



Colorado Gives Guide for Foundation Chapters

The Foundation for Douglas County Schools



Overview

Have you thought about launching a campaign to raise community support for an initiative, project or purchase for your school? Crowdfunding can be a great option to supplement the school district budget to meet a compelling need for your students.

The Foundation for Douglas County Schools offers an easy, low-fee resource for your e-commerce crowd-fundraising effort. Follow the simple guidelines and instructions in this guide and start raising money for your project!

How it Works

Launching a crowd-funding campaign is easy. You'll use the Foundation's Colorado Gives account through the Community First Foundation. [Coloradogives.org](https://coloradogives.org). This site is designed to support and track funds for individual efforts like yours, and because it is managed by a foundation (not a for-profit organization) the fees are low.

First You: Get approval from your board, create your messaging, establish your goal and timeline, and submit your fundraising page through the site.

Then We: Approve your fundraising page and get you set up in our financial system

Then You: Get the word out! Social media, email, school website, etc. Monitor your page to view donations and amount raised.

Then We: Wait. After your campaign closes we'll receive all of your funds by the middle of the following month. We'll send a check to your school with a donation report so you can thank your supporters.

Then You: Celebrate!

Wasn't that easy?!

The Fine Print

Before you can get started the Foundation must review and approve your fundraising page to make sure it aligns with the policies of DCSD and The Foundation for Douglas County Schools. Invest the time in reading the fine print before putting work into your campaign.

What types of projects CAN be funded?

Projects should directly benefit the students at your school. For example:

- Equipment purchases for student use such as technology, art supplies and books
- Field trip admission fees
- Class activities
- Guest speakers
- Extracurricular activities

You can also put out a general request to support your PTO or club.

What types of projects and/or expenses are not permitted?

- Projects that do not directly benefit the students at your school
- Teacher pay or compensation including stipends and substitute teacher fees
- Any expense that has already been incurred
- Items or equipment to be used by an individual teacher/staff rather than students
- Mileage reimbursement

Guidelines & Agreements

1. Developing your page

- All fundraising pages must contain the unabbreviated name of your chapter.
- You must select a beginning and ending date, and must end by May 30 (so that funds can be distributed in the current school year).
- You may set a goal for your campaign, but it is not required.
- Each chapter may have only one campaign running at a time.

2. Accessing your data

The names of your donors and overall amount-raised-to-date will be visible to you on your fundraising page. However, the amount gifted per donor will not, and the names of anonymous donors will be withheld.

By the end of the month following the close of your campaign (for example, by April 30 for a campaign closing on March 31) the Foundation will send a check for the funds and a full donor report to your school. This report will include the amount invested by each donor.

- Because of the high volume of active fundraising pages the small Foundation staff do not generate regular reports for your review, however they are available monthly upon request.
- The wishes of donors to remain anonymous must be honored. The site allows donors to remain completely anonymous, or to provide their name but decline any form of public recognition. You may privately recognize these donors, but be careful to avoid public recognition.

3. The money

- All checks will be made out to your chapter, never to an individual teacher or staff member.
- Even though your supporters have donated to your fundraising page, technically the donation has been made to The Foundation for Douglas County Schools, a non-profit 501c3 organization.
 - The donation is tax deductible, Colorado Gives will initiate a receipt to all donors automatically
 - There may be no exchange of goods and/or services for the donation, you may send a thank you letter but nothing more
 - The donation **must be used for purposes as described** on the fundraising page. Why? Because these are considered “restricted” gifts. For accounting and tax purposes non-profits are held to a strict standard of using restricted funds as specified.
- You will be assessed 2% in fees, this will be deducted from the check provided to you from the Foundation. This fee is lower than other crowd-funding sites.

- ☑ You'll receive **monthly** fund disbursements for your campaign (by check or ach), however, due to timing of fund disbursements by Colorado Gives, there is a one month delay on payment processing.
- ☑ Running your campaign in December? Your fundraising page will not be eligible for any matched or incentive funds associated with Colorado Gives Day.

Getting Started

Step 1 – Create Your Account

- [Click here](#) to create your donor account.
- Go to "The Foundation for Douglas County Schools" page
- Click "Start A Fundraiser"
- Enter the information you want on your Fundraising Page (your Campaign Details)

Step 2 – Create Your Messaging

Create your Campaign Title:

- Your title must contain the name of your school
- Use the title to communicate a clear purpose, for example: Chromebooks for ABC School Kids!

Write your Campaign Summary:

- Speak from the heart! This is your opportunity to share why you believe others should invest in your project. The more emotionally resonant you make your message the more effective it will be.
- Donors like to know their money will be used effectively. Provide specific details on how the funds will be used.

Step 3 – Finalize the Page

- URL Link: <http://coloradogives.org/XXX> (use the campaign name or an abbreviated version of the campaign name)
- Incentive Fund: Unless your school PTO or another organization has committed to matching funds, select NO
- Add a Photo: The most appealing pages include photos but be sure to follow all district policies for privacy and confidentiality. If you elect to include a picture of the equipment you'd like to purchase make sure you have legal rights to the photo.

- Your Personal Appeal: Here is where you close the sale! We suggest something like: Your donation is tax deductible and 100% of dollars raised will help students
- Send campaign emails to: enter your email address
- Allow people to email me from my campaign page: select YES
- Campaign Goal: This is optional, but can be very effective in encouraging people to make larger gifts. You can select any amount desired. If you exceed the goal, donations can still be accepted. All funds raised will be provided to your school whether or not you reach your goal.
- Start Date: Select the date you want your campaign to begin
- End Date: Select the date you want your campaign to close.
 - To receive your funds faster we recommend closing your campaign at the end of the month
 - All campaigns for the school year must close by May 30
- Save
- "Submit for Approval"

Step 4 - Approval Process

Hopefully you've followed the guidelines and requirements, if so the approval process will be quick. Within three days of submitting your form you'll receive an email from the Foundation that will include a signature form. You'll need to certify that you have permissions for your photos and that any technology you plan to purchase is either in the district's hardware catalogue or has been approved by your area STIP. Next, you'll need your principal or school supervisor's signature that he or she has reviewed and approved the fundraising page. Then you send the form back to us (as an attachment or simply email us a photo of the completed form). After receiving the completed form the Foundation will review your page and you'll go live on your selected start date.

Once your page is approved you'll receive a URL link that you can share with your network. Please double check the link to ensure it is live and accurate before sharing it with others.

If there are questions about whether your page is in compliance with the guidelines the Foundation will notify you of our concerns so that you can correct the issue. These challenges will slow down the launch of your fundraising page, so it is best to avoid them and make sure your page follows the guidelines prior to submitting it for approval.

Step 5 – Get the Word Out!

Share your link on social media, in emails, through your school website and anything else you can think of! The Foundation is not able to market your fundraising page, so have a strong plan for how to communicate your effort.