



America's Healthiest Schools Awardee

Event Celebration Guide

As you prepare to celebrate your achievement, this document will help you make the most of your celebrations, locally and regionally.

Find examples of a timeline, materials list, run-of-show, templates for a media advisory and proclamation, and an event invitation at the end of this guide.

Identify Your Event Objective(s)

Understanding your objectives fosters a sense of purpose and helps you stay on track.

Example Objectives

- Celebrate the success your school has achieved
- Share the success your school has achieved with others (e.g., families, community members, local media)

Schedule Event-Planning Meetings *(Optional)*

If needed, set a regular meeting date with an event-planning committee – 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).

Delegate tasks and responsibilities (e.g., invite the help of parent/caregiver volunteers) at your meetings so everyone can take ownership and be held accountable.

Take meeting notes and place those notes in a central location so that everyone can access them.

Set a Date and Draft a Planning Timeline

Take a look at calendars for your school(s) and the community to determine the best date to hold an event. Be mindful of holidays and school testing, and try to schedule your celebratory event at a time where all relevant parties are able to attend.

Work backwards from your event date and draft a plan of everything that needs to be accomplished before your event. A timeline will help you determine how much time you should spend on planning your event.

Virtual Event Tip

Opt for a virtual event if an in-person event has been ruled out. Ensure that you have the technical capacity for a virtual event (i.e., access to a virtual platform like Zoom or WebEx, school or district media specialist who can help run the event from a technical perspective.)

Identify All Materials Needed and Draft the Run-of-Show/Agenda

A materials list should include any visuals or materials you plan to bring/display at the event.

A run-of-show/agenda will help guide the logistics of event planning. Make sure you provide guests with a printed agenda at the event so that they know what to expect.

Virtual Event Tip

For a virtual event, your run-of-show/agenda should include natural breaks (i.e., time to grab water, use the restroom, etc.) for your audience, just like for an in-person event.

Identify Attendees and Send Invitations

Send invitations to your event attendees as soon as possible to hold the date on their calendars. Three months out from the date of the event is a good rule of thumb.

Think about your event audience—an event can be a great way to share your achievements with the larger community.

Local media

To invite local media to your celebratory event, send a media advisory to local media personnel 3 to 5 days ahead of the event.

Be sure to:

1. Personalize your email outreach to each journalist/reporter
2. Paste the body of the media advisory within your email
3. Attach the media advisory to the email

Community members

(e.g., local businesses, local non-profits, and other key community leaders)

Local government officials

Alerting local government to your success could lead to more exposure. Send a proclamation along with the event invitation to encourage local government to acknowledge a “America’s Healthiest Schools” day, week, or month.

Family members (of students, teachers, and staff)

Healthier Generation team member

Reach out to help@healthiergeneration.org to see if there is team member local to your area who can attend the event.

Virtual Event Tip

Don’t forget to include the link to attend a virtual event in your invite!

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.

Finalize Event Plans

In the weeks preceding the event, it will be important to run through the entire event from start to finish with your event committee 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.

Host the Event

Now it’s time to host your celebration event. Make sure you have all of your materials packed the night before. Plan to arrive early to the event location 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.

Communicate to your planning committee time of arrival/set-up and breakdown. Provide water and snacks for your planning committee and any presenters; they will appreciate staying fueled throughout a busy event. Have fun!

Event Tip

Don’t forget to document the event by capturing photos and videos. Have your guests sign [this waiver](#) when they check-in for the event. Caption your image and video files and send them to help@healthiergeneration.org with the subject line, “[Insert school name] - AHS Event Celebration Photography and Video”.

Post your event photos and video to social media!

Sample social posts below:

Our school community had a wonderful time celebrating our hard work and success in being recognized as one of America’s #HealthiestSchools!
(share with photo(s) from event)

On [day] we hosted a [type of event] to celebrate our achievement of being recognized as one of America’s #HealthiestSchools! It was so wonderful to see our students, staff, and families honored for their hard work and commitment to health and wellness.
(share with photo(s) from event)

Follow Up After the Event

Following up with everyone involved in making your event successful is critical, including thanking the event-planning committee, any special speakers, community members, local media, and other guests for their involvement and attendance. 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.



America's Healthiest Schools Awardee Event Celebration Sample

Sample Timeline

Event Date: December 1

September

- Select school or district, in-person or virtual event
- Begin planning event content—pick a date, identify event-planning committee members, create a timeline, and draft materials list
- Send 'Save the Date' invitations to community members and other guests

October

- Identify audiovisual and technology needs
- Request quotes from several food & beverage vendors to compare costs
- Prep speakers and other special guests with roles, responsibilities, and talking points, if applicable

November

- Hold a practice run-through with special guests, speakers, event-planning committee
- Send an email reminder and a run-of-show/agenda to guests one or two weeks before the event to get attendees excited and prepared
- Send a media advisory to local media 3 to 5 days ahead of the event
- Finalize space layout
- Finalize audiovisual and technology needs
- Finalize food/beverage needs and communicate with venue and vendor(s)

One day before the event

- Conduct a final walk-through of the event space, meet with your venue leads, if applicable
- Ensure that all materials are set-up and/or ready to be transported to the event venue
- Take care of yourself—eat a healthy meal, and get some exercise and a good night's sleep!

Sample Materials List

- Alliance for a Healthier Generation banners
- Certificate(s) (to pass out to students, wellness committee, parents, teachers, staff, etc. for contributing to success)

Sample Run-of-Show/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 | |

Media Advisory Template

Update [this Media Advisory Template](#) according to your needs.

Reach out to Alliance for a Healthier Generation's media contact audrey.rodriquez@healthiergeneration.org if you plan to host a celebratory event and would like to review your media advisory prior to sending it to local media.

If possible, we highly recommend asking a district communications expert/staff member to send this media advisory to local media on your behalf.

Event Invitation

Find a ["Save the Date" Canva template here](#).

Proclamation Template

Find an [example Proclamation template here](#).