

ACPTA MINI-GRANTS for PTAs

SOME IDEAS FOR USING A GRANT AT YOUR SCHOOL

SUMMER EVENTS FOR FAMILIES

Summer is a great time to focus on fun. You can invite your campus community to meet for fun events once a month during the summer: a picnic on your campus, a gathering at a local pool, an event in your library where people check out library books, a family game night, a family dance night or an outdoor movie night. Summer events keep people connected and they're a ton of fun!

Funds can be used to pay for a movie and outdoor screen, for food, for a DJ or for other things to help host a fun event.

PLAYGROUND PLAYDATES FOR INCOMING KINDERGARTNERS

Starting school for the first time is a big deal – for students and their families. Your PTA can host playground playdates for incoming students, beginning the day of Kindergarten Roundup. Knowing just one other person helps people feel connected to the school. Make a schedule of monthly playdates that starts in the spring and continues until after the first week of school. Invite new families, and be sure a teacher, your principal or some families with older students join. It's a chance for older students to lead and it will make your community strong!

Funds can be used for snacks and they can be used to print fliers to share with families at Kindergarten Roundup and to post at parks, pools and preschools around your neighborhood.

FIELD TRIP FUNDS

Field trips are a fantastic learning opportunity, but they are rarely free. Ask teachers on your campus where they would like to take their students, then help them get there!

Funds can be used for transportation, admission and snacks.

TEACHER APPRECIATION BREAKFAST OR LUNCH

Teachers are the heart of every school – so important to the success of each student. Show your school's teachers how much they are valued by hosting a PTA teacher appreciation lunch or breakfast. It can be catered by AISD Food Service or a high school culinary program, you can buy food from an area business, or you can have volunteers bring food from home. It's all a way to say thank you to your school's teachers in a special and memorable way. To make it even more meaningful, have a teacher or parent write a thank you note to each teacher.

Funds can be used for food and decorations.

FREE FUN FAMILY FRIDAYS

Families want to connect with each other. And your campus is a great place for that to happen. Plan a year of Free Fun Family Fridays to bring people together and strengthen your community. You can host a family game night (families bring games from home and play together), a picnic on the playground (everyone brings dinner from home), a family movie night, a STEM night, a star party... The goal is to get people together – talking, connecting and having fun.

Funds can be used for food, supplies or a special entertainer or guest.

STAAR, EOC or AP TESTING SNACKS

Students need energy to concentrate and do their best. Your PTA can provide healthy snacks or breakfast for students who are taking STARR tests, EOC exams or AP tests. When students bodies feel good, their minds can be at their best!

Funds can be used to buy healthy food to share with students.

FAMILY RESOURCE ROOM OR AREA

A family resource room or area is a great way to show families that they are welcome partners on your campus. Do you want a play area for younger siblings to use while parents meet? Comfortable sofas or chairs and a rug to make a welcoming area for meetings? A library of books for families to borrow when they have questions about parenting? An upgrade to make your PSS office feel more inviting? It's a project that will have lasting benefits for many years to come!

Funds can be used to buy furniture, paint, books or toys to support a family resource space on your campus.

TRANSITION CAMP

Open your campus to incoming students for a day in the summer. They can get to know each other. They can learn their way around the campus. They can meet teachers and some older students. And parents can stay for coffee with the principal or your PTA after they drop students off. It's a great way to connect new students to your campus community.

Funds can be used to pay for food, supplies for games, pencils with your school name for each incoming student or transportation on an AISD bus for students who attend.

CREATE A WELCOMING ENTRY TO YOUR SCHOOL

When someone enters your school building for the first time, what do they see? Your PTA can help your school's entry say a big welcome to everyone who enters. Work with your principal to make a plan, help your PTA apply for funds, then transform your lobby into a place where everyone can feel at home!

Funds can be used for paint and other decorations that make your school's entry and lobby feel welcoming and special.

CLASSROOM SUPPORT

Ask your teachers what your PTA can help with. Look at the impact each will have on your campus and talk with your parent community to decide which you want to support, then apply for a mini-grant to help with that project.

Funds can be used for classroom needs. Remember, supporting teachers is a powerful way to support students.

MURAL ON YOUR CAMPUS

Your art teacher and students can work to design a mural for your campus. Maybe it's your school mascot, or a big wall with different activities and clubs represented. Maybe you want to document your neighborhood or your school's history. Find a spot, get permission and transform a blank space into a beautiful mural that shares the story of your school.

Funds can be used for paint, for food to support volunteers and for a celebration when your mural is ready to be unveiled.

FAMILY AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Welcome new families to your campus by creating a campus ambassador program. Ambassadors can help families learn about the school, meet other people and feel welcome and supported. Family partners can answer questions for new families, serve as a familiar face and introduce the new family to the campus community.

