

10 Ways to Create Better School Events in 2026

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1. **Tighten up your event space.** We all think that creating a wide open space for a huge event will lead to a more successful event. Experience shows us, however, that creating a smaller space will lead to more guests interacting with each other and massively higher amounts of overall event energy. Always focus on bringing your guests to the center of the party rather than letting them spread out. Energy level is one of the core factors of a successful event.
2. **Timeframe is key.** Students want to spread just enough time at your event to have a blast and not get bored. The 2 hour mark is magical. Even 2.5 hours can draw the energy out of an event and let it end on a down note. Unless there is a ceremonial event happening or a “pre-event / performance” going on, limiting your event to 2 hours is the sweet spot for student activities in 2026.
3. **Chaperones can help bring your event to life!** Encourage your chaperones to dress according to the theme, help lead group dances, or encourage guests to do the same. Guests look up to your chaperones for examples on how to have the best time possible, and if they are all in, your students will be too.
4. **Themes are always great, but, go big or don't go!** Starting early and letting students choose the theme of your next event allows them to be creative and have more buy-in to the event overall. As you facilitate their great ideas, you will see a new layer of energy towards your event and massive interaction leading up to the big day. On the flip-side, it is better to have no theme than a poorly executed one.
5. **Lighting is decor!** So many events have amazing decorations and great creations by hard working PTA committees, only to have them lose focus when students want the lights dimmed so they show off their moves on the dance floor. Using colored lighting as your decor will not only save massive amounts of time and energy, but also give your venue a dramatically different look and even have the capability to change as the event is progressing. Colored washlighting and patterned gobos are a fun way to bring a theme to life!
6. **Create Contests:** Students love a good competition! Anything from best dressed contests in relation to the theme to a skilled hula hoop tournament are just some of the many great ways you can get students engaged and ready for some fun.
7. **Over inform your vendors,** You will be amazed at what great add-ons or donations your vendors will give you when you give them ALL the info. You will find they will offer amazing ways to help promote your events, incorporate your theme, and bring it all to life if you give them as much info as possible leading up to your event.
8. **Food is not just for thought:** Almost every event usually offers some kind of refreshments to students, but one of worst things you can do is serve it so far away from the dancefloor that they end up hanging out in that other space. Keeping your food / beverage stations just off the dancefloor will lead to incredible amounts of dancefloor energy, as students might step off for a min to grab a drink, but jump right back in as they spot their friends cutting it up. Something they couldn't do if they are a 2 min walk to the water station.
9. **Designate “party pumpers”.** Find the most outgoing students in your crew and let them know that you are counting on them to keep the dancefloor jumping, or help start group dances to encourage the wallflowers to spread their wings. Dancing can be contagious and the more people that are doing it, the more people will join. Finding your party starters is always key. Also finding an outgoing school staff member never hurts!
10. **Get feedback from your attendees.** Create a quick QR code for guests to scan and send a fun photo or a short text about their favorite part of the event. This will lead to instant info on what guests loved most about your event!