
Planning a Big Event



Whether you're getting ready for Day of Silence, collaborating with other clubs on a campaign to address hurtful language in your school, or organizing an all-school assembly, putting on a big event takes a lot of work and planning. Here are some quick tips to help you be successful!

- 1. Create goals and objectives:** Taking the time to discuss your goals for an event will help guide you along the way. Ask questions like, "What change do we hope to see as a result of this event?" and "What do we want people who participate in this event to learn?" Use the acronym *SMART*: Goals should be *specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely*.
- 2. Keep administrators and staff in the know:** You will likely have to get permission to hold a big event at your school, and administrators will want to see a detailed description of your plan. Let staff know about the event well in advance and keep them informed of changes.
- 3. Create a timeline:** Working backwards from the date of the event, create a timeline with clear benchmarks. What will you have accomplished two months out? One month? If you're not hitting your benchmarks, how will you adjust your plans accordingly?
- 4. Delegate responsibilities:** When planning a big event, the bulk of the work should not fall on one or two students. And don't expect your advisor to pick up the slack if things fall behind! Divide big responsibilities into smaller, manageable tasks and ask students to volunteer to take them on. Check in regularly with students to see how they are coming along in their work, but be careful not to micro-manage them.
- 5. Utilize your resources:** GSAs sometimes struggle for funding, and students and advisors should not be expected to pay for materials out of their own pockets. Hold a fundraiser early in the year to help pay for event costs. Send letters to local businesses asking for donations of food and other materials. And don't forget to send thank you notes!
- 6. Get your event trending:** In addition to creating posters and fliers for your event, utilize social media to create excitement about it. Create an event on Facebook and post regular updates to Twitter, Tumblr, and other sites. Create a hashtag and get it trending.
- 7. Document everything:** In addition to keeping records of all your planning, make sure to take photos and document the actual event itself. It's nice to have a record of your success.
- 8. Evaluate and celebrate!** How will you measure if your event was a success? Survey people who attended to get feedback so you can improve future events. And take time to pat yourselves on the back and celebrate a job well done!