Funds can be used to create a display with pictures of family partners, so new families will have an easy way to know who is ready to help. They can be used to buy buttons or T-shirts for family ambassadors to wear during school events, and they can be used to host a breakfast or another event for ambassadors and new families.

SPORTS TEAM FUNDRAISER OR COMMUNITY BUILDER

If you are a high school or a middle school, a sports team can invite younger students to campus for a fun fundraiser. Schedule a day of fun and games at your school and publicize it to families at neighboring schools. Make sure you have permission from your principal and lots of adult helpers to keep things safe. Younger students can pay a fee to make it a fundraiser, or you can use a grant to make it free. Then invite them back to your next game and have them run onto the field or the court with your team.

Funds can be used for food, activities or give-aways like water bottles or T-shirts to build community spirit.

STUDENT SAFETY PATROL

Does your campus have a safety patrol? It's a great chance for older students to learn leadership skills. They can open doors in the carpool line, greet students as they walk to school and help raise and lower the flag.

Funds can be used to buy safety vests for students.

FAMILY DANCE

A family dance is a great way to bring people together. Find a fun playlist, decorate your cafeteria, serve some food and let the party begin! You can sell tickets and food to use the dance as a fundraiser, or you can invite people to come just to have a great time.

Funds can be used to pay for food, decorations, fun extras like glow necklaces and more.

HEALTHY LIFESTYLES EVENT

Invite high school students from one of AISD's culinary programs to lead a fun healthy lifestyles event focused on healthy no-cook snacks that students can make for themselves at home. Your PTA and the culinary students can work together to plan the menu. It's a fun, hands-on event that brings people together and shares great tools for kids.

Funds can be used to pay for supplies that can be used to make healthy snacks.

LITERACY LIBRARY TO SUPPORT STUDENT READING

Is literacy a priority on your campus? A literacy library can be a powerful tool to help students strengthen their reading skills. Ask your teachers if they would like one, and ask them to help you plan. Then tell them that your PTA will help them raise the funds.

Funds can be used to buy books for the literacy library.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR A TEACHER OVER THE SUMMER

The more our teachers know, the more they have to share with students. Ask teachers on your campus if they would like support for a special professional development program – to learn something they can bring back to share with teachers and students throughout your school. A PTA grant is a great way to help them with that opportunity.

Funds can be used to pay for the registration fee and basic travel expenses.

TEACHER VERSUS STUDENT SPORTING EVENT

Host a teacher versus student sports event like a volleyball game, a baseball game or a track and field event. Invite everyone to cheer the teams on.

Funds can be used for food for the event, for T-shirts for the players or for supplies.

PE EQUIPMENT

Does your PE class need some new equipment to help kids learn and have fun in PE? Consider supporting it with a mini-grant. At an elementary school, every kid is impacted by support for the PE program.

Funds can be used for anything that supports learning and your PE program.

TEACHER SUPPLY FUND

Teachers spend money out of their own pockets to buy supplies for their classrooms. Your PTA can offer a small supply fund to teachers on your campus – to help them help their students. You can give money to each teacher, each department or each grade. Your principal or some teachers can help you find the best way to support teachers in this way.

Funds can be used to buy supplies for to teacher or to reimburse teachers for supplies.

MONTHLY PARENT EDUCATION EVENTS

Parents and other family members have a lot to learn, too. Your PTA can help by offering monthly parent education events, focused on topics that are important to families at your school. What's important on your campus? Literacy? Student mental health? Healthy screen use? Friendships? Juvenile justice? Special education? Planning for college? Choosing a high school campus or a special high school CTE program? There are excellent free resources available in our community to talk about all of that, and much more. The ACPTA Back the Future Resource Guide is available on our website, and it will help you find great free resources to support almost any need and interest your families have. Use it to plan one meeting each month, to bring families together for learning and for fun.

Funds can be used for food at your meetings, or to pay for a special speaker.

BACK TO SCHOOL EVENT FOR FAMILIES

Your PTA can host a coffee or picnic for families near the beginning of the school year. Announce it, plan it, then watch people come together to connect!

Funds can be used for food for your event.

SUMMER READING CLUB

Schools are open during the summer. Ask your principal if your campus can host a weekly summer reading club in your school library. It's a great way to keep kids reading, and a great way to keep your community connected.

Funds can be used to buy books for kids to read or food for the event.

LITTLE FREE LIBRARY FOR YOUR CAMPUS

A Little Free Library is a box that holds books that people can take free of charge. If your campus does not have one yet, you can make one and stock it with books. It's a fun way to encourage reading and a fun way for people to share books – especially if people put donated books to the library as well as taking books out.

