for your school or department. By focusing on thoughtful planning, preparation, and community involvement, this handbook aims to make your fundraising efforts both enjoyable and impactful.

Understanding Fundraisers

Turning a simple idea into a successful fundraiser involves more than just reaching a financial goal. It's about creating an experience that captivates and inspires your community while leaving a lasting impact. To maintain high engagement and avoid donor fatigue, each school and department (including both arts and athletics) is limited to one major school-wide or departmental fundraiser per year. This policy ensures enthusiasm remains high and that each fundraiser receives the attention it deserves.

Whether you are a member of the Mapleton Education Foundation (MEF) or organizing independently, this handbook provides practical advice and strategic insights for every step of your fundraising journey. It applies to all schools and departments, regardless of MEF affiliation.

Revenue-Generating Activities and Fundraising Types

When planning fundraisers, it's important to understand the different types of activities and how they work. Here's a breakdown to help you navigate your fundraising options and ensure everything runs smoothly:

Revenue-Generating Activities: Some activities generate revenue differently from traditional fundraisers. These usually involve exchanging goods or services and are managed by specific programs rather than the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO). Examples include:

- **Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs:** Programs like the shirt-printing initiative at Mapleton Early Career (MEC) give students hands-on experience while generating revenue. These activities are managed by the school's CTE program.
- **Student Performances at PASB:** Ticket sales for student productions support the arts program and help it become self-sufficient. These events are handled directly by the school.
- **Student Store and Concessions:** Sales of spirit gear and event concessions support various school programs. These operations are overseen by the school.
- **Merchandise Sales for Events:** Selling themed items for events like homecoming fosters school spirit and generates funds - these sales may include apparel and memorabilia marketed through pre-orders or pop-up events.

Traditional Fundraising Types and Activities

Here are some popular fundraising methods and their benefits:

- **School-Wide or Full Department Events (limited to one per school year):**
 - ✓ **What It Is:** Large-scale events that engage all of the students within the school or community like fun runs, talent shows, annual pledge drives, or fall festivals that involve the whole school community.
 - ✓ **Why It Works:** These events foster school spirit and provide a fun way for everyone to participate.
 - ✓ **How to Do It:** Plan an engaging event, set clear goals and a budget, secure necessary permissions, and promote widely through newsletters, social media, and flyers. Evaluate success based on funds raised and feedback.
- **Club or Class Fundraisers (limited to 2 per club or class per school year):**
 - ✓ **What It Is:** Fundraising activities specifically organized by individual clubs or classes such as student council or cheerleading. These could include activities such as bake sales, car washes, candy sales, craft fairs, etc. Each club or class can conduct up to two such fundraisers annually or one per semester.
 - ✓ **Why It Works:** These fundraisers allow clubs or classes to focus on their specific goals and needs while engaging their members and supporters. They can also be tailored to the interests and strengths of the group, making them more effective and enjoyable.

- ✓ **How to Do It:** Choose a fundraising idea that aligns with your club or class's interests and capabilities. Plan the details, including budgeting and logistics, and get necessary approvals. Promote your fundraiser within the school and the wider community. After the event, assess its effectiveness and gather feedback to improve future fundraisers.
- **Restaurant or Entertainment Nights (unlimited):**
 - ✓ **What It Is:** Partnering with local restaurants or entertainment venues to donate a percentage of their evening's proceeds to your school.
 - ✓ **Why It Works:** It's a convenient way for families to support the school while enjoying a night out, and it promotes local businesses.
 - ✓ **How to Do It:** Identify and partner with local venues, schedule the event, promote it through various channels, and follow up to thank the partners and share results.
- **Adult-Only Fundraising Events (unlimited):**
 - ✓ **What It Is:** Events such as themed dinners, galas, or mixers designed specifically for adults.
 - ✓ **Why It Works:** These events provide a specialized setting for higher donations and offer a social opportunity for the community.
 - ✓ **How to Do It:** Plan an appealing event, set up ticket sales, organize details like food and entertainment, and promote through social media and email. Evaluate the event based on feedback and funds raised.

Why Limit to One Major Fundraiser Per Year?

Limiting each school and department to one major fundraiser per year prevents donor fatigue and maintains high engagement levels. In addition, this is a commitment the District made to the community in exchange for the unyielding support the community provides through tax overrides. Limiting to one, also ensures each event receives the attention it deserves and prevents overwhelming supporters with frequent requests.

