

HOW TO HOST  
A SUCCESSFUL  
PROJECT  
CELEBRATION  
EVENT



# PROJECT CELEBRATION

# PROJECT CELEBRATION GUIDEBOOK

GETTING STARTED

TxDOT AS A RESOURCE

BUDGET & FUNDRAISING

SENIOR INPUT

PARENT LETTERS

VOLUNTEERS

ALCOHOL AWARENESS

SECURITIES & RULES

EVENT ACTIVITIES & FOOD

PRIZES & FAVORS

EVALUATING & REPORTING

RECOGNITION

PUBLICITY

WEBSITE

RESOURCES



## Acknowledgements

The Project Celebration Guidebook is the culmination of planning guides and guidelines provided by members of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Behavioral Traffic Safety Program. On behalf of TxDOT we would like to acknowledge the following contributors for their subject matters expertise given to this project.

*Jill Christie, TxDOT Behavioral Traffic Safety Specialist, Abilene District Traffic Safety Office*  
*Mona Lisa Didelot, TxDOT Behavioral Traffic Safety Specialist, San Angelo District Traffic Safety Office*  
*Jeanni Luckey, TxDOT Behavioral Traffic Safety Specialist, Brownwood District Traffic Safety Office*  
*Theresa Parma, TxDOT Behavioral Traffic Safety Specialist, Yoakum District Safety Office*  
*Karen Peoples, TxDOT Behavioral Traffic Safety Specialist, Lubbock District Traffic Safety Office*  
*Irene Webster, TxDOT Behavioral Traffic Safety Specialist, Atlanta District Traffic Safety Office*

A sincere appreciation to the Behavioral Traffic Safety Program Management team for their support and guidance throughout the process of revising the Project Celebration Manual. Your input and feedback was invaluable to the success of this project.

*Terry Pence, Behavioral Traffic Safety Section Director, Austin Traffic Safety Office*  
*Samuel Aguirre, Behavioral Traffic Safety Branch Supervisor, Austin Traffic Safety Office*  
*Freddie Summer, Behavioral Traffic Safety Program Lead, Austin Traffic Safety Office*  
*Tracie Mendez, Behavioral Traffic Safety Branch Supervisor, Austin Traffic Safety Office*  
*Robert White, Behavioral Traffic Safety Program Lead, Austin Traffic Safety Office*  
*Carol Campa, Behavioral Traffic Safety Branch Supervisor, Austin Traffic Safety Office*  
*Jessica Son, Behavioral Traffic Safety Program Lead, Austin Traffic Safety Office*

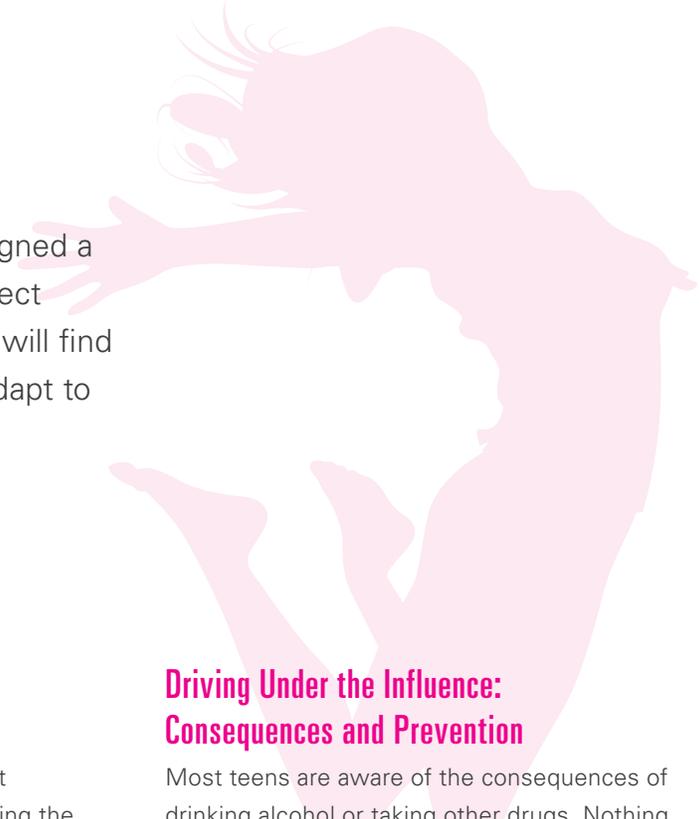
*Marcia Gibbs, Publishing and Design Branch Manager, Communications Division*  
*Dave Nong, Graphic Designer, Communications Division*

Visit [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov) and search for "project celebration" for more information



# GETTING STARTED

Welcome to Project Celebration. We have designed a guidebook to assist you plan a memorable Project Celebration/Graduation Event. In this book you will find tools, tips and sample materials that you can adapt to fit the needs of your event.



## What Is Project Celebration — A Little History

Project Celebration began as Project Graduation, originating in Maine during the 1970s in response to twelve teens who were killed in alcohol-related traffic crashes. Seven of those teens were from the same community. A group of parents, determined not to let alcohol ruin more lives, organized and hosted the original chemical-free alternative to the late-night partying that often accompanies senior celebrations.

Project Celebration is a combination of education and lock-in events conducted by educators, parents and or community partners to help keep students safe and alcohol and chemical free throughout the school year and especially during school-related celebrations.

In the 1980s, John McKay, a Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) employee, attended a traffic safety conference, learned of the program and brought it back to Texas.

Spring brings high school seniors two reasons to celebrate—prom and graduation—the name evolved from Project Graduation to Project Celebration. Event backers quickly recognized that all too often, teens celebrate their achievements and pending freedom by drinking alcohol, taking mind-altering drugs and making reckless choices that sometimes end up with dire consequences.

## Driving Under the Influence: Consequences and Prevention

Most teens are aware of the consequences of drinking alcohol or taking other drugs. Nothing compares to the devastation of wrecked cars, injuries and the deaths of their friends due to driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.

For this reason, TxDOT's Project Celebration mini-grant reimbursement program is available for schools who will conduct a alcohol and chemical free event for the graduating seniors or those attending prom.

## When Is Project Celebration?

You may have Project Celebration any time of the year that students celebrate, such as football homecoming weekend, or before Spring Break. The materials in this guidebook are directed to a graduation-night event, however, feel free to adapt these materials to suit your school's needs. To receive a TxDOT mini-grant this event does have to be a "lock-in" with a release time of 5:30 a.m.

## Who's on the Project Celebration Committee?

Project Celebration is a planned event that provides seniors a safe and chemical-free place to celebrate with friends without the risk of something going terribly wrong due to alcohol

or other drugs. Successful events have been planned by committees comprised of students, parents, teachers, administrators.

With this guidebook and the experience of others who have planned successful events, you can easily recruit volunteers who will help you organize a successful Project Celebration. When the event is over, you can be sure you and your team had a direct influence in preventing alcohol and other drug related crashes in your area and reducing the number of teens and others who are killed or seriously injured in alcohol or other drug related traffic crashes.

### What Do We Need and When Do We Start?

If you are holding this guidebook you are off to a great start in planning your event. Bring your team together by hosting your first meeting. Let it comprise of students, parents, teachers and administrators. Keep your meeting relaxed and informal.

As soon as school begins in the fall, start having your meetings so planning is not rushed and so you're guaranteed a successful event.

### Who Attends Project Celebration?

For schools with a large graduating class, Project Celebration may include only graduating seniors who have registered to attend. For schools with a small or medium-sized graduating class, you and your committee may

decide to invite juniors or guests to register to attend Project Celebration. To keep it simple, most materials in this guidebook are presented as if you were having a seniors-only event. Adapt all materials as needed.

### Where Is Project Celebration Held?

The ideal location for Project Celebration is any venue that can safely house your seniors and staff that can also be set up for food and activities. See the **Event Activities & Food** section for some suggestions.

### Is There a Lot of Paperwork?

Not at all. If you receive a mini-grant, TxDOT asks that you complete a Report on Activities form. See the sections titled **TxDOT as a Resource** and **Evaluation & Reporting** for more information.

### How To Use This Guidebook

Use this book as a resource to stay organized while you are planning your event. Then you may pass it on to next year's coordinator.

Call on your TxDOT Traffic Safety Specialist for help and ideas if needed. Attached is a list of Traffic Safety Specialist or you may find them at [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov).

Most of all have fun because you know your seniors will!

---

#### For a successful Project Celebration event, you may need subcommittees for:

- Advertising & promotion
  - Cleanup & storage
  - Educational activities
  - Event activities
  - Event entertainment
  - Event food
  - Event location
  - Event staffing
  - Event theme
  - Event transportation
  - Fundraising & finance
  - Prizes & favors
  - Recognition & thank-yous
  - Reporting
  - Security
  - Steering
  - Surveys & forms
  - Website
-

# SAMPLE TIMELINE



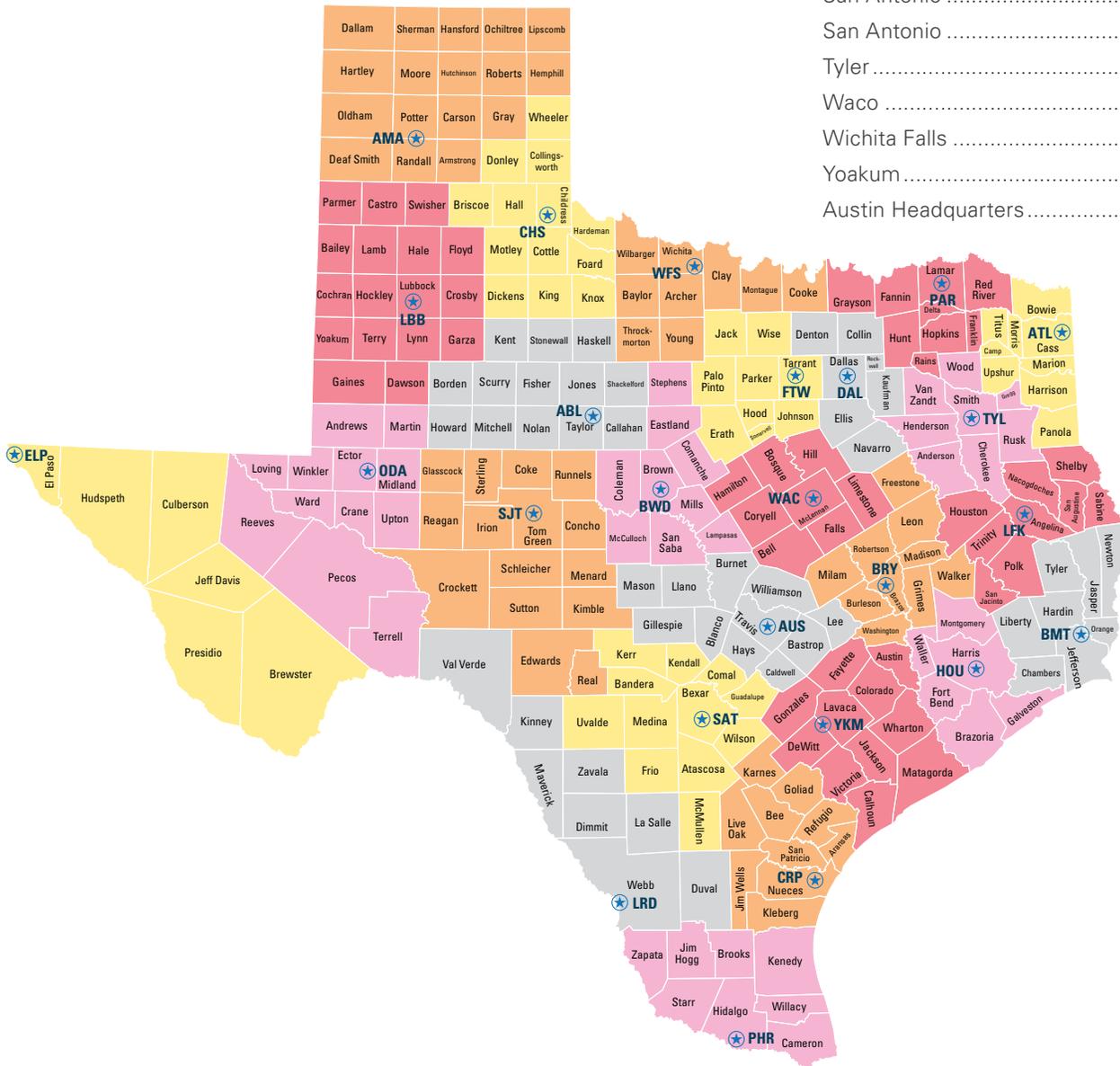
Below is a sample timeline to assist you in establishing some benchmarks for you and your committee.

<b>Ongoing/regularly scheduled</b>	Planning meetings, fundraising, committee work, documenting activities for reporting, record-keeping
<b>August</b>	Consult local TxDOT Traffic Safety Specialist. See Section <a href="#">TxDOT as Resource</a> to find a listing of specialists
<b>September</b>	Begin holding your planning meetings
<b>October</b>	Distribute senior surveys ( <a href="#">sample in Chapter 4</a> ) and letters to parents ( <a href="#">sample in Chapter 5</a> ); hold first alcohol awareness activity (optional)
<b>November</b>	Turn in Intent Form to TxDOT. Collect and tabulate senior surveys
<b>December</b>	(Optional) Hold second alcohol awareness activity prior to holiday break
<b>January</b>	Contact food vendors; secure event location with deposit
<b>February</b>	Arrange event transportation
<b>March</b>	(Optional) Hold third alcohol awareness activity prior to Spring Break
<b>April</b>	Unless you decide to distribute prizes via contests or drawings, assign a prize to each registered senior and document it in a spreadsheet. Checklists will be your best friend during the planning and executing of your event
<b>May</b>	<b>Hold Project Celebration event</b>
<b>June</b>	Send final Report on Activities to TxDOT within 30 days of event
<b>July</b>	File reports and other materials in this binder; pass along to next year's coordinator

TxDOT continues to support the efforts of Texas high schools by providing “seed money” (mini-grants) and educational material. Any high school that holds a chemical-free, lock-in event is eligible to apply for funds and materials. Due to limited resources, not all applicants can receive funding.

# TxDOT Traffic Safety Specialists Locations

Abilene.....	325-676-6808	El Paso.....	915-790-4384
Amarillo.....	806-356-3338	Fort Worth.....	817-370-6643
Atlanta.....	903-799-1221	Fort Worth.....	817-370-6626
Austin.....	512-832-7035	Houston.....	713-802-5877
Austin.....	512-832-7243	Houston.....	713-802-5177
Beaumont.....	409-898-5719	Laredo.....	956-712-7408
Brownwood.....	325-643-0403	Lubbock.....	806-748-4478
Bryan.....	979-778-9777	Lufkin.....	936-633-4315
Childress.....	940-937-7179	Odessa.....	432-498-4748
Corpus Christi.....	361-808-2381	Paris.....	903-737-9292
Dallas.....	214-320-6220	Pharr.....	956-782-2508
Dallas.....	214-320-6235	San Angelo.....	325-947-9219
		San Antonio.....	210-731-5219
		San Antonio.....	210-731-5218
		Tyler.....	903-510-9225
		Waco.....	254-867-2752
		Wichita Falls.....	940-720-7708
		Yoakum.....	361-293-4307
		Austin Headquarters.....	512-416-3175



---

MONTH

---

S

M

T

W

T

F

S

---





# TxDOT AS A RESOURCE

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) can provide high schools with information, resources and “seed money” funding to help high school officials and parents sponsor Project Celebration activities and lock-in events. TxDOT can also be a resource to schools not applying for funding, too.

TxDOT is divided into 25 districts. See next page, then contact your district’s traffic safety specialist to get an understanding of how involved your local TxDOT representative can be in your planning.

Use the space below to pencil in your local TxDOT’s Traffic Safety Specialist’s (TSS) name and contact information.

---

---

---

---

## Workshop for Project Celebration Coordinators

Some TxDOT districts hold annual workshops at the beginning of the school year for the Project Celebration Coordinators. The workshop is a good way to learn what has worked and what hasn’t for other schools in your area. Attendees can learn about conducting year-round alcohol awareness educational activities, fundraising, hosting lock-in events and reporting. Year round events are optional and are not required to be eligible for the TxDOT mini-grant.

Contact your local Traffic Safety Specialist for a workshop or any traffic safety awareness and educational activities you may want to have at your school.