Funds can be used for supplies to make a library, for a pre-made Little Free Library and for books to put inside. Half Price Books, Recycled Reads and other used bookstores have low-cost books to help you get started.

SCHOOL T-SHIRT FUNDRAISER

Your PTA can buy school T-shirts to sell as a fundraiser. Then, with the money your PTA earns, you can buy more and raise even more. School shirts are a terrific way to help people feel connected to your community! (There are sales tax rules involved in PTA sales. Please email treasurer@austincouncilpta.org if you would like support.)

Funds can be used to buy the first group of T-shirts to sell.

CAMPUS CAMPOUT

Texas Children in Nature offers support for a campus campout – where families spend the night (or at least the evening) outdoors in nature on school grounds. You can invite Travis Audubon to talk about birds, the Travis County Astronomical Society to talk about stars, and parents or teachers to lead fun outdoor games or storytelling.

Funds can pay for food, supplies for games or the fee for someone to bring something special like a telescope.

FAMILY FIELD DAY OR FAMILY FUN RUN

Celebrate spring or back to school with a family field day or family fun run. Turn your campus into a place for everyone to come together and play, with music, silly races and games, or competitive races. It's a great chance to stay healthy and have fun.

Funds can be used for supplies for games, for food, for decorations or for other things that will support your event.

CAMPUS OPEN HOUSE FOR FAMILIES INTERESTED IN YOUR SCHOOL

You chose your school for a reason. Host an open house on your campus to show ALL families what's best about your school. Stay open late one evening, with teachers in classrooms and families and students on hand to share stories and answer questions. When people see your campus, meet the teachers and discover your campus community, they will be more interested in choosing your school for their own students.

Funds can be used to print fliers to publicize your event, to buy food for families, to print information for families to take home and for expenses to cover activities during the event.

CAMPUS-WIDE GARAGE SALE

Host a campus-wide garage sale at your school, to help families and raise funds for your PTA. Each family pays \$5 or \$10 for a table. That goes to the PTA. The money each family makes is theirs to keep. Your PTA can sell food and drinks at the event to raise extra funds. And you can invite people from the surrounding neighborhood to join you – bringing money into your school's PTA.

Funds can be used to buy food and drinks to sell, to promote the event or to support it in other ways.

ARCHITECTURE, ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION NIGHT

Is your school getting a major renovation or a new building? Your PTA can use that to build a link to learning by hosting an architecture, engineering and construction night. You can invite local engineers, architects and builders to speak. You can organize hands-on activities like building towers with marshmallows and toothpicks. You can have a Lego area where students build. You can have plans of your new campus for families to see. And you can have an art area where students draw their own buildings. Call the ACE Mentor Program, AIA Austin and the UT School of Architecture for help or ideas.

Funds can be used to buy supplies for activities or to pay an expert to lead an activity if you can't find someone to do it for free.

SUMMER FUN FAIR

Summer is a special time for kids. But you also want to make sure your student is safe, well-fed, and continuing to learn. Your PTA can host a summer fun fair to help families learn about summer opportunities in Austin. You can invite the City of Austin to talk about free programs at pools, parks and rec centers. AISD Food Service can talk about free summer meals for students. Teachers can talk about ensuring that students continue to learn new things over the summer. Your librarian can talk about using your neighborhood public library to continue reading. For older students, you can also talk about summer jobs for students.

Funds can be used for food to support the event or to print an information sheet for families.

CLASSROOM NOVELS

Do students on your campus read novels together as a class? If they don't, the issue might be the cost. Your PTA can talk with teachers about buying books for their classrooms, so students have more opportunities to read in school.

Funds can be used to buy books that will benefit teachers and their students.

campus back to school guide for your school <https://www.smallmiddleschool.org/2018/07/25/back-to-school-guide/>

MONTHLY COFFEES FOR GRANDPARENTS, DADS OR ALL FAMILIES

Your PTA can sponsor a monthly gathering for one or more groups. You can consider offering something just for grandparents or just for fathers. Or you can offer something for everyone at your school. Better yet, invite the principal, too. It's a great way to connect your community.

Funds can be used to buy food for the event.

CUSTODIAN, BUS DRIVER OR OTHER APPRECIATION

It takes many people to run a school. Host an event to show them that you notice the hard work they do and to tell them how much they matter to families on your campus.

Funds can be used for a small gift like a school water bottle or school T-shirt and a thank you note.

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

Celebrate the world at your campus with an international festival. Invite families to bring music and food from their home countries or the countries their ancestors came from. Ask people to share dances or stories from other places. Print passports or world maps for students so they can mark where they have explored. Link the event to learning in social studies class by having students learn about other countries.

Funds can be used for food, to pay performers, for decorations or to create maps or passports.