**School Fundraising Ideas that Take Little to No Effort**

By: Stacy Tornio

**1. Sign Up for Amazon Smile**

Amazon will donate 0.5 percent of all eligible items you buy to the charitable organization of your choice! You probably have parents who shop on Amazon every single day, yet they just haven’t taken the time to designate an Amazon Smile recipient. Make sure your school is set up in the [Amazon system](http://smile.amazon.com/) to be an available option. Then promote it to parents in newsletters, email and at school events.

**2. Sell Gift Cards**

You can sign up for one of the online programs like [Scrip Pro](http://www.scrippro.com/about-scrip/) or [Shop With Scrip](https://www.shopwithscrip.com/), where people can choose from hundreds of different gift card vendors. (This is especially popular around the holidays, and you earn a percentage of sales from every gift card sold—usually 3 to 15 percent.) Typically you can choose from local and national companies, including grocery stores. Who doesn’t need groceries, right? Send home a simple ordering slip or set up a table at a school event.

**3. Monetize Your Website Traffic**

School Bell Partners offers a plug-in fundraiser that turns school and district websites into cash! Just have your website manager add it (takes less than an hour), and then promote it to teachers, parents and your community. When your website visitors click on sponsorships and participate in special offers, the school earns. You choose which sponsors are displayed, and the fundraising pretty much happens all by itself—24/7.[Connect your school today.](http://www.schoolbellpartners.com/connect?utm_source=WAT&utm_campaign=SBPArticle&utm_medium=Article)

**4. Collect Box Tops for Education**

If you’re not clipping box tops, then it’s time to get on board! This popular program encourages schools to collect “box tops” from cereal boxes, snack packages and hundreds of other items. Most are worth 10 cents each. You then send them in to earn money for your school. When you get all your families collecting, this can really add up! Consider doing a Box Tops Challenge at your school to incentivize students. The class with the most box tops can win a special prize. If you’re not signed up, here’s [how to get started](http://www.boxtops4education.com/).

**5. Ask Parents for a Check**

A middle school in Dallas made news last year because they sent a humorous letter home with kids, directly asking parents for cash or checks. For instance, the $25 level read, “I do not want to hit up friends, family and co-workers, so here is the money I would have spent buying wrapping paper.” (You can see more of the letter [here](http://wtop.com/watercooler/2015/08/school-fundraising-letter-people-laughing/).) The letter resonated with so many parents and went viral on social media. Now schools all around the country are following their lead. The great thing about these anti-fundraisers? You can say with confidence that 100 percent of the money raised will go back to the school.

**6. Auction Off Free Experiences**

Do you know how special it is for kids to have unique experiences with their teachers? They love it, and the parents will gladly pay for it! This is an easy fundraising task, and it especially works well when you set it up at a school dance or event. You could either run it as a silent auction and let parents bid, or you could sell raffle tickets for each item. Some of the items you could auction off might include:

* Be principal for an afternoon.
* Read the morning announcements.
* Have lunch with my teacher.
* Be the co-librarian for an afternoon.
* Get special game time with the gym teacher.



**7. Try Using GoodSearch**

This program rewards online shoppers. All you have to do is shop through [Goodshop.com](http://www.goodsearch.com/goodshop) and you can earn money for your designated school. It’s easy to set the school up in the database, so do that first. Then start including links to the site in future newsletters or mailings. Parents are usually happy to support efforts like these—they just forget they are there. So it’s best to offer plenty of reminders.

**8. Eat and Earn**

Have you ever been invited to a dining night at a local restaurant where a portion of the proceeds is donated to a nonprofit in the area? These are extremely popular because all you have to do is spread the word about the night, and then families just show up to eat. It’s important to know that not all restaurant percentages are the same. Some do as little as 10 percent while others will get up to 25 percent. [Chipotle](https://chipotle.com/fundraisers) does 50 percent, but you have to apply—they don’t accept everyone. Ask one of your parents to call around and get the best offer, but make sure it’s a restaurant that your families like. Don’t forget to send lots of reminders to your community, and post it on social media on the specific day.


**9. Put the Principal on Display**

Principals will often offer to do something fun or crazy as a reward for reaching reading or fundraising goals, but what if you make the principal the central focus? For instance, you can sell strips of duct tape to help tape the principal to the wall. Or perhaps you can do a coin drive, and the winning class gets to turn the principal into a human ice cream sundae. Here are some [more ideas](https://www.ptotoday.com/pto-today-articles/article/614-principals-do-the-darndest-things) on putting your principal front and center.

**10. Recycle and Get Rewarded**

You can find a handful of programs out there that will pay you to collect old or unwanted items from your families. For example, collections for electronics are really popular. This one, the [EcoPhones Recycling Fundraiser](http://www.recyclingfundraiser.com/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), collects phones, ink cartridges and other electronics. You don’t have to do a thing. EcoPhones sends you boxes, and then you ship your recyclable items directly to them.



**Posted by Stacy Tornio**

Stacy Tornio is a senior editor with WeAreTeachers. Nearly everyone in her family is a teacher. So she decided to be rebellious and write about teachers instead.