## Planning Guide

This book is provided to you as a guideline, compiled from materials used at a variety of high schools. Adding your materials and descriptions of what has and hasn’t worked will help your school’s coordinators in future years.

## Mini-Grant

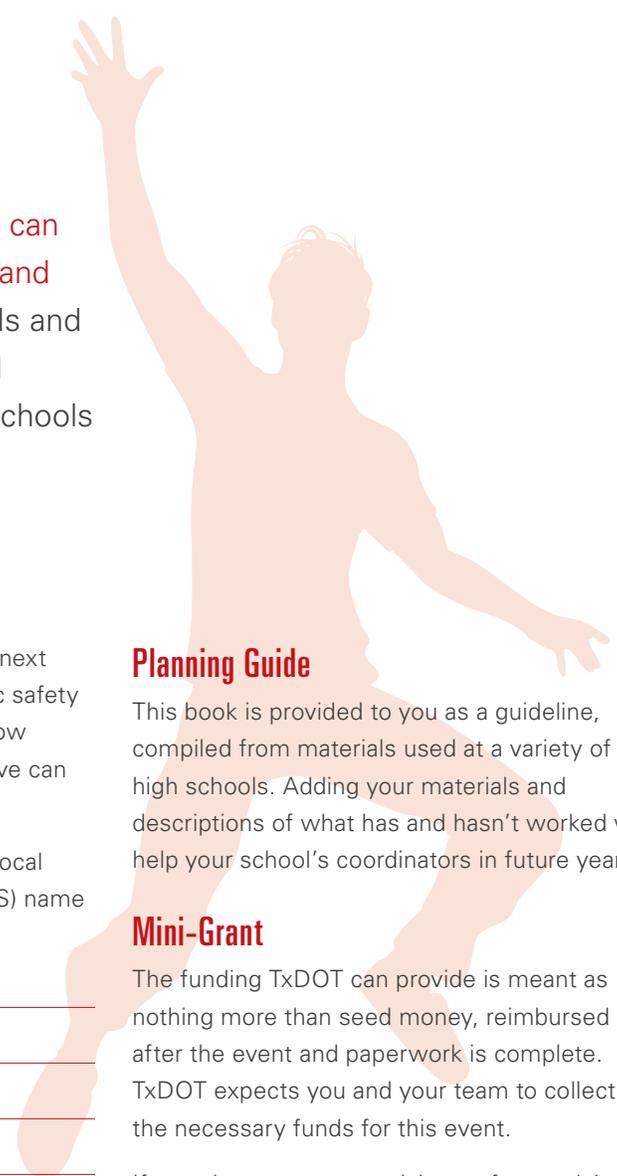
The funding TxDOT can provide is meant as nothing more than seed money, reimbursed after the event and paperwork is complete. TxDOT expects you and your team to collect the necessary funds for this event.

If you choose not to participate after applying for a TxDOT mini-grant, please notify your local TSS so they can reallocate resources as necessary. The grant form must be signed by the high school principal or representative who has signing authority.

See a sample mini-grant at the end of this section.

## Educational and Promotional Materials

All schools, even those that do not receive TxDOT funding, are eligible to receive educational and promotional materials (incentives) from TxDOT for their event. Some examples of these materials, which all feature messages discouraging drinking and driving, may include:



### Activities Available

- Pedal Karts
- Virtual Reality Goggles
- Driving Simulator
- Rollover Convincer

### Promotional Items

Please contact your local Traffic Safety Specialist

You may incorporate materials from other sources, such as the Texas A&M Transportation Institute, local MADD chapter, Police Department, Sheriff’s Department and local hospitals.

### Intent Form and Grant Contract

On the following pages you will find the Intent Form and a sample mini-grant. Make a copy of the original Intent Form found in your guidebook before you complete it. Always keep an original in the guidebook for future use.

After TxDOT receives your Intent Form, if awarded, your local Traffic Safety Specialist will send you a mini-grant. This mini-grant is written and provided by TxDOT and may not be altered in any way.

### Know Your PIN

You must have a valid payee identification number (PIN) to receive reimbursement from TxDOT. Get your school’s PIN/Mail Code from your school’s accounting office. This 14-digit number is assigned by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. This is 11 digits for PIN/TIN and 3 digits for mail code. Visit [window.state.tx.us](http://window.state.tx.us) for more information.

### At Project End

If your school is awarded a TxDOT mini-grant, complete and submit the final Report on Activities to TxDOT within 30 days of your Project Celebration event. You must turn in the Report on Activities before you receive grant funds. See the **Evaluation & Reporting** section for more information.

### TxDOT Traffic Safety Specialists Locations

Abilene.....	325-676-6808
Amarillo.....	806-356-3338
Atlanta .....	903-799-1221
Austin .....	512-832-7035
Austin .....	512-832-7243
Beaumont .....	409-898-5719
Brownwood .....	325-643-0403
Bryan .....	979-778-9777
Childress .....	940-937-7179
Corpus Christi .....	361-808-2381
Dallas .....	214-320-6220
Dallas .....	214-320-6235
El Paso .....	915-790-4384
Fort Worth .....	817-370-6643
Fort Worth .....	817-370-6626
Houston .....	713-802-5877
Houston .....	713-802-5177
Laredo.....	956-712-7408
Lubbock .....	806-748-4478
Lufkin.....	936-633-4315
Odessa .....	432-498-4748
Paris.....	903-737-9292
Pharr .....	956-782-2508
San Angelo .....	325-947-9219
San Antonio .....	210-731-5219
San Antonio .....	210-731-5218
Tyler .....	903-510-9225
Waco .....	254-867-2752
Wichita Falls .....	940-720-7708
Yoakum.....	361-293-4307
Austin Headquarters.....	512-416-3175

# PARTICIPATION FORM



**FY** ..... **Funding** | ..... **District**

Date: .....

..... High School is interested in receiving funding for Project Celebration. We understand that the event must be an alcohol and chemical-free lock-in event and the students will be expected to stay at the event till 5:30 a.m. or later.

In order for us to receive funding we are prepared to participate:

- PSA/Poster/Presentation contest. Subjects for the Contest are Distracted Driving, Underage Drinking and Driving, Speed, Occupant Protection. Schools may focus on one subject or all. Return form by .....
- We will be participating in a Shattered Dreams program sponsored by TxDOT or local agency. TxDOT will be invited to attend/participate in the event.
- We will be providing education to students this year. Safety education will consist of speakers by TxDOT, Teens in the Driver's Seat, Agri-Life, or any local speakers. At least three education events are required. Return form by .....

School Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Project Celebration Contact Information**

Event Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person for Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate Number of Students at event: \_\_\_\_\_

Return form to: Traffic Safety Specialist



## COUNTY OF TRAVIS

This grant is made by and between the State of Texas, acting by and through the Texas Department of Transportation hereinafter called the "State," and {HighSchool} ..... hereafter call the "Subgrantee."

School District:	{ISD}
High School:	{HighSchool}
County:	{County}
Payee Identification Number:	{PIN}
County District Number:	{SchoolNumber}

### WITNESSETH

WHEREAS, Traffic crashes, half of which involve alcohol and other drugs, are a leading cause of death and serious injury for young people (ages 15 – 19) and the State is supporting Project Celebration, a program promoting drug/alcohol-free parties for high school students; and

WHEREAS, The State desires to provide mini-grants as "seed money" to high schools to support Project Celebration activities and the Subgrantee will conduct Project Celebration and report to the State on the results; and

WHEREAS, this Agreement is made in accordance with the provisions established in V.C.S. Article 6701j-1, designated as the Texas Traffic Safety Act; and NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants and agreements herein contained, the State and Subgrantee mutually agree as follows:

### AGREEMENT

1. **EFFECTIVE DATES:** This agreement becomes effective on {DatePeriodBegin}, or when fully executed by all parties hereto, whichever occurs later, and shall terminate on or before {DatePeriodEnd}, or unless otherwise terminated or modified as hereinafter provided.
2. **FUNDING AMOUNT:** A lump sum amount of {AmountAwarded} will be paid to the Subgrantee by the State after the Project Celebration event is concluded and the Report on Activities is submitted and approved. The funds are to be used to cover expenses such as printing, materials, postage, supplies, room rental, etc.
3. **PURPOSE:** The Subgrantee agrees to provide a Project Celebration Event to offer student the opportunity to have drug/alcohol-free celebrations in lieu of traditional drinking parties and to curb deaths and disabilities associated with drinking, taking drugs, and driving.
4. **REPORT:** The Subgrantee agrees to provide to the State a Report on Activities on the form provided as soon as possible, but no later than thirty (30) days after the grant end date {DatePeriodEnd}.

5. PAYMENT: The Subgrantee agrees that this is a reimbursement grant.
- a. The State will exercise good faith to make payment to the Subgrantee within thirty (30) days from the receipt and approval of the Subgrantee's Report on Activities.
  - b. Payment will be made through the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts by DIRECT DEPOSIT using the above- referenced PIN number.
  - c. Payment will be deposited into the school district's central finance account using the following identification: "FY TxDOT Project Celebration {SchoolNumber}"
  - d. The subgrantee agrees to provide a copy of the signed, executed grant to the school's grant manager and chief accountant.
6. FORFEITURE:
- a. Failure to conduct the Project Celebration event will result in forfeiture of payment.
  - b. Conducting the Project Celebration event before the grant is signed by TxDOT will result in forfeiture of payment.
  - c. Failure to submit an acceptable Report on Activities by no later than thirty (30) days after the grant end date of {DatePeriodEnd}, may result in forfeiture of payment.
7. GENERAL PROVISIONS: The subgrantee agrees to comply with the following General Provisions.
- a. The Subgrantee agrees to maintain books, records and documents pertaining to the costs and expense of this agreement, and agrees to make available said books, records and documents to the State for the purpose of making inspections or audits for a period of four (4) years from the date of final payment, until completion of all audits, or until pending litigation has been completely and fully resolved, whichever occurs last.
  - b. This agreement shall remain in effect until the Subgrantee has satisfactorily completed all services and obligations described in this agreement and these have been accepted by the State, unless: a. This agreement is terminated in writing with the mutual consent of both parties: or b. There is a written ten (10) day notice to terminate by either party.
  - c. To the extent permitted by law the Subgrantee shall save harmless the State from all claims and liability due to activities of the Subgrantee or its agents, or employees, performed under this agreement and which result from an error, omission, or negligent act of the Subgrantee or any person employed by the Subgrantee. The Subgrantee shall also save harmless the State from any and all expenses, including attorney fees, which might be incurred by the State in litigation or otherwise resisting said claim or liability which might be imposed on the State as the result of such activities by the Subgrantee, its agents or employees.
  - d. The State and the Subgrantee shall not assign or otherwise transfer its rights or obligations under this agreement except with the prior written consent of the other party.
  - e. Upon completion or termination of this agreement, all documents prepared by the Subgrantee or furnished to the Subgrantee by the State shall be delivered to and become the property of the State. All data prepared under this agreement shall be made available, upon request, to the State without restriction or limitation on their future use. The Subgrantee may, at its own expense, have copies of the document or other data it has furnished the State under this agreement without restriction or limitation on their future use.
  - f. Texas Transportation Commission policy mandates that employees of the State shall not accept any benefits, gifts or favors from any person doing business or who reasonably speaking may do business with the State under this agreement. The only exception allowed are ordinary business lunches and items that

have received the advanced approval of the Texas Department of Transportation Executive Director. Any person doing business with the State under this agreement may not make any offer of benefits, gifts or favors to Departmental employees, except as mentioned here above. Failure on the part of the Subgrantee to adhere to this policy may result in the termination of this agreement.

g. The Subgrantee represents that it or its employees have no conflict of interest that would in any way interfere with its or its employees' performance or which in any way conflicts with the interests of the State. The Subgrantee shall exercise reasonable care and diligence to prevent any actions or conditions that could result in a conflict with the State's interests.

h. In case any one or more of the provisions contained in this agreement shall for any reason, be held to be invalid, illegal or unenforceable in any respect, such invalidity, illegality or unenforceability shall not affect any other provision thereof and this agreement shall be construed as if such invalid, illegal or unenforceable provision has never been contained herein.

i. This agreement constitutes the sole and only agreement of the parties hereto and supersedes any prior understandings or written or oral agreements between the parties respecting the within subject matter.

j. The agreement shall be construed under and in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas. Any legal actions regarding the parties' obligations under this agreement must be filed in Travis County, Texas.

**SUBGRANTEE**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent (Signature) OR individual authorized to sign contracts for the Superintendent

Name and Title (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**STATE OF TEXAS**

Executed by and approved for the Texas Transportation Commission for the purpose and effect of activating and/or carrying out the orders, established policies, or work programs approved and authorized by the Texas Transportation Commission.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
TxDOT Authorized Signature

District Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# BUDGET & FUNDRAISING

Budgeting and fundraising for Project Celebration may be among the most challenging aspects of coordinating the event because of the amount of money it takes to host a successful party and the amount of coordination it takes among subcommittees.

Committees should work together to make sure they don't contact the same merchants for donations. This can be done by geographic region or business type. If there is more than one high school conducting a Project Celebration in your community, coordinate fundraising efforts to avoid contacting the same businesses for support.

The goal is to have enough money to hold a successful event, and that may vary from year to year at your school. Set realistic goals for yourself and remember, it's not a competition with the previous year's committee.

1	Set event attendance goals. Take a look at prior years' attendance as a baseline. You want to set a guideline for how much money you need to cover all expenses. Some schools raise \$50 per student and others raise up to \$200 per student or more.
2	Brainstorm other sources of funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Businesses</li> <li>• Fundraising events</li> <li>• Individuals</li> <li>• Mini-grants</li> <li>• Parents</li> <li>• Service organizations</li> </ul>
3	Budget expenses, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleaning crew</li> <li>• Decorations</li> <li>• Entertainment</li> <li>• Facility</li> <li>• Food</li> <li>• Food-service staff</li> <li>• Party favors</li> <li>• Prizes</li> <li>• Security</li> </ul>
4	Meet with your subcommittee chairs and determine goals, priorities and fundraising territories and ideas. Set up a project bank account and establish authorized signatures.
5	Publicize fundraising events using the school and district websites, posters, announcements, marquee signage and newspaper and radio announcements. Let teachers know so they can spread the word too. If you facilitate or arrange a Parents Night or attend a PTA meeting, bring a presentation with visuals of past Project Celebration events to get attendees excited about the project.
6	Prepare a solicitation letter for donations. An example is included. The letter should include a description of Project Celebration, who benefits from the event, and where and when the event will be held. You may want to create sponsorship levels, such as Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze. Assign realistic dollar-value ranges for sponsorship levels based on the economic profile of your community.

<b>7</b>	Keep accurate records of donations. An example of a donation spreadsheet is included. Give all donors a receipt for their donation for tax purposes.
<b>8</b>	Ask the Fundraising Committee chair to report to the committee and to you monthly. This will give everyone a sense of how the fundraising efforts are going and if more activities are needed to raise necessary funds.
<b>9</b>	Ask the Fundraising Committee chair to report to the committee and to you monthly. This will give everyone a sense of how the fundraising efforts are going and if more activities are needed to raise necessary funds.

## Setting Up a Nonprofit

Many Project Celebration coordinators set up a nonprofit organization so donations are free from state and federal taxes. Many set up a 501(c)(3), a type of incorporation used to set up a charitable organization that provides a service to a community.

You may know someone who can help you set up a nonprofit, or you may have done it in the past. Visit the Texas Secretary of State's website, [www.sos.state.tx.us](http://www.sos.state.tx.us) for assistance. When you reach the website, search the term "nonprofit" to learn more about how to set up a nonprofit in Texas. This site will guide you on how to apply for federal and state tax exemption through the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.

## Fundraising Ideas

You and your team may have activities you already know you want to implement to raise funds and other donations for your Project Celebration. If not, below is a list of ways to raise funds for the event.

