

EXAMPLE: Steps in Planning an After-Prom Party
(posted 11.28.2021)

1. Build a Committee (Summer of the year before)
 - a. Define roles of members. (One person may be able to do multiple jobs. Refine list as necessary for your event.) Sample Committee Positions:
 - i. Chair
 - ii. Entertainment
 - iii. Hospitality/Food
 - iv. Volunteers
 - v. Tickets
 - vi. Prizes
 - vii. Social Media
 - viii. Parent Donation Letter
 - ix. Decorations
 - x. Fundraising
 - b. Recruit members
 - c. Plan meeting schedule
2. Define Budget (Summer of the year before)
 - a. What did your PTSA spend the last few years? Do you want the budget to be more/less/the same?
 - b. Submit budget request to PTSA Budget Committee (Important! Budget is voted on at first General Meeting in the fall).
3. Define the Event
 - a. Review what your school has done in past years.
 - i. Was it considered successful?
 - ii. What suggestions had been made in the past?
 - iii. Talk to previous year AP committee members/volunteers to get input
 - b. Survey students
 - i. what do they want AP to look like?
 - ii. What kind of food do they want?
 - iii. Activities?
 - iv. Prizes?
 - v. What will motivate them to attend?
 - c. Who is eligible to attend
 - i. Seniors AND juniors?
 - ii. Do attendees need to have attended the Prom or not?
 - iii. Do guests have to have attended the Prom dance also?
 - iv. Can guests be from other schools?
 - d. COVID/Safety Precautions
 - i. Masks required?
 - ii. Try to minimize crowding?
 - iii. Require vaccination?
4. Fundraising (ongoing throughout the year leading up to AP)

- a. Strategize
 - i. Grants
 1. Insurance companies
 2. Walmart
 3. Others
 - ii. Sponsorships
 1. Local/Community businesses
 - a. Coordinate with other school groups who are also hitting up local/community businesses, like your booster club or football/other athletic team. Do not want to frustrate those potential donors.
 - b. Insurance agents
 - c. Real Estate agents
 - d. Restaurants
 - iii. Partnerships
 1. Local/Community businesses
 - a. Recruit prom-related businesses to exchange a share of the proceeds for marketing, i.e. you promote a local florist to your school community and they give you 10% of all prom-related business generated.
 - b. Florists, tuxedo rental places, dress shops, nail salons, etc.
 - iv. Donations
 1. Parents
 2. Local/Community businesses (who are not sponsors)
 - a. Again, coordinate with other school groups so as to not overwhelm those businesses.
 3. Your own school's booster club.
 - a. Submit budget request in Summer before the following After-Prom.
 - b. Cultivate relationship with booster club leaders.
 - v. PTSA programs. Examples:
 1. Mulch Sale (big project/big returns)
 2. Tuxedo Rental Fundraiser (smaller returns/lots of marketing required)
 3. Restaurant Nights (smaller returns/not much effort)
 4. Spirit wear (Coordinate with booster club/don't duplicate)
 - b. Pursue
 - i. Develop a plan of action for fundraising.
 1. Break down each fundraising project into manageable steps: who will do which piece of it by when.
 - c. Follow up
 - i. Calls/emails/reminders.
 - ii. Thank you letter after all is done.
5. Identify Venue

- a. Where has your AP been held in the past? Are you happy there?
 - b. Determine how much of your budget can be spent on venue. HoCo PTSAs have used these following places as AP venues in the past:
 - i. Columbia Supreme Sports Club
 - ii. Dancel Family YMCA in Ellicott City
 - iii. Bowlero
 - iv. AMC Movie Theater/other movie theater
 - v. The Mall in Columbia
 - vi. School building
 - vii. NinjaBe
 - viii. Glenwood Community Center
6. Define Activities
- a. Rent or Make?
 - i. Budget for Activities
 - ii. If rent, identify company to rent from.
 - 1. Talk of the Town (TOTT)
 - 2. Other?
 - iii. If make, pull together a committee for this
 - b.
7. Food/Drinks
- a. Are they included with your venue?
 - b. Are you allowed to bring in your own food?
8. Marketing
- a. Craft message for parents and students
 - b. Social Media Campaign - FB/insta/Twitter
 - c. For students:
 - i. School morning and afternoon announcements
 - ii. Student Canvas messages
 - iii. Go through student groups: SGA, NHS, Clubs, Athletic Teams
 - iv. In-school presentations by AP Chair/Committee members during that flex time on Wednesdays (called "Viking Time" at Mt Hebron)
 - v. Get creative - e.g., ask TV class teacher if they can craft an assignment (or offer extra credit) out of a promotional video for After-Prom. Post the videos to YouTube and promote to students.
 - vi. Run an "After-Prom Logo Contest" - offer prize to the winner (free tix to AP if a junior/senior?).
9. Ticketing
- a. Online sales
 - i. Software/program, e.g. Ticket Leap
 - b. Timing - start date and end date of ticket sales
 - c. Decide if you will sell tickets in school also - when and where (e.g. in the cafeteria during lunch time the week leading up to Prom)
 - i. Sell After-Prom tickets at the same time as school sells Prom tickets? (NOT combining tickets - HCPSS and PTSA cannot mingle monies)

