

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 a note of things you do to 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 goody 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 & Goody 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: _____
STREET

CITY STATE ZIP

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

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

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