- Art show
- Babysitting services
- Bake sale
- Balloon sale
- Battle of the bands
- Birthday cake sale
- Booth at county fair
- Bowl-a-thon
- Breakfast with Santa
- Bumper stickers

- Calendar sale
- Candy sale
- Car smash
- Car wash
- Celebrity basketball
- Chess tournament
- Christmas tree sale
- Class-faculty competitions
- Coffee bar at school
- Couples pageant
- Dance contest
- Dance marathon
- Donut sale
- Dunk tank
- Face painting booth
- Faculty cooking class
- Faculty talent show
- Fashion show
- Flea market
- Flower sale
- Free-throw contest
- Frozen banana sale
- Garage sale
- Guess the baby picture
- Halloween candy sale
- Haunted house
- House number painting
- Ice cream social
- Jeans Day for Teachers
- Juice bar at school
- Kiss-a-gram
- Kissing booth
- Monogram sale
- Mr./Ms. School contest
- Obstacle course
- Pancake supper
- Pie sale

- Pie throw
- Pot luck dinner
- Powder puff game
- Raffle car
- Raffle cheerleader appearance
- Raffle drill team appearance
- Raffle band/drum corps appearance
- Raffle pep squad appearance
- Rent-a-parking-space
- Rent-a-student
- Ring toss
- Rope climb
- Santa grams
- Scavenger hunt
- School bus wash
- Silly human tricks
- Silly pet trick contest
- Singing grams
- Sports ticket sale
- Squirt gun contest
- Student directories
- Student talent show
- Stuff a phone booth
- Sundae sale
- Teacher auction
- Treasure hunt
- Wash-a-dog
- Wreath sale
- Yearbook cover sale
- Yearbook signing party

## At Project End

At the end of your fundraising efforts, evaluate your team's success. Did you meet your goals? Do you feel the event was successful? If your school receives a TxDOT mini-grant, complete and mail to TxDOT the final Report on Activities thirty days after your event night. Report your results on the school website and to the principal and other interested individuals.

Every team wants to get a jump-start on next year. Be sure to let next year's coordinator know that next year's fundraising can begin only after this year's fundraising efforts are complete.

## Sample Letters

The following pages offer sample fundraising letters and forms you can adapt to use in your community.

- Donation letter for Parent
- Donation letter for Business
- Letter of Commitment and Receipts
- Certificate of Donation
- Donation log sheet

Feel free to use these, or create letters and forms of your own. Make sure you keep a hard copy of your final letters and forms at the back of this section so when you hand off this guidebook to next year's coordinator, he or she can review and use your examples, too.

You can adapt the following letters and print them using your school's letterhead or using letterhead created for your year's Project Celebration.



Date

Dear ..... High School parent,

Soon our children will be graduating from high school and starting their adult lives. How time flies!

..... High School staff and parents are working together to make sure our students get the education and experience they need to succeed as adults. We are proud of our students' achievements and community involvement. We estimate that ..... percent of our seniors will attend a 4-year university and ..... percent will attend a 2-year university.

The parents and staff of ..... High School's graduating class of ..... want to celebrate our seniors' accomplishments by planning and hosting Project Celebration, an all-night, alcohol-free, drug-free graduation party at ..... (location) on ..... (day, date). For years now, we have held successful Project Celebration events and are proud to report that none of our participating seniors has been hurt or killed in alcohol- or drug-related incidents. We want this trend to continue.

This year's graduating class has ..... (number) seniors and we want to provide these students with a safe way to celebrate graduation without drugs and alcohol. We plan to make this a memorable event by organizing a variety of activities and giveaways they can experience as the evening progresses.

The event budget for this year is \$ ..... . We have applied for a small grant from the Texas Department of Transportation. No other public funds are used for this project—it is funded mostly from in-kind donations from people like you.

There are three ways you can help:

1. Make a monetary donation for this year's Project Celebration. We are asking for a minimum of \$50 from each family to make the event a success. (Please make checks payable to ..... and mail them to ..... .)
2. Identify businesses that might be willing to donate cash, or gift certificates or merchandise that we can use as door prizes for graduating seniors. All donations are tax-deductible and the business will be gratefully acknowledged in our school and local newspaper.
3. Volunteer your time for the night of the event. It takes 50+ volunteers doing 2-hour shifts the night of the event. Contact our volunteer coordinator, ..... , at ..... (phone) to ask for a list of volunteer opportunities and times.

We appreciate anything you can do to help us keep our graduating seniors safe so they can celebrate their accomplishments for years to come.

Thank you and best regards,

*Signature*

Name  
*Chairperson, Project Celebration Planning Committee*  
(area code) phone number



Date

Dear valued member of our business community,

Thank you for the support you have shown to the students at ..... High School over the years.

..... High School staff and parents are working together to make sure our students get the education and experience they need to succeed as adults. We are proud of our students' achievements and community involvement. We estimate that ..... percent of our seniors will attend a 4-year university and ..... percent will attend a 2-year university.

The parents and staff of ..... High School's graduating class of ..... want to celebrate our seniors' accomplishments by planning and hosting Project Celebration, an all-night, alcohol-free, drug-free graduation party at ..... (location) on ..... (day, date). For ..... years now, we have held successful Project Celebration events and are proud to report that none of our participating seniors has been hurt or killed in alcohol- or drug-related incidents. We want this trend to continue.

This year's graduating class has ..... (number) seniors and we want to provide these students with a safe way to celebrate graduation without drugs and alcohol. We plan to make this a memorable event by organizing a variety of activities and giveaways they can experience as the evening progresses.

The event budget for this year is \$ ..... . We have applied for a small grant from the Texas Department of Transportation. No other public funds are used for this project—this worth- while event is funded mostly from in-kind donations from people like you.

Please consider contributing a monetary donation for this year's Project Celebration. We would like to hear from you by April 10, ..... (year). (Please make checks payable to ..... and mail them to ..... .) If you prefer, we will gladly accept gift certificates or merchandise that we can use as door prizes for graduating seniors. We can pick up donations, if needed. All donations are tax-deductible and your business will be gratefully acknowledged in our school and local newspaper.

We appreciate anything you can do to help us keep our community's graduating seniors safe so they can celebrate their accomplishments for years to come.

Thank you and best regards,

*Signature*

Name

*Chairperson, Project Celebration Planning Committee*  
(area code) phone number

# LETTER OF COMMITMENT & RECEIPT

**Planning for Project Celebration is in full swing! We offer this safe, chemical-free event in an effort to keep our children safe on the night of their upcoming graduation. Your donations will help make this year's Project Celebration a smashing success.**

Name of Individual or Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Donation(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Value of Item(s) Donated: \_\_\_\_\_

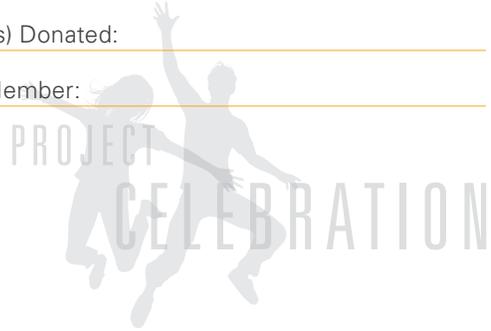
Date to be Picked Up by Project Celebration Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROJECT CELEBRATION ..... High School**

Attention: (name, number)

Address

City, TX Zip



# CERTIFICATE OF DONATION

(Keep this section for your records.)

Name of Individual or Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Donation(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Value of Item(s) Donated: \_\_\_\_\_

Date to be Picked Up by Project Celebration Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

**PROJECT CELEBRATION ..... High School**

Attention: (name, number)

Address

City, TX Zip



A tax-deductible donation

# DONATIONS



Fundraiser Volunteer: \_\_\_\_\_

Company or Individual's Name	Address & Phone Number	Item(s) Donated	Approximate Value
ABC Restaurant Supply	124 Main Street Suite 105 Town, TX 12345 000-000-0000	Baking supplies Gift Certificate	\$200.00 \$50.00
Joe Parent	100 Hometown Lane Town, TX 12345 000-000-0000	Gift Card	\$50.00
Stylish Hair Salon	147 Academy Drive Town, TX 12345 000-000-0000	Gift Card	\$100.00
Jane & John Doe	13 Sprintdale Drive Town, TX 12345 000-000-0000	Gift Card	\$200.00



# INCOME STATEMENT

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Current Month		Year to Date	
		Percent of Total Revenues		Percent of Total Revenues
<b>Revenues</b>				
Jeep Raffle Income	\$7,420.00	85.39%	\$32,760.00	90.77%
Donation Income	\$1,270.00	14.61%	\$2,540.00	7.04%
Cake Raffle	\$0.00	0.00%	\$641.50	1.78%
State Comptroller	\$0.00	0.00%	\$150.00	0.41%
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$8,690.00</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>\$36,091.50</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

		Percent of Total Revenues		Percent of Total Revenues
<b>Expenses</b>				
Postage	\$0.00	0.00%	\$296.00	0.82%
Printing Costs	\$0.00	0.00%	\$64.95	0.18%
Auto Expenses	\$13,632.00	156.87%	\$13,632.00	37.77%
Entertainment Costs	\$5,167.51	59.46%	\$5,855.76	16.22%
Food Costs	\$400.00	4.60%	\$400.00	1.11%
Gifts	\$15,012.81	172.76%	\$15,012.81	41.60%
Office Expenses	\$278.57	3.21%	\$293.47	0.81%
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$278.57</b>	<b>396.90%</b>	<b>\$35,554.99</b>	<b>98.51%</b>

<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$25,800.89</b>	<b>296.90%</b>	<b>\$536.51</b>	<b>1.49%</b>
-------------------	--------------------	----------------	-----------------	--------------



# SENIOR INPUT

Getting input from seniors is critical to whether your Project Celebration event will be a hit or a miss. Remember, the central reason for this party is to provide a fun and chemical-free environment for seniors to celebrate their achievements. Above all, you want students to feel like it is their party.

## Senior Involvement

Different schools incorporate student leadership in different ways. Some schools have student leaders sit in on Project Celebration planning committee meetings. Others establish an additional steering committee comprised only of students. Either way, it's a good idea to involve students early in the planning of Project Celebration. The investment of seniors early on will translate into greater student buy-in later.

You may want to arrange to introduce the concept of Project Celebration to the rest of the seniors at a class-wide meeting during school. While students need to understand the rules prohibiting alcohol or other drug consumption before and during the party, the emphasis should be on how exciting and fun the celebration will be. Students listen to what their peers have to say, so let student leaders be your mouthpiece to the rest of the class.

Let the seniors know that the committee will send letters to their parents explaining the party's rules and asking for their help so that students feel that the organizers are being up front in all aspects of the planning process. Students should understand that, while Project Celebration is all about them, it will be bigger and better with help from parents and other adults. Also, communicate that adult volunteers are invaluable on the night of the party so

student planners can be free to enjoy the festivities with the rest of the class.

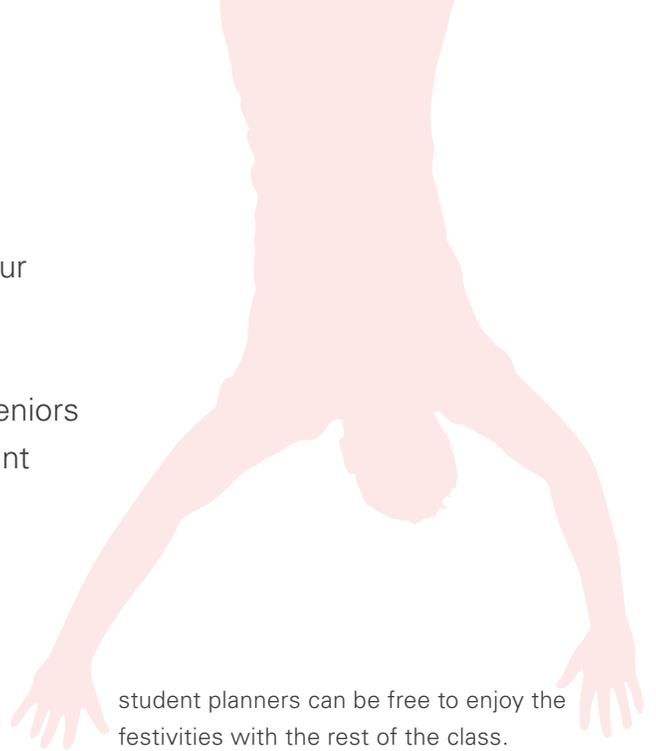
As plans for Project Celebration progress and specific details become concrete, keep the seniors informed with written notices or public announcements at school. Ask the principal if senior leaders can make the announcements on the public address system. Have art students make flyers or posters promoting the event. Drama students can do a skit at an assembly. The more you engage students, the more they will anticipate the event.

## Theme Contest

If you choose to have a theme for your Project Celebration, hold a theme contest. Encourage students to submit theme suggestions, and have a group of senior judges select the best entries. If you need ideas to get students thinking, there are theme suggestions in the [Event Activities & Food](#) section. Then, distribute a ballot listing the top five choices and have seniors vote for their favorite. You can even take the contest concept a step further and have students submit logos, t-shirt designs or even fundraising ideas.

## Senior Survey

When it comes to things like entertainment, food and activity ideas, seniors know themselves the best. Soliciting senior input communicates that their opinions matter and



creates a sense of student ownership. A survey can also generate anticipation and jump-start “buzz” about the upcoming event.

Distribute the survey in mid–late October so you will have time to incorporate student suggestions. In the survey, present options for food, activities, entertainment, music and prizes. It’s a good idea to have a rating system so you can see which preferences are strongest. Also be sure to include blanks for students to fill in their own ideas.

At the end of this section is a sample survey you can modify. Check out the [Event Activities & Food](#) section for even more ideas. Be sure to add a copy of your survey to this binder to help in next year’s planning.

### **Music Survey**

If you are including a DJ and/or dancing in your Project Celebration planning, distribute a survey for song requests. Be sure to work with the DJ on what to play. You may want to get this feedback close to the event, around late April or early May because music trends change and new songs come out frequently. See the sample music survey at the end of this section.

### **Post-Party Questionnaire**

Administering a short post-party evaluation will give next year’s coordinators a head start in their planning. Getting feedback while the event is still fresh on students’ minds is most efficient. Consider handing out the survey during the last hour of the event and ask students to turn in the forms for a prize drawing. See a sample post-party survey later in this section. Customize it with the activities from your event and add a copy of the survey (along with the tallied responses) for next year’s planners to reference.

# SURVEY



Seniors, graduation is just around the corner! To make graduation night even more memorable, we are planning an all-night party for the senior class. This is your party and we want your input! Please fill out the form below and return it to ..... (place) by ..... (day).

**Theme:** Please select the theme for this year's Project Celebration.

- Casino night
- Mardi Gras
- Pajama party
- Circus/carnival
- Hawaiian luau
- No theme

**Activities:** Tell us what you want to do during the party. Use 1–5 to indicate your first, second, third, fourth and fifth choices. (Only five choices should be filled in.) Got a better idea? Let us know in the blanks at the bottom of this section.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Casino tables
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hypnotist
- \_\_\_\_\_ Rock wall
- \_\_\_\_\_ Carnival booths
- \_\_\_\_\_ Inflatable games
- \_\_\_\_\_ Swimming/pool games
- \_\_\_\_\_ Comedian
- \_\_\_\_\_ Karaoke
- \_\_\_\_\_ Slide show
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dancing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Live band
- \_\_\_\_\_ Time capsule
- \_\_\_\_\_ Movie (name):
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other Ideas (list):

**Foods:** Use 1–3 to indicate your first, second and third preference for a midnight meal. Only three choices should be filled in.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Barbeque
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pancakes
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tacos
- \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken tenders
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pizza
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other:
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hamburgers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submarine sandwiches

Please list a few of your favorite snacks:

---

---

**Drinks:** Use 1–3 to indicate your first, second and third preference for drinks. Only three choices should be filled in.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Bottled water
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dr. Pepper
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sprite
- \_\_\_\_\_ Coca-Cola
- \_\_\_\_\_ Juice:
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sunkist Orange
- \_\_\_\_\_ Coffee/espresso drinks
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mountain Dew
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other:
- \_\_\_\_\_ Diet Coke
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pepsi

**Prizes:** Please list a few prizes (valued at \$25–\$100) that you would want to win.

---

---

---

List any other ideas you have that would help make the party a success:

---

---

I plan on attending Project Celebration this year:  Yes  No

---

# SURVEY



**Music:** List songs you would most like to hear at this year's Project Celebration.

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

6 \_\_\_\_\_

7 \_\_\_\_\_

8 \_\_\_\_\_

9 \_\_\_\_\_

10 \_\_\_\_\_

11 \_\_\_\_\_

12 \_\_\_\_\_

13 \_\_\_\_\_

14 \_\_\_\_\_

15 \_\_\_\_\_

16 \_\_\_\_\_

17 \_\_\_\_\_

18 \_\_\_\_\_

19 \_\_\_\_\_

20 \_\_\_\_\_

**Music Categories:** Use 1–3 to indicate your first, second and third preference for musical categories. Only three choices should be filled in.