Fund Allocation: Fund 23 vs. Fund 85

Understanding the difference between Fund 23 and Fund 85 is essential for effective financial management. Fund 23, which is part of the general fund, is designated specifically for supporting student activities that align with the original fundraising goals. All funds raised and allocated here must be used directly for these initiatives, ensuring that contributions benefit students.

In contrast, Fund 85 is a part of the Mapleton Education Foundation (MEF) and offers more flexibility. While it can also support activities outlined in the fundraising plan related to students, it may include allocations for staff appreciation, school awards, or other initiatives that enhance the school environment. This distinction allows for targeted support of both student and staff needs, fostering a well-rounded educational experience.

Establishing a Fundraising Plan

A comprehensive fundraising plan is essential for guiding your efforts towards successful outcomes. It serves as a roadmap from goal setting to post-event evaluation. Here's how to create an effective plan:

1. **Define the Purpose:** Determine if you're raising money for a specific project, new materials, or general school support. Clearly communicate this purpose to everyone involved.
2. **Set a Financial Target:** Decide on a realistic fundraising goal that aligns with the type of fundraiser, the scope of your event, and what you hope to achieve.
3. **Fund Allocation:**
 - ✓ **If you are part of the MEF:**
 - For school-wide fundraisers, **at least 80% of the funds must be allocated to the school's student activities account (fund 23)**. This supports activities like field trips, awards, or special programs.
 - If less than 100% is allocated to the student activities account, the remaining funds can be used for chapter-specific needs, like staff appreciation or additional school supplies (fund 85).
 - ✓ **If you are NOT part of the MEF:**
 - **100% of all funds must be deposited into the school's student activities account (fund 23)** and spent consistent with your fundraising plan.

Links to digital school or Foundation Chapter Fundraising Plan

Use the digital forms provided to develop and submit your plan routed automatically for approval.

School Annual Fundraiser Plan <https://form.jotform.com/242745966803063>

Chapter Annual Fundraiser Plan <https://form.jotform.com/242746997711167>

Energize Your Fundraising with Smart Donation Management

Handling donations effectively can boost your fundraising success. Here's how:

1. **Soliciting Donations:** Communicate with enthusiasm! Explain the goals of your fundraiser and the impact of donations.
 - ✓ **For monetary gifts,** offer secure options like online payment portals or checks.
 - ✓ **For items or services,** be clear about your needs and how they'll be used.
 - ✓ **DonorsChoose:** When a teacher receives a DonorsChoose grant, acknowledge their success and ensure the resources are aligned with school policies and become the property of the school. Coordinate with the teacher to manage the delivery and integration of the materials and celebrate the achievement in school communications. DonorsChoose handles all funds – assure the teacher fulfills their commitment to the donor.
 - ✓ **Grants:** Before submitting a grant proposal, make sure to gain approval from your school / department supervisor. Present your project idea and budget to them for review, ensuring it aligns with district policies and objectives. Obtain their formal endorsement to support your application.
2. **Handling Donations:** Follow these steps for managing donations:
 - ✓ **Superintendent Approval:** For donations worth \$250 or more, obtain approval from the superintendent before accepting them, when possible. Sometimes generous donors simply drop donations off without prior coordination. If that happens, simply thank the donor and notify the superintendent's office.
 - ✓ **Documentation and Tax Letters:** The MEF will handle documentation and tax letters for larger donations, ensuring donors receive proper paperwork.
 - ✓ **Record-Keeping:** Maintain accurate records of all donations to ensure transparency and compliance.

Collecting and Depositing Funds

Proper management of funds is crucial. Follow these best practices:

1. **Methods of Collection:**
 - ✓ **Online Donations:** Use the school district's online platform with unique QR codes linked to student activities accounts or chapter-specific accounts.
 - ✓ **Event-Based Collections:** Collect funds via cash, checks, or credit card transactions at in-person events. Ensure payment collection methods are secure and monitored.
2. **Handling Cash and Checks:**

- ✓ **Cash Management:** Use locked cash boxes during events. Count money with a second person present and deposit it promptly.
- ✓ **Check Management:** Endorse checks immediately and record details in a secure ledger before depositing them.
- 3. Electronic Payments:**
 - ✓ **Online Transactions:** Use only the district's online platform or QR codes for electronic donations, no Venmo, Zelle, or PayPal. Ensure transactions are secure and donors receive electronic receipts.