- d. Consider donating a certain number of tickets for students who may not be able to afford one. Coordinate with your Student Services office for student privacy issues.

10. Insurance

- a. AIM says they DO NOT REQUIRE Certificate of Liability Insurance or Hold Harmless forms from vendors, although they recommend them. Does FSPTA require these?

From FSPTA: As of right now, we do not have SOA or any other requirements in place- as of yet. We are starting from scratch; so we ask to please bear with us during this process. In the interim, until these things are established (should be fairly soon), I would suggest getting them.

- b. On the Certificate of Liability Insurance form there is a box near the bottom labeled "Description of Operations/Locations/Vehicles". We used to be required to have a specific sentence in this box: "The Maryland Congress of Parent & Teachers (Maryland PTA) including all units and councils, and all their officers, directors, members, and volunteers are named as Additional Insured with respect to General Liability coverage, when required by written contract." Does FSPTA require a statement in this box, and if so, what is it?

From FSPTA: I would suggest keeping it the same for now, until we (The Free State Board) can determine if that is something we want to keep. Just remember to change the name to Free State PTA.

11. Waivers

- a. AIM says they DO NOT REQUIRE waivers from parents or participants. Does FSPTA? If so, may we collect signatures electronically with online waivers?

From FSPTA: As stated above, we do not have any regulations in place yet; however, for now, I would suggest collecting them and would be ok in saying they may be collected electronically. Please just make sure you have a way of tracking and storing them safely.

- b. AIM has sample Hold Harmless and participant/parent waivers on its website. Should we use these or does FSPTA have sample forms you prefer we use?

From FSPTA: Please use the sample that AIM has for right now until we send out new information.

12. Volunteers

- a. Crowd Manager Training

- i. One trained person required for each 250 people at your event.
- ii. Offered by Howard County Fire & Rescue once a month:

<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/fire-and-rescue-services/crowd-manager-safety-seminar>

- b. Define volunteers jobs required
- c. Create a SignUp Genius (or whatever other program you choose to use)
- d. Promote the need for volunteers
 - i. Parents
 - ii. Staff
 - iii. Community

- e. Communicate!!
 - i. Make sure volunteers know WHERE to be and WHEN and FOR HOW LONG and WHAT TO DO
 - ii. Make sure volunteers know who to contact (name/cell) if they need something while they're on the job
 - iii. Have a volunteer check-in/check-out station at the event. Consider having name tags, lanyards, or t-shirts for volunteers.
 - iv. Make sure to visit all volunteers at their stations to offer restroom breaks/water & food breaks
 - v. Follow up with all volunteers after the event
 - 1. Thank them profusely
 - 2. Solicit suggestions for next year

13. Prizes

- a. Determine budget
- b. Using survey of students (from "Define the event"), plan the types of prizes you will offer
- c. Decide if you want a prize team or one person will handle acquiring all prizes
- d. Consider shopping Black Friday, holiday sales
- e. Determine the timing and method of awarding prizes
 - i. Will you give out prizes throughout the night or all at the end?
 - ii. Will all students be in the drawing for every prize, or will you have students indicate which prizes they are interested in?

14. Post-Event

- a. Thank everyone who helped you along the way - volunteers, donors, sponsors, venue management, entertainment company, etc.
- b. Solicit feedback so you can make improvements next year
 - i. From students
 - ii. From volunteers
- c. Complete a post-event survey from PTACHC/HCCAP for the purpose of sharing information with other PTSA After-Prom organizers in Howard County.