_____ Alternative	_____ Hip Hop	_____ Rap
_____ Country	_____ Oldies ('70s, '80s, '90s)	_____ Rock
_____ Dance/Electronica/Trance	_____ Pop	_____ Soul/R&B
_____ Disco Dance		

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# SURVEY



Answer the following questions by circling the appropriate number to the right of the question.

The scale is as follows:

- 1 – Excellent
- 2 – Good
- 3 – OK
- 4 – So-so
- 5 – Not good

1	How informed were you about Project Celebration plans—mail outs, in-school messages and advertising?	1	2	3	4	5
2	Were you met at the door and greeted at the registration table with courtesy and a smile?	1	2	3	4	5
3	Did you like the decorations?	1	2	3	4	5
4	Did you like the variety and quality of food and drinks?	1	2	3	4	5
5	Did you like where Project Celebration was held?	1	2	3	4	5
6	How satisfied were you with the various forms of entertainment?	1	2	3	4	5
7	Did you like the amount, quality and type of prizes?	1	2	3	4	5
8	Would you recommend Project Celebration to future seniors?	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

---

---

---

---

---

Thank you for coming to Project Celebration and good luck!



# PARENT LETTERS

Senior parents are your most valuable resource in the planning of Project Celebration. They are your best source of time and talent. They also are a starting place for donations and can network to raise money from others, too. Parental consent is also required for all seniors attending Project Celebration, so keeping parents informed and involved is essential for multiple reasons.

## When To Send Letters

In this section you will find example letters to send to parents at various intervals in the planning process. Feel free to adapt them to suit your needs.

- The initial information letter should be sent out early (mid-October) to give parents an overview of the purpose and plans for Project Celebration. Depending on your specific needs and timeline, you can send out the volunteer registration form with the first letter or in a separate mailing. The volunteer form is located later in this section and in the Volunteers section.
- Continue to correspond with senior parents throughout the year by informing them of upcoming fundraisers and alcohol awareness events. You might also want to have a section on your website specifically for parents with announcements and frequently asked questions.
- When the date, time, location and transportation details of your event are confirmed, send out a letter that includes the rules and the student registration/parental consent form found later in this section and in the **Security & Rules** section. Also include the guest registration form and early departure form, if applicable.

Even if your Project Celebration is a seniors-only event, involve as many underclassmen parents as possible to work or just to observe before their turn. Underclassmen parents can also be a supplementary source of ideas and donations. Some communities even begin planning and fundraising for their own seniors' Project Celebration when those students are freshmen. Sample letters for all underclassmen parents are included at the end of this section.

After the event, be sure to add a copy of all the letters you send to the end of this section as examples for future Project Celebration coordinators at your school.



Date

Dear Senior Parent,

Plans are underway for a special event honoring the senior class at ..... High School. We are celebrating their accomplishments by hosting Project Celebration—an all-night lock-in alcohol-free, drug-free graduation party that is organized for students with help from parents, school staff and business people in the community. Project Celebration provides an environment where seniors don't have to deal with peer pressure to consume alcohol or other drugs or ride with a driver who is under the influence on that special night.

Project Celebration is a costly event to hold, but we know that providing a fun-filled alternative to drinking and driving will far outweigh the expense. We plan to make this a memorable event by organizing a variety of exciting activities, entertainment, food and prizes. We want our seniors to enjoy this last chance to share memories and create new ones to cherish for years to come. While the party is not until ..... (date), it's critical that our funding be in place as early as possible.

The event is completely funded by fundraisers and donations. We urge you to support this worthy cause to help us continue this tradition for our graduating seniors. Please consider donating a \$50 tax-deductible contribution in the enclosed self-addressed envelope to help host one of the last and most memorable events of your student's high school life.

We will be recruiting volunteers soon—we'll keep you posted as plans progress!

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Name

*Chairperson, Project Celebration Planning Committee*

(area code) phone number



Date

Dear Senior Parent,

It's time to gear up and get ready for Project Celebration the all-night lock-in, substance-free graduation party that is safe and fun for our students. We need your help to make this event the best night of your student's life. Mark your calendars—Month ..... from ..... P.M – ..... A.M. Now is your opportunity to volunteer to be a part of this exciting event. Please fill out the attached volunteer form and return it to ..... by .....

Thanks in advance for your involvement!

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Name

*Chairperson, Project Celebration Planning Committee*  
(area code) phone number



Date

Dear Senior Parent,

Project Celebration is just around the corner! This all-night lock-in alcohol-free, drug-free party will be held ..... (date) at ..... (location) and will last from ..... P.M.– ..... A.M. Check-in closes at ..... P.M.. After that time, the doors will be locked and no one will be allowed in or out (unless there is an emergency). Please fill out and return the following consent form by ..... (date) so your student will be able to participate in the evening’s festivities. Be sure to read through the attached rules and ensure that your student thoroughly understands them. If you know your student must leave early, please fill out the early departure form (also enclosed).

Encourage your senior to participate in Project Celebration. If we are enthusiastic about this party, our students will know we are supporting them. Thank you for making this unforgettable experience a reality for your student.

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Name

*Chairperson, Project Celebration Planning Committee*

(area code) phone number

# REGISTRATION & PARTICIPATION



## Parent

Senior name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

By registering my senior for Project Celebration, I understand the following:

- 1) My student will be expected to check in at the high school by ..... (time) the night of ..... (date). I will be notified at one of the above numbers if my student fails to report by this time or if s/he wishes to leave before Project Celebration ends.
- 2) If my student violates either the ..... High School Code of Conduct or disrupts the graduation ceremony, s/he will not be allowed to attend Project Celebration.
- 3) If my student arrives for Project Celebration under the influence of alcohol or other drugs s/he will not be allowed to participate and forfeits giveaways.

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteering:** As parent or guardian of a graduating senior, I am willing to work at Project Celebration. Please email me more information.

- 10:30 P.M. – 12:45 A.M.
- 12:30 A.M. – 2:45 A.M.
- 2:30 A.M. – 4:45 A.M.
- 4:30 A.M. – 6:45 A.M.
- As needed
- Entire night

## Student

Please return this form by ..... (date), ..... (year) to:

..... High School

Attention: Name, (area code) phone number

Address

City, TX Zip

Or, place in box at school reception.

**ALL FORMS DUE BY** ..... (date), ..... (year).

# GUEST REGISTRATION



## Parent

Guest name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest's school: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of sponsoring senior: \_\_\_\_\_

By registering my senior for Project Celebration, I understand the following:

- 1) The guest will be expected to check in with his or her sponsoring senior in person at the high school by ..... (time) the night of ..... (date). Parents will be notified at one of the above numbers if the student or their guest fails to report by this time or if s/he wishes to leave before Project Celebration officially ends.
- 2) If the student or the guest violates either the ..... High School Code of Conduct or disrupts the graduation ceremony, s/he will not be allowed to attend Project Celebration.
- 3) If the student or their guest arrives for Project Celebration under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, s/he will not be allowed to participate in the evening's event. A parent will be called to arrange for their child to be picked up.

## Student

I have read and understand all the above requirements.

Guest signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest's parent's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsoring senior signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form by ..... (date), ..... (year) to:

..... High School

Attention: Name, (area code) phone number

Address

City, TX Zip

Or, place in box at school reception.

**ALL FORMS DUE BY** ..... (date), ..... (year).

# PROJECT CELEBRATION EARLY DEPARTURE FORM

..... **HIGH SCHOOL** CLASS OF ..... PROJECT CELEBRATION

Senior name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent name: \_\_\_\_\_

The above named minor has my permission to leave Project Celebration before ..... A.M..  
I understand that the participant cannot return to the party after leaving early.

- DO call me when my child leaves.
- DO NOT call me when my child leaves.

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**ALL FORMS DUE BY** ..... (date), ..... (year).



# PROJECT CELEBRATION EARLY DEPARTURE FORM

..... **HIGH SCHOOL** CLASS OF ..... PROJECT CELEBRATION

Senior name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent name: \_\_\_\_\_

The above named minor has my permission to leave Project Celebration before ..... A.M..  
I understand that the participant cannot return to the party after leaving early.

- DO call me when my child leaves.
- DO NOT call me when my child leaves.

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**ALL FORMS DUE BY** ..... (date), ..... (year).



Date

Dear Junior Parent,

Plans are underway for a special event honoring the ..... (year) senior class at ..... High School. We are celebrating their accomplishments by hosting Project Celebration—an all-night, alcohol-free, drug-free graduation party that is organized for the seniors with help from parents, school staff and business people in the community. Project Celebration provides an environment where seniors don't have to deal with peer pressure to consume alcohol or other drugs or ride with a driver who is under the influence on that special night.

The senior parents play a vital role in the planning process by organizing a variety of exciting activities, entertainment, food and prizes for the event. Your time will be here before you know it! Your kids will be seniors next year, so you may be working on your own Project Celebration. We will be here for you to share our experiences, ideas, and successes and yes, even our pitfalls.

To better prepare for your student's Project Celebration, consider volunteering this time around. You can learn the ropes this year to make next year's event better than ever. Get involved. Stay informed. Your kids are worth it, and it's fun. If you are interested in volunteering, please fill out the attached volunteer form and return it to ..... (location) by ..... (date).

As you will see next year, Project Celebration requires hours of volunteer time and a great deal of money. If you know a senior, please consider making a small donation in his or her name to show your support of him or her. Please encourage them to participate. It will be great fun for everyone involved!

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Name

*Chairperson, Project Celebration Planning Committee*

(area code) phone number



Date

Dear Sophomore Parent,

Plans are underway for a special event honoring the ..... (year) senior class at ..... High School. We are celebrating their accomplishments by hosting Project Celebration—an all-night lock-in alcohol-free, drug-free graduation party that is organized for the seniors with help from parents, school staff and business people in the community. Project Celebration provides an environment where seniors don't have to deal with peer pressure to consume alcohol or other drugs or ride with a driver who is under the influence on that special night.

The senior parents play a vital role in the planning process by organizing a variety of exciting activities, entertainment, food and prizes for the event. Get ready—the next two years will fly by. Your kids will be seniors before you know it, and you will be working on your own Project Celebration. We will be here for you to share our experiences, ideas, and successes and yes, even our pitfalls. So, we are asking for your help now.

To better prepare for your student's Project Celebration, consider volunteering this time around. Being a veteran volunteer will give you a leg up for the next time. Get involved. Stay informed. Your kids are worth it, and it's fun. If you are interested in volunteering, please fill out the attached volunteer form and return it to ..... (location) by ..... (date).

When it's your turn, you will see that Project Celebration requires hours of volunteer time and a great deal of money. If you know a senior, please consider making a small donation in his or her name to show your support of him or her. Please encourage them to participate. It will be great fun for everyone involved!

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Name

*Chairperson, Project Celebration Planning Committee*  
(area code) phone number



Date

Dear Freshman Parent,

Plans are underway for a special event honoring the ..... (year) senior class at ..... High School. We are celebrating their accomplishments by hosting Project Celebration—an all-night lock-in alcohol-free, drug-free graduation party that is organized for the seniors with help from parents, school staff and business people in the community. Project Celebration provides an environment where seniors don't have to deal with peer pressure to consume alcohol or other drugs or ride with a driver who is under the influence on that special night.

The senior parents play a vital role in the planning process by organizing a variety of exciting activities, entertainment, food and prizes for the event. Only three years left until your child is a senior, when you will have the opportunity to get directly involved in the planning of their Project Celebration. We will be here for you to share our experiences, ideas, successes and yes, pitfalls. So, we are asking for your help now.

To better prepare for your student's Project Celebration, consider volunteering this time around. Being a veteran volunteer will give you a leg up for the next time. Get involved. Stay informed. Your kids are worth it, and it's fun. If you are interested in volunteering, please fill out the attached volunteer form and return it to ..... (location) by ..... (date).

When it's your turn, you will see that Project Celebration requires hours of volunteer time and a great deal of money. If you know a senior, please consider making a small donation in his or her name to show your support of him or her. Please encourage them to participate. It will be great fun for everyone involved!

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Name

*Chairperson, Project Celebration Planning Committee*

(area code) phone number



# VOLUNTEERS

**Successful recruitment and management** of volunteers is the key to pulling off Project Celebration without a hitch. One mistake that planners often make is taking on all the responsibility. Delegating responsibilities to committee members and volunteers will not only make things easier for everyone involved, it will foster community ownership of the program and it will be more fun.

In this section you will find tips on recruitment, techniques for delegation and ways to effectively communicate with your volunteers. In dealing with volunteers, don't forget to offer constant encouragement and support. Saying "thank you" is often forgotten when things get busy. Check out the **Recognition** section for more ways to make your volunteers feel appreciated, and make note of things they do so you can pat them on the back.

**A word of caution:** Volunteers should be a good example for teens by showing that alcohol-free and drug-free activities are enjoyable.

Keep the spirit of Project Celebration alive throughout the school year in every related fundraiser and activity. Do not allow teen or adult participants to drink alcohol or use other drugs at Project Celebration related events, fundraisers and activities.

## Recruiting

Although senior parents will likely be your main source of volunteers, be careful not to overlook parents of juniors, sophomores and freshmen. Send out an informative recruitment letter to parents at the beginning of the year, along with the volunteer form. (See the sample form at the end of this section.) Another effective way to inform and recruit parents is to present event planning needs at PTA meetings or other

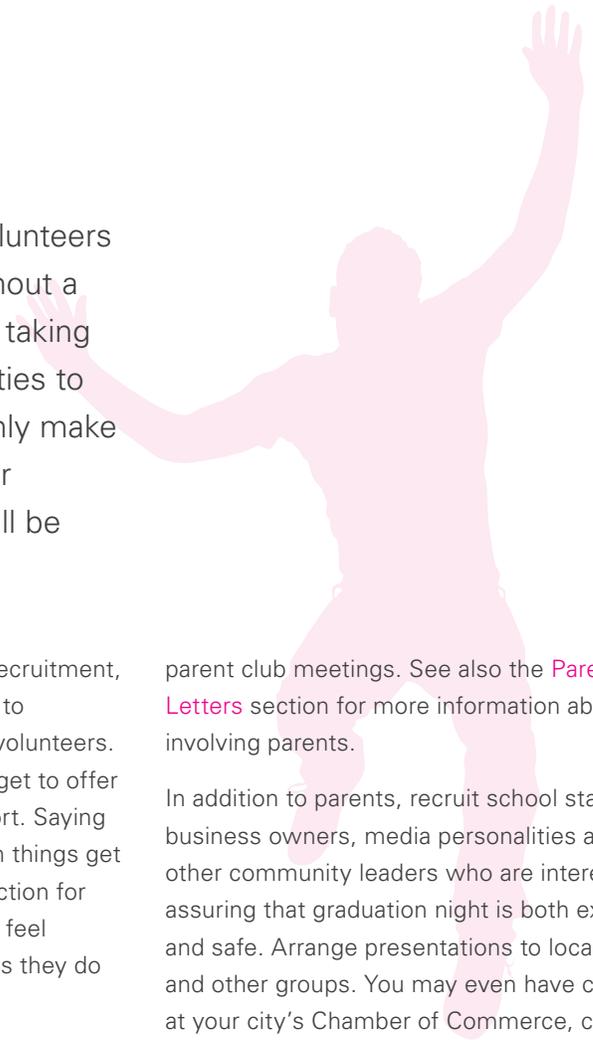
parent club meetings. See also the **Parent Letters** section for more information about involving parents.

In addition to parents, recruit school staff, business owners, media personalities and other community leaders who are interested in assuring that graduation night is both exciting and safe. Arrange presentations to local clubs and other groups. You may even have contacts at your city's Chamber of Commerce, church groups, or other service organizations like Rotary Club or the Kiwanis. Anytime you present to a group be sure to tell success stories, show visuals of past events and have volunteer forms on hand.

## Committees

As you recruit your volunteers, match them up with the various subcommittees you may need (below). You may want to combine subcommittees based on the number of volunteers you get.

- Advertising & Promotion
- Cleanup & Storage
- Educational Activities
- Event Activities
- Event Entertainment
- Event Food
- Event Location
- Event Staffing
- Event Theme
- Event Transportation
- Fundraising & Finance



- Prizes & Favors
- Recognition & Thank-yous
- Reporting
- Security
- Steering
- Surveys & Forms
- Website

Designate or vote on chairs or co-chairs of subcommittees. Identify the strengths and talents of your committee members, and match them up with fitting responsibilities. You may even want to recruit volunteers according to their strengths from the very beginning. For example, you may recruit a web developer specifically to head up the Website Committee. If you know an accountant, he or she might be best cut out for the Fundraising & Finance Committee. Ask your most creative members to head up Event Theme, Activities, Entertainment and Advertising & Promotion Committees.