Approval Process

Securing approval for your fundraising plan involves:

- 1. Developing Goals and Strategies:**
 - ✓ Define clear goals for the year, including fundraising amounts and purposes. Outline fundraising events and how funds will be allocated (if MEF PTO determine % to be deposited into fund 23 and which % into fund 85 – if not a chapter member of the PTO – all funds will be deposited into fund 23 – student activities)
- 2. Identifying Participants and Roles:**
 - ✓ Assemble Teams: Determine who will be involved and assign roles.
 - ✓ Assign Responsibilities: Clearly define responsibilities for each participant.
- 3. Selecting Fundraising Approaches:**
 - ✓ Choose methods and set targets for each event or activity.
- 4. Submitting the Plan for Approval:**
 - ✓ Present Proposal: Submit a copy of your plan to the PTO and school administration, including goals, strategies, budget, and coordination.
 - ✓ Review Process: The PTO and administration will review your proposal for alignment with school policies.
- 5. Receive Feedback and Finalize:**
 - ✓ Incorporate Input: Adjust the plan based on feedback.
 - ✓ Finalize Plan: Once approved by the PTO board, submit the finalized plan to the superintendent and, if applicable, a copy to the MEF.
- 6. Execute and Evaluate:**
 - ✓ Implement Plan: Organize and execute the approved fundraisers.
 - ✓ Monitor Progress: Track and compare actual outcomes with goals.
 - ✓ Review Results: Evaluate events and gather insights for future improvements.

Guide to Fun and Success

Fundraising should be exciting and engaging. Here's a quick overview to ensure success:

1. **Dream Big, Plan Smart:** Start with a clear vision and plan. Outline goals and map out a realistic plan for your event.
2. **Rally the Troops:** Gather volunteers and community support. Everyone plays a role in making your event successful.
3. **Reach Out with Flair:** Communicate clearly and enthusiastically when requesting donations. Make it easy for people to contribute and understand the impact.
4. **Keep It Fun and Transparent:** Engage your community with enjoyable events, keep them informed, and express genuine thanks.
5. **Follow the Rules:** Get approval for donations over \$250 and let the MEF handle documentation. Maintain accurate records.
6. **Celebrate and Reflect:** After the event, celebrate successes, thank supporters, and reflect on what worked and what could be improved.

What to Avoid

1. **Don't Forget to Plan:** Ensure a solid plan is in place before starting your fundraiser.
2. **Don't Overlook Details:** Get all necessary approvals and keep accurate records.
3. **Don't Be Vague:** Clearly state your needs and how donations will be used.
4. **Don't Neglect Communication:** Keep your community engaged with regular updates and thanks.
5. **Don't Skip the Follow-Up:** Thank supporters, evaluate results, and improve for next time.
6. **Don't Ignore Food Safety:** Use licensed food vendors to ensure safety standards.
7. **Don't Overwhelm Your Community:** Limit to one major fundraiser per year to maintain excitement and avoid donor fatigue.
8. **Don't Forget Legalities:** Obtain necessary approvals and rely on the MEF for proper documentation.

Reminder for Fundraisers Involving the Sale of Food:

USDA Federal regulations prohibit the sale of competitive foods to Child Nutrition Programs. No food or beverage can be sold in direct competition to the nonprofit foodservice program. The general rules are as follows:

- Any food or beverage service available to students on the school campus during the school day that is separate and apart from the district's nonprofit federally reimbursed food service program, and is operated by school approved organizations or by school-approved outside vendors, shall not operate in competition with the district's food service program and shall be closed for a period beginning 30 minutes prior to and remain closed until 30 minutes after each meal service.
- Any food or beverage, outside the reimbursable lunch or breakfast meals, sold on the school campus (includes a la carte, school stores, food-based fundraisers, vending machines, etc.) must meet the Smart Snacks in Schools requirements. This does not include afterschool events where parents are in attendance, or 30 minutes after the end of the official school day.

Additional information can be found on Smart Snacks in Schools at the link below

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/smart-snacks-in-schools>

Let's work together to make your fundraising events successful and strengthen our school community!