



School Council Tip Sheet

Event Planning Checklist

16 to 20 Weeks Ahead

Decide who will oversee or chair the event and recruit volunteers. Bring everyone together and decide on big picture details, such as: topic/theme, program, potential speakers, budget, volunteer support, date, time and location. To help your planning, consider the following:

- Whom do you want to attend? Who is your target audience?
- Do you need a rain date?
- Is there seating, parking and accessibility for people with disabilities?
- How much money do you need to raise?
- What items can you get donated?
- How many people can you accommodate?
- How long is your event going to last?
- Are you going to need any permits?

Generally, two to three committees are sufficient to plan and implement your event: a Promotions Committee, Program Committee, and if you plan to solicit many donations or sponsorships, a Donations Committee. Otherwise, donations can be part of one of the other committee's responsibility. Appoint Chairpersons with the time, energy, and commitment to do the work. If you have a large group of volunteers, you can develop specific sub-committees, such as Food, Entertainment, Decorations, etc. The committees should be organized in a way that best meets your needs.

12 to 16 Weeks Ahead

Identify and contact potential partners, donors and local dignitaries to help with the event. Look for well-known citizens who are from different cultural groups, heads of community groups or newspaper editors. Create and send out letters of invitation to groups/people you would like to have as exhibitors, speakers, presenters, etc. Include the purpose, date, time and place. Identify the benefits they will achieve by supporting your event, and provide forms to register their commitment.

8 to 12 Weeks Ahead - Create Checklists

Chairperson's Checklist

Meet with committee Chairpersons regularly, offer help when needed, and monitor progress.

Promotions Checklist

- Invite local trustees, celebrities, government officials, etc.
- Designate greeters to accompany celebrity guests.
- Decide whether you are going to use flyers, signs, advertisements or other methods to advertise your event. Post flyers four to six weeks before the event.
- Develop a media contact list. Alert communications@ocdsb.ca for advice and recommendations for dealing with media.
- Call radio and television stations and newspapers to introduce yourself and the event.
- Prepare a news release to send out one week before the event, if appropriate.
- Recruit a volunteer photographer to take pictures at the event.
- Be available on the day of the event to meet and greet media representatives and answer questions.
- Make promotional signs, directional signs and posters.

Program Checklist

- Estimate how many people will be attending and plan for refreshments.
- Ensure you have adequate parking, access for people with disabilities, restrooms, and a secure place for coats (don't forget hangers).
- Have on hand a first aid kit, fire extinguisher, a cellular phone (or access to a phone), and emergency phone numbers.
- Make name tags and site maps for all volunteers, presenters, exhibitors.
- Book tables for exhibits, registration, displays, etc.
- Recruit volunteer greeters and runners for last-minute needs.
- Plan activities and entertainment. Arrange for stage, sound, and audio-visual equipment as required.
- Follow up on invitations to exhibitors, speakers, presenters and verify who will attend. Send confirmation letters.
- Recruit volunteers to help exhibitors, speakers, and presenters set up, unload and load materials or displays.
- Decide if you are going to serve refreshments. If you don't want to provide refreshments, you could invite local vendors to sell food.
- Arrange for required tables, chairs, napkins, cups, plates, and utensils for food, exhibitors, and awards.
- Recruit volunteers for pre-event set-up and post-event clean-up.
- Decide what decorations you will have and where they go.

1 Week Ahead

Send news release out to radio, television and print media. Don't forget local bloggers or others in your community with a strong social media following. Purchase non-perishable food and utensils, etc., and confirm all deliveries and pick ups.

1 Day Ahead

- Pick up orders and arrange deliveries as appropriate.
- Test audio-visual and sound equipment.
- Set up tables and decorate if needed.
- Purchase all perishable food items and/or ensure that all food is prepared.
- Ensure that first aid kit, fire extinguishers, phone, and emergency phone numbers are readily accessible.
- Do a final review to make sure all checklist items are completed.
- Do as much set up as possible the day before.
- Email media contacts with a reminder about your event.

The Big Day!

- Ensure that volunteer greeters, helpers and runners are briefed, and ready to go
- Relax and have a great event!
- Don't forget to thank all donors, workers, partners, VIPs and everyone else who helped with your event

After the Event

- Clean up and return all borrowed equipment and supplies.
- Send thank you notes to all who helped to make the event a success
- Make notes for next year's event - you can always improve!
- Meet with your committee chairs for a post-event evaluation

Questions?

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