**Advertising & Promotion**—in charge of generating public awareness and enthusiasm for the party among students, parents, school staff and the community; advertises for the event in local and school publications; oversees poster development for local distribution; designs, prints and sells tickets to students (if applicable); recognizes donors in publicity

**Cleanup & Storage**—stores prizes and items for resource bags; works with Event Location Committee regarding requirements for clean up; cleans up after party and arranges for volunteers to clean up as needed

**Educational Activities**—plans and conducts alcohol awareness and other educational activities to create awareness of the dangers of drinking and driving throughout the school year; works with Advertising & Promotions Committee to promote the activities

**Event Entertainment/Activities**—plans, arranges and coordinates the entertainment and activities for the night; finds talent,

negotiates and executes contracts; works with Event Staffing Committee to provide volunteers and chaperones for various activities

**Event Food**—plans and executes menu for party around student preferences; procures, prepares and serves food (unless location includes professional staffing as part of package)

**Event Location**—secures a location for party; negotiates contract and rentals; arranges security with Security Committee; works with Event Entertainment Committee on floor plan and set-up

**Event Staffing**—recruits and manages chaperones, food servers and other volunteers for the party; works with Security Committee to develop a system for checking students in and out

**Event Theme**—in charge of decorations; promotes and holds theme contest within the senior class; works with Survey & Forms Committee for students to vote on theme; works with Entertainment/ Activities/Foods Committees to brainstorm ideas on how to incorporate theme

**Event Transportation**—organizes and secures student transportation to and from the event; works with school district if using school buses; hires drivers or trains volunteer drivers; works with Event Staffing/Security Committees for student check-in

**Fundraising & Finance**—works with the treasurer to develop a budget; plans all fundraisers including student involvement; works with Recognition & Thank-yous Committee to thank all donors publicly and personally

**Prizes & Resource Bags**—responsible for tagging, categorizing and dividing prizes; sets up and handles prize designation or drawings at the party; purchases prizes as necessary;

works with Clean Up & Storage/Event Location Committees for storing collected prizes before the event

**Recognition & Thank-yous** – sends thank-you notes to everyone who donated time, money, goods and services; works with Advertising & Promotion Committee to recognize donors publicly

**Reporting** – records attendance, costs and other details for all Project Celebration events; completes forms to report to TxDOT for fulfillment of mini-grant, if applicable

**Security** – formulates basic rules of conduct for the party; works with the Event Staffing Committee to develop a system for checking students in and out

**Steering** – oversees event; includes a chair-elect (a junior parent to be trained as chair for next year); treasurer (who keeps exact records of all funds raised; keeps a record of all receipts and disbursements; collects, counts and deposits money; prepares budget report for meetings; and assists Fundraising & Finance Committee chair); and secretary (who takes minutes at meeting and posts meeting notes)

**Surveys & Forms** – distributes and tallies student surveys; keeps track of student and volunteer forms and contact information; prepares and handles mailings as needed during the year

**Website** – designs website and develops content; manages online calendar; updates website with new content regularly; provides secure site for online donations

## Planning Meetings

Each subcommittee should have its own meetings scheduled throughout the planning process, and you may ask committee chairs to meet occasionally, too. As the Project Celebration chairperson, stay in regular contact with the subcommittee chairs and periodically attend subcommittee meetings. Encourage chairs to communicate with each other often, particularly those on committees that are dependent on one another like the Event Theme and Event Activities Committees. Coordination among committees is critical, for example, when committees are contacting local businesses for donations of goods, services or money because each business should be contacted only once.

## Meeting Announcements

Keep volunteers in the communication loop. Schedule meetings in advance, and post or distribute a meetings calendar. As Project Celebration draws closer, you might need to meet more frequently. Don't forget to send meeting announcements and reminders at least a week in advance to give volunteers time to clear their schedules.

Email can be a powerful tool in communicating with your volunteers. Survey the group to see if email is an effective way to contact them.

Consider compiling a list of volunteer email addresses and use the list to send out meeting announcements and reminders. Be careful not to overuse email.

Post a meetings calendar on your Project Celebration website. The website can be a central place where volunteers can go to find that kind of information.

# VOLUNTEER INFORMATION FORM



Project Celebration is the all-night, substance-free graduation party that is safe and fun for our students. We need your help to make this event the best night of these students' lives. Now is your opportunity to volunteer to be a part of this exciting event!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's name (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, email is a good way to communicate with me.

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to volunteer in the following area(s):

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Advertising & promotion | <input type="radio"/> Event location        | <input type="radio"/> Recognition & thank-yous |
| <input type="radio"/> Cleanup & storage       | <input type="radio"/> Event staffing        | <input type="radio"/> Reporting                |
| <input type="radio"/> Educational activities  | <input type="radio"/> Event theme           | <input type="radio"/> Security                 |
| <input type="radio"/> Event activities        | <input type="radio"/> Event transportation  | <input type="radio"/> Steering                 |
| <input type="radio"/> Event entertainment     | <input type="radio"/> Fundraising & finance | <input type="radio"/> Surveys & forms          |
| <input type="radio"/> Event food              | <input type="radio"/> Prizes & favors       | <input type="radio"/> Website                  |

Please return this form by ..... (date), ..... (year) to:

..... High School

Attention: Name, (area code) phone number

Address

City, TX Zip

Or, place in box at school reception.





# ALCOHOL AWARENESS

Since the purpose of Project Celebration is to keep students safe and alcohol-free during times when they are celebrating, create awareness of the dangers of drinking and driving by conducting alcohol awareness and other educational activities throughout the school year. Activities may take place at school and within the community. The goal of the educational activities is to reduce the number of students and others involved in

collisions that often result from alcohol or drug use. Reducing the number of collisions reduces the number of injuries and deaths that can be attributed to impaired driving.

## Before and After Educational Program

Before and After educational materials, available free of charge from TxDOT, tell the gripping story of Jacqueline Saburido. After she came to the United States from Venezuela to study English, a drunk driving crash changed her life completely. In September 1999, on a dark road on the outskirts of Austin, a teenage drunk driver named Reggie Stephey slammed into the car in which Jacqui was riding. Two of her friends were killed instantly. Within minutes, the car caught fire—Jacqui was pinned in the front seat passenger side and was burned over 60 percent of her body; no one thought she could survive. But Jacqui lived. She lost her hair, her ears, her nose, her left eyelid and much of her vision. She has had dozens of operations since the crash and has many more to go.

## How Before and After Was Developed

To help others avoid the pain she has endured, Jacqui courageously lent her story to TxDOT's Faces of Drunk Driving public education campaign, which many have said is the most hard-hitting campaign ever produced that deals with drunk driving. The campaign was developed as a result of focus group testing

among teens and young adults, who insisted messages must be both real and graphic to catch their attention about the dangers of drinking and driving.

Child psychologists reviewed and endorsed the approach in light of the fact that young children might see the shocking photographs of Jacqui's badly scarred face and hands. Statewide organizations supporting efforts to curtail drunk driving in Texas signed on as campaign supporters, including the Texas Department of Public Safety, Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission, Texas Department of State Health Services, Texans Standing Tall, Teens in the Driver Seat and Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

## How To Use Before and After Materials

All schools, even those that do not receive TxDOT funding, are eligible to receive Faces of Drunk Driving educational materials free of charge for their event. Teachers, counselors or other school staff may order Faces of Drunk Driving materials for use in classrooms or in a school-wide or class assembly. The discussion guide, included in the educational kit, gives educators ideas about how to lead classroom activities centered around the Faces of Drunk Driving program.

Contact your local Traffic Safety Specialist for materials.

## TxDOT Promotional Items

Contact your local TxDOT Traffic Safety Specialist for more information. Visit [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov) and enter the search term “traffic safety specialist” to find a listing of local representatives.

## Other Alcohol Awareness Programs

You may already have other alcohol awareness programs in mind that you want to introduce to the students in your school. Use a search engine to find out about other educational programs that may be available, including:

- Teens in the Driver Seat (Texas Transportation Institute) [www.t-driver.com](http://www.t-driver.com)
- Red Ribbon Week, Substance Abuse Prevention Materials (Partnership for a Drug-Free America, Texas Alliances, Texas Department of State Health Services) [www.redribbon.org](http://www.redribbon.org)
- The Cool Spot (National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism) [www.thecoolspot.gov](http://www.thecoolspot.gov)
- Shattered Dreams (Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission)
- AlcoholEdu and Youth in Action (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) [www.madd.org](http://www.madd.org)
- Think About It (Students Against Destructive Decisions) [www.sadd.org](http://www.sadd.org)
- Danger Without Intentions (Danger Without Intentions Nonprofit Organization) [www.dangerwithoutintentions.com](http://www.dangerwithoutintentions.com)
- Smashed (Home Box Office)
- Every 15 Minutes (National Every 15 Minutes Foundation) [www.every15minutes.com](http://www.every15minutes.com)
- Fatal Vision Goggles (Innocorp Products)

You may also want to contact your PTA, local police department, sheriff 's office or health department to inquire about programs developed in your community.

## Homegrown Ways To Educate Young People

You may know someone who has presented a different alcohol awareness program or effort at your school. You may also know students who have expressed an interest in getting involved in this area. Below are some things you and committee members and students can do to raise awareness about alcohol use among young people that may work at your school.

- Ask students to conduct an alcohol awareness program for parents with skits, songs and other student performances.
- Create a Greatest Graduation Gift pledge not to drink or do drugs and drive.
- Create a Prom Promise pledge students sign pledging not to drink or do drugs and drive.
- Distribute My Pledge Today to students, as shown in the sample later in this section. (Feel free to copy or adapt the sample.) Invite students to read aloud and sign their pledge, make copies and exchange them with their friends. You may want to copy the Here's the Law section on the backside of the pledge.
- Have a local celebrity come to your school to tell his or her stories about how an alcohol-related traffic crash changed his or her life. Set up picture-taking displays for after the presentation.
- Have students create Safe Harbor signs (including a picture of a ship or boat) and distribute them to parents to display in windows representing homes that do not provide alcohol to minors.
- Have your school's mascot spread alcohol awareness messages throughout the school.
- Invite students to decorate the hallways or a bulletin board with alcohol awareness messages.

- Light candles during the halftime of a sporting event and take a moment of silence to remember those students who have lost their lives to alcohol or other drugs, and chant a pledge to stay safe and sober.
- Make paper bricks, and have each student put his or her name on one as a pledge to be alcohol and drug free. Build a wall as a symbol of students joining together to stay safe and sober.
- Organize a Say Boo to Alcohol and Drugs with a special Halloween Prevention Party.
- Prepare parent-student pledge books to facilitate discussion between parents and students.
- Schedule a Band Against Alcohol and Drugs musical assembly.
- Set up a camera with an interviewer and camera operator, and ask students to record their own alcohol-prevention PSA. Have a contest to vote on the best ones and post them on the school website and on popular websites that feature user-generated content.
- Set up mock cemetery headstones with the names of celebrities and community members who have died as a result of alcohol or other drugs.
- Use daily intercom messages to highlight the educational activities for the day or deliver a message about the harmful effects of alcohol and other drug use.

### **Here's the Law: Under 21 Regardless of Age**

It is illegal for minors (under 21) to purchase, attempt to purchase, possess or consume alcohol. It's also against the law for minors to misrepresent their age to obtain alcohol.

#### **Minors in Possession (MIP)**

Here's what happens the first time minors are found in possession of alcohol. Any amount of beer, wine or liquor can trigger the penalties.

- Up to a \$500 fine
- 30- to 180-day driver's license suspension
- Eight to 40 hours of community service
- Mandatory alcohol awareness classes

A second or third offense can lead to suspension of the minor's driver's license for 60 to 180 days. Those 17 or older can be fined as much as \$2,000 or go to jail for up to 180 days for a third offense or both, plus automatic driver's license suspension.

#### **Driving Under the Influence (DUI)**

It is illegal for anyone under 21 to drive with any detectable amount of alcohol in their system. Here's what happens the first time a minor is convicted of a DUI. Any amount of beer, wine or liquor can trigger the penalties.

- Up to a \$500 fine
- 60-day driver's license suspension
- 20 to 40 hours of community service
- Mandatory alcohol awareness classes

#### **Driving While Intoxicated (DWI)**

Drivers 17 and older who are stopped for drinking and driving with a blood or breath alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.08 or greater can also face DWI criminal penalties listed at right.

#### **Here's the Law: For All Drivers**

In Texas the legal limit for intoxication is .08 BAC (blood or breath alcohol concentration). However, drivers can be stopped and cited when impaired regardless of BAC. Drivers and passengers can be fined up to \$500 for having an open alcohol container in a vehicle.

#### **First Offense**

- Up to a \$2,000 fine
- Up to 180 days in jail upon conviction (mandatory three days in jail)
- Loss of driver's license up to a year
- \$1,000 surcharge for three years to retain driver's license

**Second Offense\***

- Up to a \$4,000 fine
- Up to one year in jail upon conviction (mandatory five days in jail)
- Loss of driver's license up to two years
- \$1,500 surcharge for three years to retain driver's license

**Third Offense\***

- Up to a \$10,000 fine
- Two to ten years in prison
- Loss of driver's license up to two years
- Mandatory 10–60 days in jail if defendant receives probation
- \$2,000 surcharge for three years to retain driver's license

*\*After two or more DWI convictions in five years, motorists must install a special ignition switch that prevents their vehicle from being operated if they've been drinking.*

**DWI With a Child Passenger**

Motorists can be charged with child endangerment for driving while intoxicated if they're carrying passengers younger than 15 years old. DWI with a child passenger is a felony and punishable with:

- Up to a \$10,000 fine
- Up to two years in a state jail
- Loss of driver's license for up to two years

## MY PLEDGE TODAY

This agreement is between my friends, my parents and me. We all know drinking and driving is no accident—it's a violent crime we must never commit. We also know that drunk driving hurts and kills too many teens and others in Texas, and I can help stop it right here and right now. I know by signing this pledge that I really can make a difference.

This Project Celebration, I give my friends and myself the gift of life. I pledge to not drink and drive, ride with an impaired driver, let my friends drink and drive or let my friends ride with an impaired driver. I also pledge to insist we always wear our safety belts— it's our best defense against a drunk driver.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## MY PLEDGE TODAY

This agreement is between my friends, my parents and me. We all know drinking and driving is no accident—it's a violent crime we must never commit. We also know that drunk driving hurts and kills too many teens and others in Texas, and I can help stop it right here and right now. I know by signing this pledge that I really can make a difference.

This Project Celebration, I give my friends and myself the gift of life. I pledge to not drink and drive, ride with an impaired driver, let my friends drink and drive or let my friends ride with an impaired driver. I also pledge to insist we always wear our safety belts— it's our best defense against a drunk driver.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# SECURITY & RULES

**Project Celebration** is an all-night, lock-in event that offers students a safe place to celebrate their achievements without alcohol and drugs. You and your volunteers will need to create a plan to keep students safe during indoor and outdoor activities (if any) and keep uninvited individuals out of your event. The information provided here serves as a guideline so you can create a plan suitable for your event and student population.

## Facility Layout

Get a facility layout/floor plan from your event facility (if indoors). Do a walk-through with your security personnel to see how many windows and doors are in the building so you can create a plan to secure them. All fire exits must be accessible. For outdoor events, check out fencing or natural boundaries, such as rivers, so your team can anticipate how to keep the location safe.

## Security

Depending on the size of your event, you may elect to have security guards on the premises using a security company, local police or sheriff's office. When you share with them the facility layout, they will be able to guide you about the best ways to keep the event safe, and you can stress to them that the focus of the event needs to be on students' celebrating.

Arrange to have as many security personnel as needed. You may also have volunteers who can monitor the premises and report any suspicious behavior to security. Ask security to handle any mix-ups with the least amount of interruption possible.

## Equipment

Determine what security equipment you will need to have on hand for the event. Some possibilities are listed below. Work with your security company (if needed) and your school

to rent or borrow items. Be sure to swap phone numbers with volunteers and security guards on premises if the facility is large.

