Fun run planning kit

A head start for your PTO or PTA board. Take what's useful and change the rest.

Timeline

12 weeks out

- [ ] Pick a date and a rain date with the school
  Look for clashes with testing, field trips, and other fundraisers.
- [ ] Get approval for the course and the grounds
- [ ] Choose an event lead and a small committee
- [ ] Set the fundraising goal and how the money will be used
  A clear goal, like new playground equipment, can help families get behind it.

10 to 8 weeks out

- [ ] Decide how pledges work
  A flat donation, an amount per lap, or both. Decide whether families give online, on paper, or both.
- [ ] Map the course and the lap length
  Think about the surface, shade, a water stop, and the walk to restrooms.
- [ ] Choose a T-shirt design and get quotes
- [ ] Ask local businesses to sponsor the shirt
- [ ] Add a save the date to the school newsletter

6 weeks out

- [ ] Decide whether grades run during school or all together
  Some schools run one grade at a time during the day. Others hold one morning event for families.
- [ ] Share the volunteer signup link

4 to 5 weeks out

- [ ] Send the pledge forms or online link home
- [ ] Order T-shirts with sizes
  Collect sizes from teachers or the sign-up form, and order a few extras.
- [ ] Order lap counters or punch cards
- [ ] Decide on class and student incentives

2 to 3 weeks out

- [ ] Share fundraising progress with classes
- [ ] Follow up on empty volunteer spots
- [ ] Plan water, first aid, and shade
  Your school nurse can say what they'd like on hand.
- [ ] Line up music and a sound system
- [ ] Confirm the run schedule with teachers

The final week

- [ ] Send a reminder to families
- [ ] Buy everything on the shopping list
- [ ] Sort the shirts by class
- [ ] Mark the course with cones and signs

Race day

- [ ] Walk the course before runners arrive

After the run

- [ ] Thank volunteers, sponsors, and teachers
- [ ] Remind families to turn in pledges
- [ ] Count the money and record receipts
- [ ] Hand out class and student incentives
- [ ] Write down what to change next year
  A few quick notes while it's fresh can save next year's board a lot of time.

Volunteer spots

A sample to adapt. Add, cut, or rename spots to suit your school.

Spot	When	People
Setup Crew Set out cones, signs, the water table, and the finish line.	7:30 AM to 9:00 AM	6
Check-In Table Greet runners and hand out lap cards.	8:30 AM to 10:00 AM	3
Lap Counters Mark laps as runners pass. No experience needed.	9:00 AM to 11:30 AM	10
Water Station Hand out cups of water and keep the table stocked.	9:00 AM to 11:30 AM	3
Course Cheer Squad Cheer runners on and keep the course clear.	9:00 AM to 11:30 AM	4
Cleanup Crew Pick up cones, cups, and signs, and leave the field clean.	11:30 AM to 12:30 PM	5

Sample budget

Placeholder amounts to help you get started, not real prices. Swap in your own numbers.

Item	Example	Our budget
T-shirts	$900	
Prizes and incentives	$200	
Water and snacks	$120	
Lap counters or punch cards	$60	
Cones and course markers	$60	
Flyers and pledge forms	$40	
Total	**$1,380**	

Shopping list

Warehouse club

- [ ] Bottled water
- [ ] Paper cups
- [ ] Snacks for runners
- [ ] Sunscreen
- [ ] Trash bags

Party or dollar store

- [ ] Small prizes
- [ ] Finish line ribbon
- [ ] Balloons

Office supply store

- [ ] Clipboards
- [ ] Tally sheets or punch cards
- [ ] Hole punches
- [ ] Markers
- [ ] Name tags for volunteers

Sporting goods store

- [ ] Cones
- [ ] Stopwatch
- [ ] Whistles

Easy things to overlook

Every child runs

Pledges are optional for families. Making sure every student can run, whatever they raised, keeps the day fun for everyone.

Shirt sizes

Sizes take longer to collect than people expect. A few extras in each size saves a scramble.

Shade and water

Runners and lap counters are out for a while. Water, shade, and a first-aid spot make a long morning easier.

Collecting pledges after

Some pledges come in after the run. A reminder a week later helps you reach the goal.

Notes for next year

A few notes the week after can save next year's board hours.

Want it all in one place?
PineBoard can hold your tasks, volunteers, shopping, and budget together, and copies the plan to next year. Try it free for 60 days at pineboard.app.