

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT 13

Regional School District 13 Fundraising FAQs

Purpose of School Fundraising

Fundraising plays an important role in supporting the experiences that make our schools dynamic and well-rounded. The funds raised through school clubs, teams, and PTOs help provide opportunities that go beyond the regular budget, and these activities strengthen school spirit, connect families, and give students memorable experiences.

At the same time, it's essential that all fundraising efforts prioritize student safety and well-being above all else, especially given new avenues that leverage technology platforms. The RSD 13 Board revised its policy this past year to help everyone achieve this balance. This means carefully supervising activities, using only approved methods, and ensuring that no student or family feels any pressure, vulnerability, or lack of equity while participating.

Fundraising Activities [Policy](#) & Fundraising [Regulations](#)

FAQs about RSD 13 Fundraising

Who is allowed to fundraise for the district?

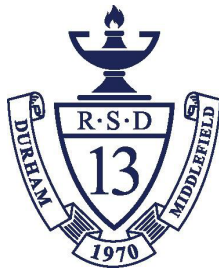
- Student organizations or clubs run through the school student activity account.
- Parent support groups (PTO, PTA, Booster Clubs) - Must have their own Federal EIN Number and be an approved partner with the district.
- Qualified nonprofit organizations (501(c)(3)) Must have their own Federal EIN Number
- Non-profits must be incorporated in the State of Connecticut as non-stock corporations. Annual reports must be filed every year with the state and sent to the Central Office for proof of good standing.

All fundraising must directly support district-approved educational programs or activities.

What activities are allowed?

Examples of approved fundraising activities: (overview, always check for more specific guidance)

- Food Sales - in compliance with the healthy food and beverage policy.
 - No sales of food items during the school day (must be at least 30 minutes before or after school hours).
 - Food items may be distributed after school hours only to adults (cannot be sent home with students). Items not picked up cannot be stored at the school.
 - Allowed at events occurring after the regular school day or weekends – this may require a permit from the health department.



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- Apparel/Merchandise Sales
- Discount Cards
- Talent Shows
- Fun Runs and Read-a-Thons, not organized through crowdfunding, only through ticket sales or approved peer-to-peer sites
- Golf or other Tournaments - considered games of skill
- Bingo, Bazaars, Raffles, 50/50 - (these are highly regulated by CT and you must apply to municipality at least 15 days prior for a raffle permit) - no person under 18 may promote, conduct or operate a bazaar or raffle. No person under age 16 may sell or promote sales of raffle tickets.
- 50/50- tickets must be consecutively numbered and the sale must be noticed at the location including the date, time and place of the drawing with a notice that holders of tickets must be present to claim the prize
- Restaurant partnership nights - must state in writing from the restaurant the % of sales from the specific night to benefit the school
- Clothing or food drives for donation
- Community service activities targeted for fundraising (e.g. community clean up)
- Trivia/movie/game nights

Not allowed (not all inclusive)

- Gambling or any game of chance
- Door to door sales
- Mandatory participation
- In school solicitation of students and staff
- In school sales of food or beverages

Why isn't crowdfunding allowed?

Crowdfunding platforms (e.g., GoFundMe, DonorsChoose) are **not permitted** because:

- Funds cannot be audited or tracked under district procedures
- Donations may create privacy, tax, and legal issues; many crowdfunding sites are not approved by the State of Connecticut data privacy law because they collect and retain student information
- They conflict with district purchasing and equity policies
- They potentially jeopardize the safety of private student information. Link to [Student Data Privacy and Approved Platforms](#) under current CT state privacy law
- Platforms often take a high percentage of donated funds



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- Crowdfunding platforms do not align with the district's philosophy that fundraising should be an educational and community-building experience for students that encourages participation, effort, and shared responsibility rather than passive online solicitation.

Peer to Peer Fundraising Sites:

Peer to Peer Fundraising is a method of raising money where an organization's supporters fundraising on its behalf by asking their own friends and family to donate. Individuals create personal fundraising pages connected to a single campaign, or there may be a single page with an online store. Fundraisers individually choose to share their page via email, text or social media. The donation can be for goods or services, such as selling pies, popcorn or by services such as reading, jumping rope, etc.

Certain peer-to-peer fundraising sites may be approved if there is:

- Prior district approval and oversight
- No use of student data privacy, such as names, photos, details without parental consent
- Clear rules on handling of funds and incentives, including full transparency in the breakdown of profits, fees, and the amount that goes directly to students
- Age-appropriate participation and adult supervision

What are the best ways to protect students during fundraising?

- We recommend that parents/guardians don't share student names, photos, or personal information.
- Avoid all door-to-door or unsupervised activities.
- Ensure adult volunteers meet district safety and background-check requirements.
- Handle all funds through approved district or nonprofit accounts—never personal accounts.
- Supervise all student participation appropriately, including permission slips for student participation and publication of photos.

Why shouldn't fundraisers pay for things the general school district budget would normally pay for?

It is the Board's responsibility for education funding. Fundraising is allowed to supplement, not replace the district's regular budget. The District may choose not to fund a request because it doesn't align with or actually be contrary to a currently approved education program or it may not be the right time for that investment.



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How do I know if something should be in the general school district budget or if it's extra? Who do I ask?

- All fundraisers must be **approved by the school principal** before starting.
- When applying, clearly state how the funds will be used.
- If unsure, contact your **building principal** before submitting your fundraiser request.

Why do I need to get the fundraiser approved first?