- Cell phone and charger
- Flashlights
- Hand-held body scanner
- Megaphones
- Reflector vests
- Rope to cordon off areas
- Walkie-talkies

## Ongoing Monitoring

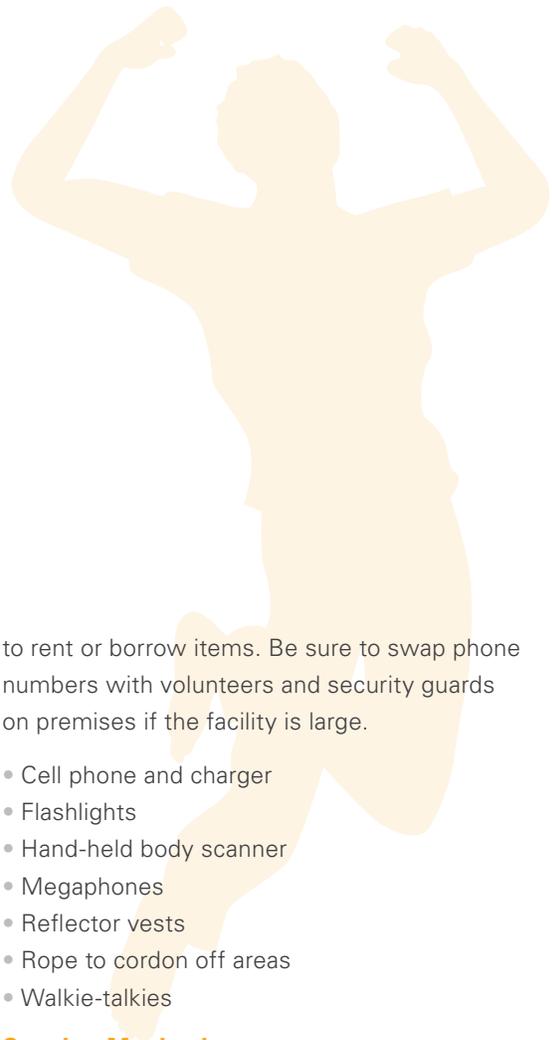
Plan ways you and other organizers will monitor areas, such as:

- Bathrooms
- Bus entry
- Check-in area
- Crash rooms
- Detention/holding area\*
- Game rooms
- Parking lot entry/exit

*\*If students arrive under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, separate them from other students and notify their parents for immediate pickup.*

## Student Drop-Off and Check-In

Many high schools arrange for students to be dropped off or park their cars at the high school, where they check in and board buses that will take them to the event facility. Since registered participants need to be visibly identifiable, you may want to facilitate a check-in before students board buses where



they receive a wristband (or other visible ways to identify them). You will also want to create a system to confiscate and tag purses, backpacks and other personal belongings if students bring unacceptable items to the event. These items can be returned to students once they exit the buses after the event.

Using a final attendee list, check off each student's name as you distribute the wristbands (if used). You may generate a final attendee list after you receive all Registration & Participation forms. (See an example later in this section.)

Some organizers purchase wristbands with pre-printed numbers and apply these numbers next to students' names on the attendee list. Plan to have monitors check that each student who tries to enter is wearing a wristband.

Remind security to handle any mix-ups with the least amount of interruption possible. You may decide to accept registrations at the door—be prepared with extra Registration & Participation forms for them to sign prior to entry and be sure to update your spreadsheet with last-minute registrants. If you charge admission, be prepared to accept various forms of payment for last-minute revelers.

### During the Event

Most Project Celebration events happen with little or no trouble. The students are there to celebrate their successes, and you may not have any problems at all. However, it's always best to have a plan. Determine with your team how to monitor activities during the event. You may want some to move about the event facility and report suspicious behavior to security or confront it themselves. You may

want others to stay in a central location as though they're participating, but they're also watching for any issues. You may also want security to monitor windows and other ways to enter and exit the event. If you and your team experience a student who needs to be removed, show them to a holding area, notify their parents (or police, if appropriate) and ask someone to monitor the situation until the student is picked up.

### After the Event

By this time, students will be weary but happy after a long night of activities, food and fun. Make an announcement toward the end of the event congratulating students again and directing them to buses (if used). Ask volunteers to help make sure all students exit the facility with their cameras and other allowable personal items.

When students exit the buses, your morning crew will be at the high school to greet students, hand out resource bags and distribute prizes.

See the section titled Prizes & Favors for information on how to acquire and distribute giveaways.

### Sample Materials

The following pages include a sample Project Celebration Rules sheet and Registration & Participation form. Feel free to adapt these to suit the needs of your student population and your event.

# PROJECT CELEBRATION RULES



**Congratulations, seniors!** We are proud of your achievements, and we want to help you celebrate with a successful Project Celebration event. Please read and follow the rules below and have a safe and happy night!

1. Project Celebration is a chemical-free lock-in party for the graduates of ..... (year) of ..... High School. After graduation, you may go home, change, visit and eat with your family. But be back at the high school by ..... (time). Buses will depart for the event at ..... (time). Volunteers are driving the buses, so please be sure to thank them for hauling you back and forth!
2. Project Celebration is being held at ..... . We have access to the entire facility, and no other schools will be present. Please show respect for this location and your school, and don't do anything that would jeopardize our relationship with the owners of this facility or the reputation of ..... High School. Thank you!
3. Sign and date the registration and participation agreement before you enter the event.
4. No chemicals are allowed—in your system or on your person. If you're caught with liquor, beer, wine, tobacco products to include E Cigarettes or illegal drugs, your parents will be notified. If we need to contact local law enforcement, we will.
5. Leave your personal belongings at home. This includes purses, cell phones, MP3 players and other mobile devices. (Exception: You may bring a camera in your pocket.) When you enter the bus, you should be empty-handed. We will have everything you will need for a safe and fun night. We will have more food than we need, so eat as much and as often as you like—it's free!
6. Wear comfortable clothing so you can participate in all the activities.
7. After we arrive, gates will be locked. You may not come and go during the party.
8. If you decide to leave early, you forfeit your door prize. We have enough for every senior, so be sure you stay! You may only leave with a parent—no exceptions.
9. Buses depart the event facility at ..... (time), getting back to the school at ..... (time).
10. Only seniors are eligible for door prizes and resource bags. Resource bags will be given to seniors as they get off buses after the event. Door prizes will be available at the volunteer table after you receive your resource bag.

The Project Celebration Committee congratulates all graduates of the Class of ..... (year). You made it through some tough times, and we bet you even learned something! We wish you a life full of success—no matter how you define it.

**Good Luck in All You Do!**



# REGISTRATION & PARTICIPATION

## Parent

Senior name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

By registering my senior for Project Celebration, I understand the following:

**1)** My student will be expected to check in at the high school by ..... (time) the night of ..... (date). I will be notified at one of the above numbers if my student fails to report by this time or if s/he wishes to leave before Project Celebration ends.

**2)** If my student violates either the ..... High School Code of Conduct or disrupts the graduation ceremony, s/he will not be allowed to attend Project Celebration.

**3)** If my student arrives for Project Celebration under the influence of alcohol or other drugs s/he will not be allowed to participate and forfeits giveaways.

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteering:** As parent or guardian of a graduating senior, I am willing to work at Project Celebration. Please email me more information.

- 10:30 P.M. – 12:45 A.M.                       As needed
- 12:30 A.M. – 2:45 A.M.                       Entire night
- 2:30 A.M. – 4:45 A.M.
- 4:30 A.M. – 6:45 A.M.

## Student

Please return this form by ..... (date), ..... (year) to:

..... High School

Attention: Name, (area code) phone number

Address

City, TX Zip

Or, place in box at school reception.

**ALL FORMS DUE BY** ..... (date), ..... (year).



# EVENT ACTIVITIES & FOOD

To have a successful event, much planning goes into the schedule, venue, theme, activities, and food. It is essential to delegate tasks to committee members and volunteers. It might be helpful to have the following committees: Fundraising, Activities, Venue, Food, Chaperones, etc. Student input is critical when planning your Project Celebration event. See **Senior Input** section to find helpful hints on getting student opinions and an example survey.

## Schedule

Before considering possible settings, themes and activities for your Project Celebration, establish start and end times for the event to know how many hours you need to fill. Project Celebrations are often held following school-related activities, such as graduation, prom. This celebration is intended to be an alcohol and chemical free all-night lock-in.

Past planners have found that it is best to schedule as little time as possible between the end of the event and the beginning of Project Celebration.

## Venue

The venue often dictates what types of activities you are able to provide. Locations of Project Celebrations vary from school to school. Many Project Celebrations take place inside the school, while others take place in rented facilities, such as bowling alleys or entertainment complexes.

Each community offers different location options, so look around for what your area has to offer and get input from senior class members. Here are some suggestions to help you get started.

- Amusement park
- Bowling alley
- College campus
- Country club

- Entertainment complex
- Recreation center
- School or gym
- Sports arena
- YMCA/YWCA

## Theme

Not all Project Celebrations have themes, but sometimes a theme can act as a valuable planning tool for games, decorations, T-shirts, food and prizes. Once again, student input is valuable—some schools even hold theme and T-shirt design contests. Below are a few themes that schools have used.

- '50s, '60s, '70s or '80s night
- Casino night/Las Vegas
- Disco
- Hawaiian luau
- Mardi Gras
- Masquerade ball
- Medieval
- Movies
- Olympics
- Rodeo

## Activities and Event Flow

The most successful Project Celebration parties provide a continuous schedule of activities for the students. While high energy activities are exciting, be sure to have more relaxing activities available, too. Not all students will be able to go full speed all night, so it is important to have balanced schedule

Depending on how many students you expect to attend, you may want to have multiple activities occurring at the same time. Some activities may be geared toward larger groups with specific start and end times (comedy act, movie). Others might be ongoing activities where students can come in and out as they please (casino tables, dancing, rock climbing wall).

When planning the party's schedule, be sure to get student input. See the [Senior Input](#) section to see a sample activity survey. Popular activities have included those listed below.

### **Music & Entertainment**

- Air guitar contest
- Caricaturist
- Comedian
- Dancing/dance contest
- DJ
- Face painter
- Fortune teller
- Handwriting analyst
- Henna tattoo artist
- Hypnotist
- Improv team
- Karaoke
- Live bands
- Magician
- Music videos
- Talent contest

### **Reflective Activities**

- Baby picture contest
- Class video
- Forecasting the future
- Slide show
- Speeches/memories
- Time capsule
- Tributes to lost students

### **Sensory Activities**

- Art projects
- Candlelight walk/vigil
- Chair massages
- Cookie decorating
- Flashlight storytelling
- Food fight
- Food relay
- Giant banana split
- Graffiti wall
- Special meal

### **Physical Activities, Games & Contests**

- Arcades
- Basketball
- Batting cages
- Bingo
- Bounce house
- Bowling
- Carnival games
- Casinos
- Hairy leg contest
- Horseshoes/washers
- Hula hoop contest
- Inflatable games
- Laser tag
- Limbo
- Miniature golf
- Obstacle course
- Rock wall
- Rollerskating
- Scavenger hunt
- Slam dunk contest
- Strong man/woman contest
- Sumo wrestling
- Swimming
- Team relays
- Tennis
- Velcro wall
- Video games
- Volleyball

## Food

Project Celebration coordinators often designate a food committee responsible for planning the menu and serving meals and snacks during the event. Volunteers can be divided into shifts to prepare the food and keep tables replenished throughout the night. It's a good idea to check with the city or state health department regarding special provisions for food handling. Be sure to check student's food allergies. Make sure you have plenty of food for students that do have food allergies and keep that food separate. The venue will need to have the appropriate kitchen appliances for perishable/non-perishable food items.

The meals and snacks can reflect your Project Celebration theme, if applicable. Table decorations should also correlate with the theme. Don't forget to include food choices when soliciting student input. Examples are included in the Senior Survey section. Popular menu choices include:

- Barbeque
- Breakfast tacos
- Chicken tenders
- Chips and dips
- Class cake
- Cookie cart
- Deli sandwiches
- Espresso bar
- Energy bars
- Fajitas
- Giant sub sandwiches
- Hamburgers
- Hot dogs
- Ice cream sundae station

- Nachos
- Pancakes
- Pizza
- Popcorn machine
- Salad bar
- Smoothie bar
- Soft drink stand
- Tacos
- Water station

Some menu choices can double as activities and should have scheduled start times (giant banana split, cookie decorating, special breakfast). However, food should be available all night so there is no interruption of activities.

The students will consume more than you think. Provide multiple food stations and have plenty of soft drinks and water available. Make sure you have ample food for volunteers, too.

## Sample Schedule

The following pages include a sample schedule and a blank spreadsheet you can fill out to aid in scheduling the evening's festivities. On the night of Project Celebration, make sure volunteers and staff have a copy of the schedule with a map and diagram of the activities, or take everyone on a quick tour at the beginning of their shift. It's also beneficial to have multiple copies of the schedule posted in various areas of the event facility.

## Project Celebration Schedule & Locations

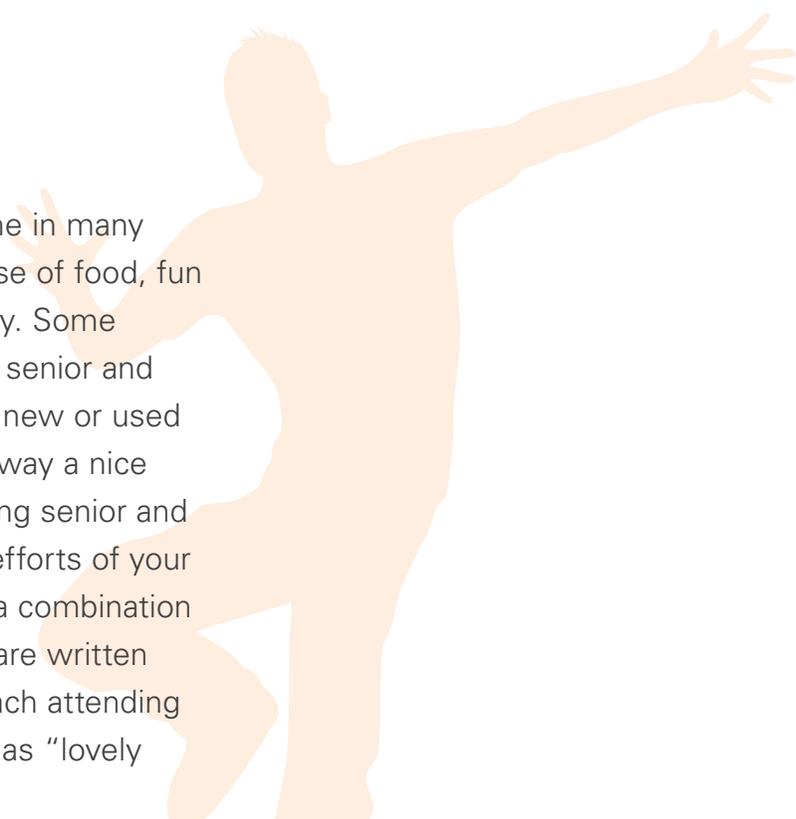
Time	Entrance	Cafeteria	Small Gym	Large Gym	Library	Theater	Classroom	Gym Corridor
9 P.M.	Set Up							
9:30 P.M.								
1 P.M.	Check In	Ongoing: DJ/ Dancing Karaoke Various Contests	Ongoing: Basketball Volleyball	Ongoing: Caricaturist Fortune Teller Henna Tattoos Sumo Wrestling Velcro Wall	Ongoing: Casino Tables		Video Games	Food will be served all night in the corridor and concession stand.
10:30 P.M.						Movie		
1 P.M.	Doors Lock							
11:30 P.M.	Security/ Emergency Contact Point							
12 A.M.								
12:30 A.M.								
1 A.M.								Giant Banana Split Build
1:30 A.M.								
2 A.M.						Improv Comedy Show		
2:30 A.M.								
3 A.M.						Senior Video		
3:30 A.M.								
4 A.M.								
4:30 A.M.								Farewell Breakfast and Prizes
5 A.M.								
5:30 A.M.								
6 A.M.	Check Out							





# PRIZES & FAVORS

A successful Project Celebration can come in many forms. Most organizers rely on the promise of food, fun and prizes to generate interest in the party. Some schools give away resource bags to each senior and have a drawing for one grand prize, like a new or used car that someone donated. Others give away a nice prize worth \$100 or more to each attending senior and do not offer a grand prize. Based on the efforts of your fundraising committee, you may choose a combination of these options. The ideas offered here are written as though you'll give a resource bag to each attending senior along with a nice prize, both given as "lovely parting gifts."



