



SCHOOL RECOGNITION EVENT PLANNING GUIDE

As you prepare to host your America's Healthiest Schools local or regional recognition event, this document will act as your guide, providing helpful tips and checklists along the way

1. Identify Your Event Objective(s)

Identify your event objectives to determine the agenda for your event. For example, your goal could be to celebrate the success your school has achieved and/or to provide professional development to your staff to move you closer toward your wellness goals.

2. Draft a Planning Timeline and Identify All Materials Needed

Work backwards from your event date and make a list of everything that needs to be accomplished before your event. This will help you determine how much time you should spend on planning your event. Review the sample timeline below and adjust it according to your specific needs.

SEE APPENDIX A: SAMPLE TIMELINE.

Once your timeline is complete, next you need to create your materials list. This list should include any visuals or materials you plan to display at the event, as well as items you need to bring with you if your event is held at a location separate from your school building. This list will help inform your event check list.

SEE APPENDIX B: SAMPLE MATERIALS LIST.

3. Set the Date, Identify Attendees and Send Invitations

Take a look at calendars for your school(s) and the community. It is important to not schedule your event too close to a holiday or during school testing so that all relevant parties will be able to attend. Then, send invitations or an email to your event attendees as soon as possible to hold the date on their calendars.

4. Schedule Event Planning Meetings (Optional)

If needed, set a regular meeting date with the colleagues who will help plan and execute your event or add your event as an agenda item to an existing meeting (such as a regular staff meeting). Take meeting notes and place those notes in a central location so that everyone can access them. Delegate tasks and responsibilities at your meetings so everyone can take ownership and be held accountable.

5. Draft the Agenda

Creating an agenda as you plan your event will help guide your event needs. Make sure you provide guests with a printed agenda when they check in to the event so that they know what to expect.

SEE APPENDIX C: SAMPLE GUEST AGENDA.

6. Order Food/Beverages

When ordering food/beverages, you can help keep costs down by comparing prices from several vendors before making a final choice. Remember to account for special dietary preferences and food allergies.

7. Finalize Event Plans

In the weeks preceding the event, it will be important to run through the entire event from start to finish to confirm the details. Much of event planning comes down to the details in the final few weeks, so this is an important time to make sure all the pieces are in place for a successful event.

8. Host the Event

Now it's time to host your recognition event. Make sure you have all of your materials packed the night before. If your event is not hosted at your school, plan to arrive early to ensure everything is set up (including testing the internet connection if any part of your presentation needs to be accessed online) before guests arrive. Place water back stage or on the stage for the presenters; they will appreciate staying hydrated while speaking. And most importantly, remember to have fun!

9. Follow Up After the Event

Following up with everyone involved in making your event successful is critical, including thanking the schools and speakers for their participation and any stakeholders for their involvement. You never know when you might need to host another event, and sharing your appreciation with a written note or email can go a long way toward building your relationship.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Sample Timeline

Event Date: December 1

One day before the event

- Conduct a final walk-through of the event space
- Meet with your venue leads, if applicable
- Take care of yourself: Eat a healthy meal, get some exercise and a good night of sleep!

November

- Send a reminder to speakers and special attendees
- Draft talking points and a guest agenda and share with speakers
- Finalize food/beverage needs and communicate with venue and vendor(s)

Appendix B. Sample Materials List

Alliance for a Healthier Generation banners
Recognition certificate(s)

Appendix C: Sample Guest Agenda

Time	Event	Location
9:00 a.m.	Guests arrive; network	School Theater Lobby
9:30 a.m.	Welcome Address	School Theater
9:45 a.m.	Recognition Ceremony	School Theater
10:10 a.m.	Closing Remarks	School Theater
10:15 a.m.	Refreshments	School Theater Lobby
11:15 a.m.	Guests Depart	

- Send an email reminder to guests one and two weeks before the event to get attendees excited and prepared
- Finalize space layout
- Finalize audiovisual and technology needs

October

- Identify audiovisual and technology needs
- Identify food and beverage needs and request quotes from several vendors to compare costs
- Send invitations to school leaders to save the date

September

- Select school or district event
- Confirm a date for your event with all relevant parties
- Begin planning event content, create a timeline and draft materials list