District Policy requires at least one month prior approval. *Fundraising activities shall not be initiated prior to approval.*

Prior approval ensures:

- Compliance with district and Board of Education policies.
- Consistency with other scheduled events.
- Alignment with educational goals and student welfare.

The building principal completes the following steps to approve a fundraiser:

- Verify fundraiser complies with RSD 13 District Policies for Fundraising Activities, Student Data Privacy and Donations.
- Verify fundraiser application is complete with clear and explicit details of event and how the funds are intended to be used. Adult contact information must be provided.
- Verify proper mode of financial collection following [District Policy 3450 monies in school buildings](#) and no personal use of Venmo for school sponsored activities; other organizations must use a business Venmo account.
- Verify other similar fundraisers are not occurring at the same time.
- Confirm at the conclusion of the event, if approved, that the appropriate financial paperwork has been submitted. Non-compliance with this can jeopardize future fundraising abilities.

Why do I need to provide the financial details of the fundraiser at its completion?

A financial summary is required at the end of every fundraiser to:

- Ensure compliance with district cash handling policies
- Verify that funds were used as intended
- Maintain accurate records
- Provide transparency and accountability
- Keep copies of approval forms, receipts, deposits, and final reports for at least one year
- Careful financial tracking protects all individuals, organizations, and the district



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Why is the use of Venmo not allowed?

Personal Venmo or similar apps are **not permitted** because:

- They lack necessary financial controls and audit trails
- Funds co-mingle with personal accounts, creating legal and ethical risks
- Verified 501(c)(3) organizations may have their own business Venmo account that is permitted under their own by-laws

Why do I need event insurance?

- Event insurance protects participants, volunteers, and the district from liability in case of injury, property damage, or other incidents.
- It is required for public or physical fundraising events held on district property.

Can fundraising occur off school property?

Yes—but all fundraisers, regardless of location, must be pre-approved.

Can equipment or other items be donated?

Yes, all donations become the property of the district. Equipment or items cannot replace what is funded in the annual budget. Donated items or those items purchased through fundraising cannot incur future expenses for the district and must be fully funded by the fundraising process. District funds cannot be used to supplement any fundraising shortfall. Donations must meet [policy #3280](#) criteria.

What is not a fundraiser?

- Charities: Monies or items raised for charity with non-profit intended recipients, and all proceeds going to the designated charity
- Events: Attendance fees for school movie nights, dances, or services, where the intention is to charge to hold the event, not make a profit

What is the link between School sponsored programs and PTO fundraising?

- A school sponsored program is run by the school and utilizes the school student activity fund to deposit and expend funds.
- A PTO or other organization sponsored program is sponsored by the organization using the name of the school or district and the district students. The organization, if a 501(c)(3) has their own Federal ID number and bank account and must report the income and expenditures to the school district at the completion of the fundraising campaign.

The link is the use of the district or school name, mascot, and students under both methods above.



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What is the difference between crowdfunding by a 501(c)(3) and peer to peer?

- Crowdfunding is the organization asking the world for donations via social media
- Peer to Peer fundraising is defined as the organization (school or PTO) asking supporters to ask their family and friends for donations

501(c)(3) organizations can use crowdfunding but must comply with all Board policies, regulations and procedures and shall not include the sharing of any confidential student information or photos of students.

Definitions:

Charity/Giving: Groups will also often participate in raising money for a specific charity or host a giving event. When all funds raised go to the designated charity or giving event, it is not a fundraiser.

Crowdfunding: A method of raising money by collecting small contributions from a large number of people usually through a fee percentage online platform to support a cause.

Common types of crowdfunding:

- Donation based - contributors give money without expecting anything in return, i.e. GoFundMe
- Reward based - contributors can receive a non-financial product or service, i.e. Kickstarter, Indiegogo

Event: An event may be hosted by a group, where money is paid to attend, but the funds are intended to cover costs, not to raise funds for another purpose. Events are not considered fundraisers.

Peer to Peer Fundraising: A method of raising money where an organization's supporters fundraising on its behalf by asking their own friends and family to donate. Individuals create personal fundraising pages connected to a single campaign, or there may be a single page with an online store. The donation can be for goods or services, such as selling pies, popcorn or by services such as reading, jumping rope, etc.

- Fundraisers share their page via email, text or social media.
- Common Peer to Peer fundraising includes:
 - Student raised funds, such as read-a-thons, color runs
 - Parent raised funds for PTO
 - Team fundraising
- Important Considerations:
 - Prior district approval and oversight



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- No use of student data privacy, such as names, photos, details without consent
- Clear rules on handling of funds and incentives
- Age-appropriate participation and adult supervision

Personally Identifiable Information:

Direct Identifiers of student information including:

- Student full name
- Parent or guardian name
- Home address
- Social security number or student ID number
- Student email address
- Student likeness

Sponsor: The individual representing the organization, club, team, etc. that is responsible for the fundraiser, including permissions, forms, and accounting.

Student likeness:

- Includes photographs, videos, digital images or drawing representation of students without parental consent. Important exceptions are: Yearbooks, photos of a student in a public event if proper notice and opt-out process has been followed.

501(c)(3):

- A 501(c)(3) is a type of tax-exempt nonprofit organization in the US that is organized for charitable, educational, religious, scientific or literary purposes. The organization maintains its own bylaws, tax filing requirements, bank accounts, insurance and directors. While the organization is separate from the district, it must still comply with the district policies on fundraising and use of confidential student data.