## Collecting and Storing Giveaways

Giveaways and donations for Project Celebration are categorized as:

<b>1</b>	Cash or checks, which are deposited in your Project Celebration bank account and used to purchase prizes and resource bag stuffers. To obtain the right amount of stuff you need, your fundraisers will need to calculate how much money needs to be collected to meet your giveaway goals.
<b>2</b>	Merchandise or gift cards worth \$50 – \$100 from area merchants, banks and service providers to use as prizes. You may need to supplement these kinds of donations by purchasing merchandise and gift cards from area vendors.
<b>3</b>	Small items, coupons, brochures and samples to fill resource bags

Orchestrating this effort takes coordination. Be sure to keep accurate, up-to-date records of what is collected, and take periodic inventories of the giveaways. Designate one person as the keeper of the giveaway list (in a spreadsheet, database or even on your Project Celebration website) so you always know which businesses have been solicited, what's been donated and, if merchandise, its brand name and estimated value. Have this list available to avoid having more than one volunteer solicit a business or service provider.

Take a look at last year's donors (unless this is your school's first year hosting Project

Celebration). You can ask past donors to contribute again. You may also want to use information about past donors to solicit new donors—there's nothing like a little friendly competition to increase your contributions. After all, it's for a good cause!

Although parents of seniors are a built-in source of funding, there's no end to the kinds of organizations that would consider giving. Solicit funding and merchandise from a variety of locally owned businesses, chains and even national companies. Most businesses have community outreach goals, and Project Celebration is certainly a worthy cause. You

may ask your employed seniors and parents to solicit donations from their employers. Also, inquire among civic, fraternal, community, neighborhood and youth organizations in your area. Don't forget schools.

Be sure to have a sheet that explains what Project Celebration is, in case you need to leave it with someone for a solicitation call later. See a sample solicitation letter in the [Budget & Fundraising](#) section.

Determine a secure location to store all giveaways. You may elect to divide this responsibility among several volunteers or parents. Also, make sure you arrange enough large vehicles to help transport prizes and resource bags to the high school the morning of the event.

## Resource Bags

Giving away resource bags filled with small, useful items and helpful information is a nice way to provide a little added value for your students and a great way to feature some of the products and services of area merchants, banks and service providers.

Your local representative at the Texas Department of Transportation may be able to offer you some free promotional items to use in your bags. The section titled TxDOT As a Resource describes materials sometimes available. Contact your local Traffic Safety Specialist for additional items.

TxDOT is constantly searching for new materials to spread traffic safety messages that also interest young people, so check with your local representative to see what may be offered.

Customize your bags based on what's available in your area, what merchants can donate (one per student is desirable) and what won't break your bank. Some vendors may want to donate the bags themselves. Be sure to ask for a deal when purchasing lots of small items, especially if you're buying in bulk. It never hurts to ask.

Fill your seniors' resource bags with stuff, such as:

- Calendars
- Candy, gum
- Confetti
- Coupons
- Small gift cards
- Hats, visors
- Highlighters
- Pamphlets, brochures
- Pens, pencils
- Personal care items
- Product samples
- Snacks

Once your team has collected enough items for all resource bags, organize a team of volunteers or students to assemble the bags before the event. Be sure to store stuffed bags (open side up) in large boxes you can transport to the event drop-off area when you are ready to distribute them.

## Prizes

Your Budget and Fundraising Committee has been working hard to get you the cash you need to make this event worthwhile, so make sure your prize purchasers buy prizes that students want. (The section titled Student Input has a sample survey to students about what kinds of prizes they might like.) Many schools allocate funds to purchase a nice prize for every attending senior.

Prizes should include fun or practical items teens might need as they start their adult lives. You'll need multiples of various items, such as:

- Coffee Maker
- Digital cameras
- Dorm fridges
- Video game players
- Gift cards, certificates
- Microwaves
- Stereos
- Flatscreens
- Laptops
- Ipads

## A Word About Cash

A word about cash: Experienced organizers know not to give cash to students. Graduates have been known to pool funds and throw a party later where alcohol and other drugs are available. Organizers may even put themselves and the school at risk of lawsuits should funds be involved in the purchase of alcohol, other drugs, guns, knives or other items that later cause harm.

If it becomes known that cash was provided at Project Celebration, organizers or school administrators may be liable. Check with authorities about any local, state or federal laws, rules and guidelines that may pertain. If you want to have a cash cube activity, you may want to use fake money that can later be exchanged for a gift card or other item.

## Distributing Educational and Promotional Bags

You can give students their resource bags anytime, but if you dole out giveaways during the event, students may worry about their things, which might distract them from having fun. You may want to hand each student their resource bag after the event, such as when they get off the bus.

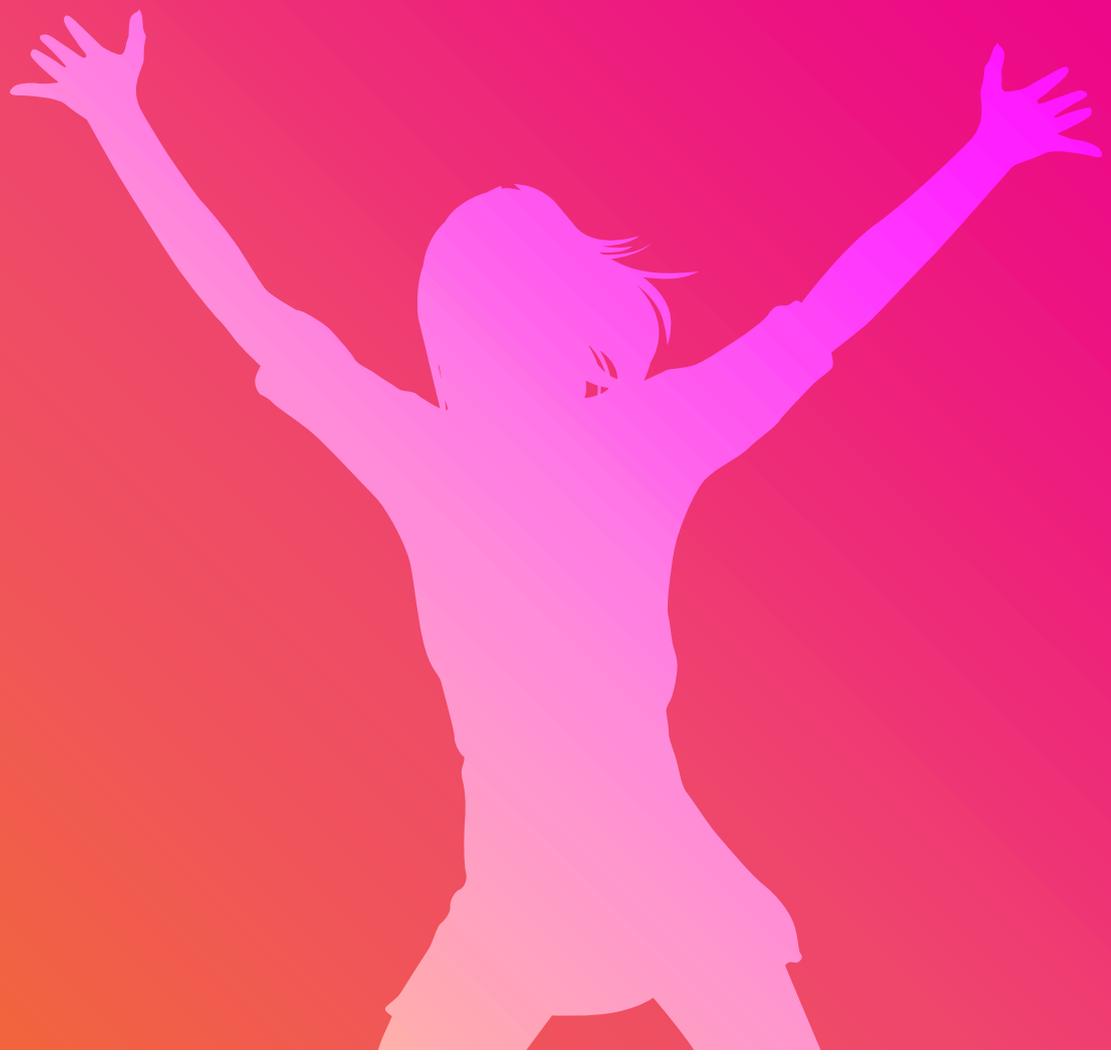
## Distributing Prizes

You may want to give away your prizes during the night using drawings or as booth prizes for contests and games, which means students will have to keep track of their prizes during the event. Most organizers opt to keep it simple by distributing prizes at the end of Project Celebration, such as when students return to the high school to their cars or rides.

Once all students are registered and locked in, complete your list of who gets what. Aim for an equitable distribution among your seniors (as much as is practical and logical) with prizes most teens would value.

Using your final attendee list, record on the prize list the name of each student attending the event. (If you purchased wristbands with pre-printed numbers, apply these numbers on the prize list.)

Then make sure your volunteers who distribute prizes have a final list.



# EVALUATING & REPORTING

If you secured a mini-grant from TxDOT, you are then required to complete a Report on Activities form. A **Report on Activities** form is located at the end of this section, for an electronic version check with your local Traffic Safety Specialist. This report is due within 30 days of your Project Celebration event. Even if you're not working with TxDOT on Project Celebration, you may want to document what your team did so future organizers can learn from your year's efforts.

- Activities, entertainment
- Alcohol/drug use education activities
- Committees involved
- Communication, website
- Cost of event (including income statement or balance sheet)
- Date of event
- Decorations, theme
- Event/activity length
- Fundraisers, total donations from event, ticket sales
- Giveaways
- Location of event, including address
- Number of students and adults attending
- Other comments to describe the event for future planners
- Publicity
- Photos
- Refreshments
- Security
- Setup
- Transportation
- Volunteers involved

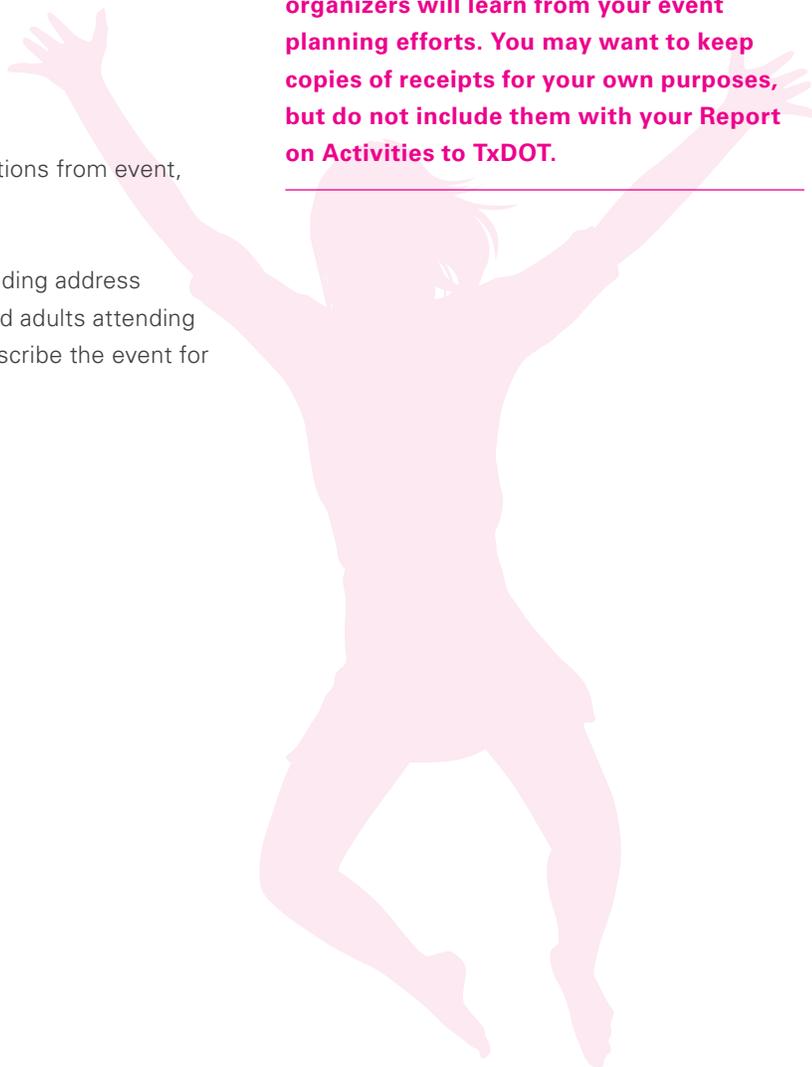
---

## Keep Copies

---

**File a copy of each Report on Activities at the end of this section. You can refer back to these reports as needed, and future organizers will learn from your event planning efforts. You may want to keep copies of receipts for your own purposes, but do not include them with your Report on Activities to TxDOT.**

---





# REPORT ON ACTIVITIES

---

TxDOT District

---

City of

---

Name of School

---

Date of Celebration

---

Number of Students in the Senior Class

---

Number of Students in Attendance

---

Event Theme

---

Event Location

---

Awarded money from TxDOT

---

Total Project Celebration Budget

---

Newspaper Clipping (if any)

---

2 Photos Capturing the Event

---

---



# RECOGNITION

Don't assume that people know you appreciate their contributions – tell them! Take the time to thank sponsors, donors, school staff and volunteers, both personally and publicly, no matter how busy you are. You want to convey how much your committee genuinely appreciates their generosity, time and donations.

Promptness is critical. Write and send thank-you notes and letters as soon as you receive donations, or at least within one month of the event.

## Sponsors

### Letters of Appreciation

It's always a good idea to send a letter of appreciation for any sponsorship or donation you receive. These letters acknowledge the contribution and help cultivate a relationship, making it more likely for the individual or company to donate again. They also serve as proof of the donation for tax purposes. Include a receipt if you did not give one after receiving the donation.

You can adapt the sample letter included at the end of this section. Print the thank-you on school or Project Celebration letterhead and send with a certificate of appreciation. If the donation was material items and not money, briefly describe the items received and the estimated market value, if known.

### Certificates of Appreciation

If you would like to thank your sponsors for their contributions and commitment to Project Celebration in a more tangible way, you might consider presenting them with a certificate of appreciation. You may even want to frame the certificate for the company to display at their place of business. See the example at the end

of this section. Feel free to reproduce it as needed.

### Public Thanks

Rewarding sponsors with good publicity is a great way to recognize their contributions. One way to do this is to put an advertisement in local newspapers and newsletters listing all the contributors and supporters. You can also write a Letter to the Editor to express the committee's thanks to all involved. Samples are included at the end of this section.

## Donors

### Thank-You Cards from Students

When it comes to fundraising, saying thank you is essential. The committee should always send an official letter of gratitude, but a warmer and more meaningful way to thank donors is to encourage students to write personalized thank-you notes. You can help students to do this by providing stationary and instructions. You could even have the seniors write the thank-you cards before Project Celebration to let donors know how much they are anticipating the event. Have the students return the notes to a central location to ensure that no one is left out. Then mail the cards promptly.



## School Staff

This group is often overlooked in the recognition process. Some school staffs are more involved in Project Celebration than others, but don't forget that teachers, principals and school administrators play a big role in getting students to this moment of celebration in their lives. Consider adding a line specifically thanking the school staff in a Letter to the Editor or thank-you ad in the paper. Certificates of appreciation are also a good way to thank school staff members for their support and involvement with the project.

## Volunteers

Recognition of adult and student volunteers begins the moment they join your team: Offer continuous encouragement and support from the Project Celebration committee. The biggest thank-you is treating volunteers as vital members of the team and as individuals who bring their own strengths and talents to the event planning.

Good volunteer managers understand the value of praising hard work at the time it takes place. Although a follow-up thank-you note is recommended, this kind of ongoing recognition is more valuable. You may also want to announce your thanks at the Project Celebration event.

An example volunteer thank-you letter is included in this section. Adapt the letter to your Project Celebration by referring to the party's theme or reference a particularly memorable moment you shared with the volunteer or from the event.

## How To Write a Meaningful Thank-You Note

Seniors, use these tips for personal handwritten notes.

### Nuts and bolts

- Use blue or black ink
- Write legibly
- Put the date and year in the upper right-hand corner

### Greet the giver

- Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms/Dr. ....,
- If the contact is the business owner or the representative of a company, begin with Dear ....., thank you and ABC Company for .....

### Express gratitude

On behalf of the Senior Class of (year), thank you for:

- your kindness
- your meaningful support
- your kind donation
- your generous contribution
- your considerate gift
- the (list merchandise) your organization contributed
- your generosity

### Mention what they donated to

- toward this year's Project Celebration, our alcohol-free and drug-free graduation party.

