

Bluefest 2018 Sponsorship and Solicitation Guide

To Do

- Ask Early! So many schools have similar spring fundraisers. Get out there early to ensure that SMS is in the front of the pack! Get their 2018 dollars before they are allocated elsewhere.
- Go big! If you have the relationship-make a bigger ask. They can always say no and offer a lower donation. If a monetary donation is requested and they cannot donate, suggest an item they may be able to contribute to the raffle.
- Have a comparable. Know a business that may want to donate? Ask a chair what similar businesses in the field have done in past years. This gives the business the opportunity to be seen on the same level as their competitors/piers. We wouldn't want a real estate agency to sponsor a level down from 4 others and then see that they were not featured in the same way. It may only be a small financial jump up for them, but it will make a difference for SMS.
- Ask smart. We know certain businesses get hit up all the time for local schools, charities, soccer clubs, scouts, etc. Here is where go big won't work. Instead ask what they would be comfortable with and how they would like to be viewed by our community.
- Make it work for them. Ask the business owner what customer they are looking to attract. Placement and donations are important here. If their business is a handmade item, take the donation of a raffle item. If they are selling a service a monetary donation for placement and exposure makes sense.
- Tax write off. Remind them the donation is a 100% write off!
- Tell them how SMS views them in the community. Bring in a personal connection on how their business helps the SMS community and how we love having them here!
- Sell tickets! Tickets are an easy way to sponsor and get people involved. They may have such a great time they become donors next year!
- Fill them in! Let them know what we are doing at SMS—building community, strengthening bonds across generations, supporting families and education.

To Forget

- Negatives-leave 'em! Don't walk in and say "I know you get hit up all the time, but can you...." BAM, you're done. The business or person already has an excuse even if no one walked through their door in months with a request. You already gave them an out. Stay positive!
- Getting items just to get items. We want donors to feel like their items are valued and useful for our Bluefest guests. If it isn't something you can reasonably see yourself or someone else using it is ok to pass. Some of these items sit and do not get bids. This equals time the committee takes to get items, tag and record them and set up which they can focus elsewhere. If you are in doubt, ask a few committee members what worked in past years. Also, check to see if we already have 5 photography sessions or 7 necklaces before committing a business for another one!