AUSTIN ISD CROWDFUNDING GUIDELINES

Crowdfunding is the practice of funding a project or idea by raising small amounts of money from a large number of people, typically via the Internet. The following guidelines outline requirements and acceptable actions, including a comparison of crowdfunding sites and get-started guides for each platform.

CROWDFUNDING GUIDELINES

Crowdfunding Requirements

- All crowdfunding campaigns must support educational or instructional-based initiatives.
- www.Edbacker.com is the AISD-supported crowdfunding platform for online donations and has a built-in principal and bookkeeper approval process. Use of the Edbacker platform does not require submission of an AISD crowdfunding application to the Office of Innovation and Development.
- Completion of an AISD crowdfunding application is required for all crowdfunding sites beyond the Edbacker.com platform.
- All campaigns must be approved by the school principal before a campaign is published, either by email through the AISD crowdfunding application or through the Edbacker.com approval system.
- Completion of an AISD crowdfunding summary report is required for any crowdfunding beyond the Edbacker.com platform. The report must be submitted within three weeks of the end of the fundraising campaign to the Office of Innovation & Development.
- Crowdfunding campaigns are considered donations and do NOT count against your limited campus fundraisers (i.e. sales of candy, t-shirts, etc.). Therefore, crowdfunding is not limited to a two-week fundraising period. It is recommended that campaigns are less than 45 days to create a sense of urgency for fundraising.

Restricted Actions

- Creation of personal campaigns or withdrawal of funds into personal banking accounts.
- Creation of campaigns that benefit individuals.
- Sales of any kind (i.e. popcorn, t-shirts).
- Transfer of donations from campus to campus.
- Donated items mailed to employee’s home.
- Fundraising for non-district organizations and charities (i.e. Red Cross fundraising for a local natural disaster).
Below is a list and chart that describes crowdfunding platforms that have been vetted by the Office of Innovation & Development. Edbacker is recommended based on their low fee structure and eligibility for tax-deductible donations.

### CROWDFUNDING SITE COMPARISON

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| www.Edbacker.com     | AISD-supported crowdfunding platform for donations, includes built-in communications, templates, school-based approval process and direct deposit into AISD accounts. | • 5% fee plus 30 cents per donation (5% = 2.9% credit card processing fee plus 2.1% Edbacker fee)  
• Credit card processing is through PayPal  
• Additional 2% per donation if organizations use America’s Charities (option only available to PTAs) |
| www.PledgeCents.com  | Online crowdfunding site for donations, focused on PK-12 education.                          | • 5% fee if fundraising goal is met plus a 3% credit card processing fee per donation  
• 8% fee if fundraising goal is not met plus a 3% credit card processing fee per donation |
| www.DonorsChoose.org| Online crowdfunding site for supplies and equipment, focused on PK-12 education.            | • 2.9% credit card processing fee per donation plus 15% per campaign for overhead, teacher outreach, maintenance and build-out of the DonorsChoose.org website  
• Fulfillment labor and materials charge (depends on items selected by school)  
• Non-cash donations (materials and supplies only with specified vendors) |
| www.Snap-Raise.com   | Online fundraising site focused on Middle and High School teams, comes with fundraising campaign support. | • 3% credit card processing fee per donation plus 20% per campaign for fundraising support |

Please be aware that other crowdfunding sites may have significantly higher fees and/or restrictions or requirements that do not comply with district policy.
AISD has partnered with Edbacker to create a customized process for AISD schools to raise money online. All fundraising campaigns created through an AISD school account include a built-in process for principal and bookkeeper approval. This process ensures that each campaign meets the school’s objectives and goals as related to the campus improvement plan.

Edbacker campaigns also benefit from increased visibility through AISD’s main website. Through the AISD website, schools can reach thousands of visitors and increase giving to their campus.

**Process for Setting Up an Edbacker School Campaign**

1. **Log In:** Teachers and administrative staff can log in to www.Edbacker.com with their Austin ISD email address. To log in, your password must be reset. Click “forgot password” and follow instructions to receive a reset password link. *Do not create your own account. If you need to create an account or need login assistance, please contact Juliana.Castillo@austinisd.org.*

2. **Create Campaign:** Follow instructions in the Fundraising Tab to customize a campaign for your school/classroom needs. Once the campaign has been completed, click “submit to financial accountant”.

3. **Bookkeeper Approval:** School bookkeeper assigns an activity account code to all fundraising campaigns. Activity account codes are assigned based on the campaign that is created. For example, if the 3rd grade class is raising money for a field trip, the 3rd grade activity code would be used.

4. **Principal Approval:** School principal reviews and approves the campaign to ensure it meets the school’s goals and objectives before the campaign is made public.

*A crowdfunding application or summary report is NOT required to be submitted to the Office of Innovation & Development if the campaign is created using Edbacker. Click here if you are interested in viewing the application as a tool to developing your fundraising campaign.*

For more detailed information and strategies on how to set up a campaign, please review the Edbacker guide.
DONORSCHOOSE

DonorsChoose is an online crowdfunding platform that allows individuals to donate directly to public school classroom projects. Once a project is fully funded, DonorsChoose will purchase and deliver the requested equipment and materials directly to the campus. *DonorsChoose is NOT a crowdfunding site used for raising money.*

Per AISD policy, campuses must ensure that:

- Items ≥ $500 in value are tagged as a fixed asset through the Fixed Assets Department.
- Items received remain property of the campus.
- An [AISD crowdfunding application](#) is submitted by the campaign creator and approved by the school principal prior to publishing the DonorChoose campaign.
- An AISD crowdfunding summary report is submitted within three weeks of the campaign close to the Office of Innovation & Development.

PLEDGECEENTS

PledgeCents is an online crowdfunding platform for PK-12 education. This website allows individuals to donate money to classroom projects nationwide. With PledgeCents, schools can raise funds by participating in contests, receive a Dollar-for-Dollar matching or Facebook matching campaign, or refer other teachers to sign up and earn money.

Per AISD policy, campuses must ensure that:

- All PledgeCents campaigns are affiliated with an AISD campus (tax identification number is required).
- An [AISD crowdfunding application](#) is submitted by the campaign creator and approved by the school principal prior to publishing the Pledgecents campaign.
- An AISD crowdfunding summary report is submitted within three weeks of the campaign close to the Office of Innovation & Development.

SNAP! RAISE

Snap! Raise is an online fundraising platform that provides campaign support focused on Middle and High school team fundraising. To get started with Snap! Raise, please contact Austin Area Representative Brian Lee at (512) 308-8416 or at BrianL@snap-raise.com.
**RECEIVING DONATIONS**

- Donations through the Edbacker platform are automatically deposited into an AISD revenue account. It may take up to 30 days to transfer funds to the appropriate campus activity account.
- Financial donations from PledgeCents are received in the Office of Innovation and Development. In order to receive the funds, schools must submit a summary report at the end of the fundraising campaign. It may take up to 30 days to transfer funds to the appropriate campus activity account.
- Snap! Raise hand delivers checks to the campus.

*For questions or assistance with your crowdfunding efforts, please contact Juliana Castillo, Office of Innovation and Development, at juliana.castillo@austinisd.org or 512-414-9851.*