### One more thing

Add a sentence to let the giver know what their gift means to you. This conveys that you put some intentional thought into the thank-you note, especially if you know the giver personally.

- I am proud to be part of a community that invests so much in the lives of ..... High School students.
- You have really made a difference in the lives of the seniors at ..... High School.
- It is so encouraging to know that our community supports ..... High School students in so many ways.

### Wrap it up

- Thank you again for your generosity
- Many thanks for your continuous support
- Once again, thank you very much for your gift

### Last but not least...

- Sincerely.
- Best regards,
- Sign your own name and add "and the Class of ....."
- Don't forget to address the envelope!



Date

Donor's Name  
Street address  
City, TX Zip  
(area code) phone

Dear .....,

On behalf of ..... High School's Class of ..... and their parents, thank you and (company name) for your generous donation of \$ ..... to this year's Project Celebration. Your support makes it possible for us to offer our graduates an alcohol-free and drug-free way to celebrate this special achievement in their lives. Without people like you, this memorable event would have never been possible.

In the coming years, we plan to continue the Project Celebration tradition of providing safe parties for our graduating classes. We hope for your continued support in the future.

Please keep this written acknowledgment of your donation for your tax records. Once again, thank you for your generous donation.

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Name  
*Chairperson, Project Celebration Planning Committee*  
(area code) phone number



Date

Volunteer's Name

Street address

City, TX Zip

(area code) phone

Dear .....,

On behalf of the Project Celebration Committee and ..... High School's Class of ....., I would like to extend the sincerest thanks for the time and effort you volunteered to make this year's Project Celebration a success. Your involvement made it possible for us to offer our graduates a fun and safe way to celebrate this special achievement in their lives. We really could not have pulled it off without your support!

Once again, thank you for all your help.

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Name

*Chairperson, Project Celebration Planning Committee*

(area code) phone number



**Project Celebration Organizers Say**

# **“Thanks for the Memories”**

Dear Editor,

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the community and businesses of ..... for all their generosity, enthusiasm and heartfelt support of ..... High School's Project Celebration.

Their unwavering commitment to help provide a safe and fun environment for our seniors has made this project a success. Those who donated time, funding and merchandise clearly made a big difference in the lives of many young adults.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Class of ..... for representing ..... High School proudly with their participation at Project Celebration. To the students, we say congratulations and good luck in all your future endeavors.

*Chairperson, Project Celebration Planning Committee*



# CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

IS PRESENTED TO

IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF YOUR NOTEWORTHY CONTRIBUTIONS AND SUPPORT OF  
PROJECT CELEBRATION

PROJECT CELEBRATION CHAIRPERSON



# PUBLICITY

Media coverage is very important to have a successful Project Celebration. It is needed before, during and after the event to help educate the community of the purpose of Project Celebration. Below are media resource examples that can be used to maximize your school's Project Celebration event:

Keep in mind that television and newspaper editors often get 200 or more email, calls and faxes a day from people like you, as well as from professional public relations (PR) consultants, pitching dozens of fundraisers and other good causes, demonstrations, announcements, celebrity news. Along with any breaking news stories in your area, you guessed it, you are competing with a lot of people for news producers' time.

The news media are your customers and the product you are selling is your story. Make it a good one that stands out and grabs their attention so they want to cover your event. If you know people in the business, use your contacts!



Facebook



Twitter



School's website



Newspaper



Television



Radio

## Tips for getting your Project Celebration event ready for social media/media:

- **Timeliness:**

Provide information to media outlets prior to events and shortly after.

- **Relevance:**

The more people affected by your story; the more likely news outlets will pick it up. Think of ways your story affects people of all ages in your community. Example – the reason for Project Celebration – give stats on Underage Drinking in your area or statewide. Contact your Traffic Safety Specialists in your area for this information.

- **Proximity:**

Report to local/surrounding newspapers, radio stations, and television stations.

## A Picture is worth a thousand words

Pictures can be taken throughout the planning and fundraising process. You may also want to take a photo of the senior class at the beginning stages of Project Celebration. These pictures can be posted on social media sites to help advertise and promote the event. You may have the seniors make a video promoting Project Celebration and the purpose. Share these with the media.

## Press Release:

Know your local media and engage them in your program. Do you have a daily newspaper, radio station in your area, TV news? Give them

a call, tell them about your program and schedule interviews. Find out the Medias deadlines so you don't miss an opportunity for front page coverage!

Engage participating students also to be available for interviews. For your interview you may want to bring some visuals so your time in front of the camera is engaging not just for the interviewer but also our audience.

**Public Service Announcement (PSA):**

PSAs can be read on the radio, at schools events, including athletic events. Enlist your seniors to record the PSAs.

**Interview Tips**

The key to a good interview is good preparation. Here are some pointers to help you shine!

<b>1</b>	Boil it down. Write and rehearse three sound bites that capture the essence of your story. You'll need these to make a memorable impression on your audience and to use during short interviews or drive-time radio. Identify your message and deliver it.
<b>2</b>	Rehearse. Practice your delivery in front of friends. Record yourself. Get familiar with media reporters in advance so you can adapt to their style.
<b>3</b>	De-stress. Relax before the interview by breathing from your diaphragm. Flex and relax your muscles. Shake it off.
<b>4</b>	Connect with your host. Greet your host with a firm handshake. Be a good listener so you can respond to all questions. Make and then maintain eye contact. This type of body language is vital to building a rapport with your host.
<b>5</b>	Remember, you're there to help the reporter create a compelling or entertaining segment. Show confidence, passion and enthusiasm. Be aware of your speech volume and tones.
<b>6</b>	End your interview with a handshake. Ask when it will air, and send a thank-you note after it does. You will stand out as a quality guest, increasing your odds of getting coverage again for a future event.

---

**When fundraising set minimum and maximum sponsorships and then let the businesses know you will include large sponsorships as partnerships in news releases or for on-camera exposure.**

---

## Next Steps – Get the Press!

You have prepared and rehearsed now it's time to get some coverage. Contact the news media directly. Use the contacts you know, or someone else's contacts. Do your research in choosing the reporter for your event in other words know their style. Give them a few days' notice, and then follow up with a phone call the day before and day of the event.

### Television and Radio

- Do your own research and have facts handy.
- Watch or listen to the station or show to understand how they cover stories.
- Make sure your story is visual. Television requires it. Even for radio, your host will be more engaged in your story if s/he can describe something you bring to the interview.
- Ask what they prefer for story pitches: fax or email. Keep it to two sentences followed by the who, what, where, when and how. Attach your print news release. (See tips on how to write a news release later in this section.)
- Follow up by phone. Be pleasant but persistent.
- Be available when the reporter calls. Give your cell phone number.

### Print

- Pitch ideas, not topics. Project Celebration is a topic. It's also an event where a school will host a lock in alcohol and chemical free event on graduation night. That is the idea.
- Write a good press release.
- Ask the schools Public Information Officer (PIO) to help you.
- Ask how they would like to receive the story either fax or by email.
- Follow up by phone. Be pleasant but persistent.
- Be available when the reporter calls. Give your cell phone number.

## Writing a News Release

Editors and reporters review the first few words of a news release to determine whether or not it's worth running. Writing a good, effective news release is essential in getting coverage for your event. Here are some essential components of a good news release. Keep it to one page, double-spaced.

<b>1</b>	<b>Headline/Subhead:</b> Write a headline and subhead that grab the attention of the editor in fewer than ten words. Summarize the information in the story in a dynamic way. You have just a few words to make your release stand out among the many others that editors receive on any given day.
<b>2</b>	Explain who, what, when, where, why and how the story relates to the public. Lead with a hook, a factual statement that gets your audience interested in reading more. Remember your first paragraph is critical, it summarizes the release and the remaining paragraph provides the detail.
<b>3</b>	<b>Body:</b> Present the most important information and quotes first, in case editors need to cut the story to fit space constraints. You may want to get a quote from a school administrator or possibly a teen safety advocate.  Provide data that's relevant to your story, research legislative decision that pertains also. Present a possible solution to keeping students safe on graduation night. Present lessons learned from past events.  Have an angle, such as how to solve the problem of keeping students safe on the night of their graduation. Other possible angles are how success came from tragedy and inspirational outcomes from lessons learned. It never hurts to include tips, such as relevant things readers can do to keep teens and others safe.
<b>4</b>	<b>Close:</b> Repeat your contact information.

---

### Keep Your Clips

**Once you get media coverage, keep copies of clippings in a binder. Include the date on your clip so you know when it ran. Then you can share with other media outlets. If news producers know others have covered your event, they may be more interested. You never know unless you try.... Keep trying.**

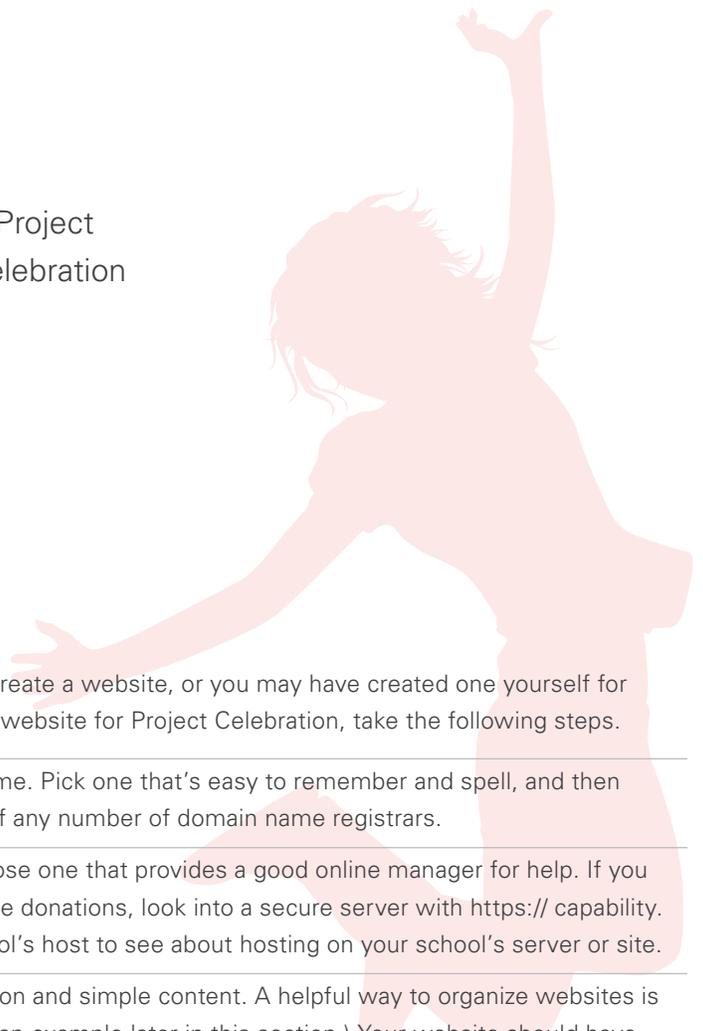
---



# WEBSITE

Develop a website to showcase your school's Project Celebration event. You can use your Project Celebration website to:

- Inform parents and students 24/7
- Communicate with other organizers
- Accept online donations
- Recognize and thank donors

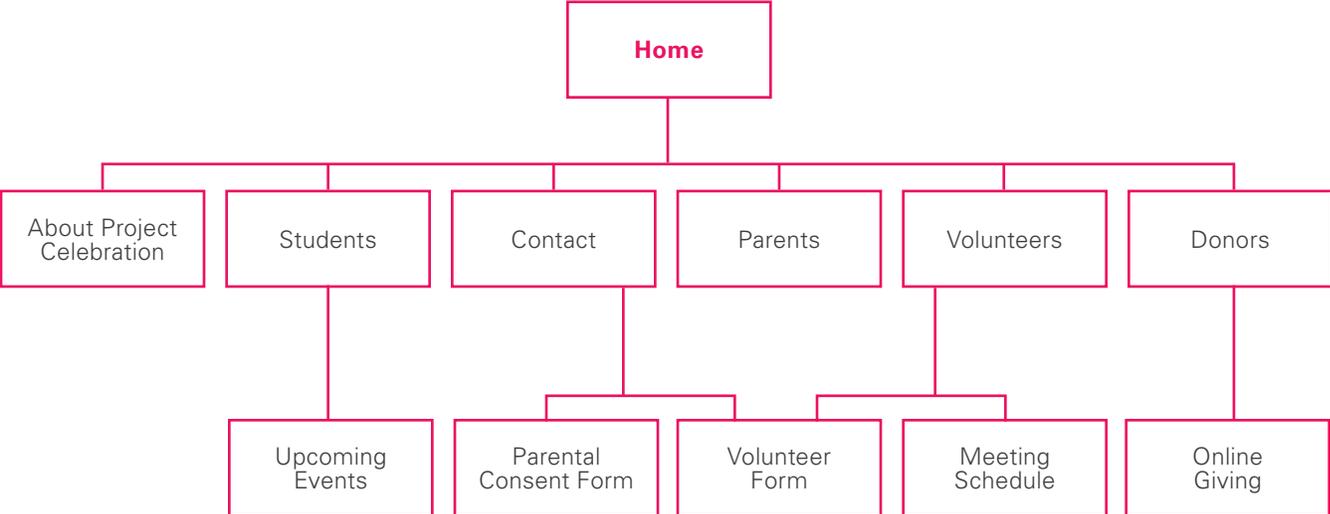


You may know someone who can create a website, or you may have created one yourself for other projects. To develop a simple website for Project Celebration, take the following steps.

<b>1</b>	Register a domain name. Pick one that's easy to remember and spell, and then register it using one of any number of domain name registrars.
<b>2</b>	Pick a web host. Choose one that provides a good online manager for help. If you decide to accept online donations, look into a secure server with https:// capability. Check with your school's host to see about hosting on your school's server or site.
<b>3</b>	Develop easy navigation and simple content. A helpful way to organize websites is with a site map. (See an example later in this section.) Your website should have sections for each of your audiences: Students, Parents, Volunteers and Donors. Include a description of Project Celebration. Add parental consent and other forms. You might even want to have an online calendar or a list of upcoming events. Be sure to include a section that allows visitors to contact you and other organizers by email or phone.
<b>4</b>	Create an uncomplicated design. You may want to ask someone experienced in graphic design to lay out your site. Ask them for a simple design, soft, neutral background colors, plenty of white space and large text with few fonts. Ask your designer to use 3D effects, bright colors, videos, sound and large images sparingly. (Large files increase download time, slowing down your visitors' experiences.)
<b>5</b>	Find an experienced programmer. You probably know someone who can write html or use web-building software. Find out whether s/he knows scripting language to make your site spiffy. Maybe even one of your students has the experience needed to help build the site.
<b>6</b>	Explore what it would take to accept online donations. For secure credit card payments, you may want to apply for a merchant account (a bank account that accepts online credit card payments) or use a payment service, such as PayPal. Whatever you select, make sure you can view your records frequently to see what's been donated and ensure the money gets to your account.



# EXAMPLE SITE MAP





# RESOURCES

## Helpful Phone Numbers

### 9-1-1 for Emergencies

Call to report life-threatening situations, such as a roadside emergency, highway crash or suspected intoxicated driver. Be ready to give your phone number and location

### Department of Public Safety (DPS)

24 Hour Non-Emergency Numbers/Roadside Assistance

800-525-5555

[txdps.state.tx.us](http://txdps.state.tx.us)

Call for non-emergency roadside assistance; answered 24 hours a day by a live operator. For emergencies dial 9-1-1

### Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)

800-GET-MADD (800-438-6233)

[madd.org/tx](http://madd.org/tx)

MADD is devoted to preventing drunk driving and its social causes

### Texas Crime Stoppers

800-252-TIPS (800-252-8477)

Call if you witness a crime or have any information about one. You do not have to give your name, and your information may earn you a cash reward

### Texas Standing Tall

512-442-7501

[texansstandingtall.com](http://texansstandingtall.com)

This statewide coalition works to prevent youth tobacco, alcohol and drug use

### Teens in the Driver Seat

210-979-9411

[t-driver.com](http://t-driver.com)

A free peer to peer safe driving program

### Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC)

888-THE-TABC (888-843-8222)

[tabc.state.tx.us](http://tabc.state.tx.us)

TABC regulates the alcohol beverage industry

### Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

512-416-3175

Behavioral Traffic Safety Section

### Texas Travel Information Center (TxDOT)

800-452-9292

Hear pre-recorded messages on road conditions throughout Texas, updated daily or as conditions warrant