

**Event Planning Checklist**

This checklist is intended to help you build a timeline that is specific to your PTA’s goals and events. Remember to include the following:

**At Least 6-8 Weeks Before Your Event**

* Connect with school administrators and faculty to gather support and secure your event location.
* Engage different members of your school community (teachers, parents, students, staff, administrators) in an open listening session to identify local STEM strengths and what they would like to see in an Invention Night.
* Determine when your event will be held, in conversation with your volunteers and school leaders and keeping in mind families’ needs and schedules.
* Reserve your location. You can set up in an open space such as a library, gymnasium or cafeteria. Or, have different inventions being made in various classrooms. Make sure you plan for a central area to welcome families and serve refreshments.
* Plan for accessibility for family members with disabilities. Is your event location accessible to those with mobility challenges? Would any families benefit from sign-language interpreters or other accommodations?
* Share event details and information with your PTA members. Recruit your planning team.

**4 Weeks Before Your Event**

* Start holding regular planning meetings with your team.
* Begin promoting your Invention Night to families. Emphasize that this is a *family* event, and parents are expected to participate with their children. (See Tips for Promoting Your Event.)
* Assign volunteer roles and leads.
* Begin the process of translating event materials and arranging for interpreters for non-English speaking families, if needed.
* Consider whether transportation to the event could be a barrier and discuss potential solutions (e.g., use a school bus or provide bus passes).
* Ask for donations for event giveaways, including an incentive for families to complete the event evaluation form or a drawing to encourage family engagement.

**2 Weeks Before Your Event**

* Solicit volunteers needed for specific roles on the event day.
* Continue promoting the event. Consider posting signs in school, asking room parents, teachers, and school staff to send flyers home with kids and include in the daily announcements
* Order food and drinks. Provide healthy snacks and a comfortable place for families to gather, eat and socialize.

**A Week Before Your Event**

* Ask volunteers to make phone calls to invite targeted families and ensure that caregivers understand the importance of their active participation during the event.
* Finalize event logistics, including creating a detailed day-of-event schedule and assigning specific volunteers to critical roles. (See Event Day Checklist.)
* Continue promoting the event.
* Make copies of your event evaluation form and any parent takeaways.

**Within 2 Weeks After Your Event**

* Formally thank PTA members, volunteers, littleBits representatives, and school and community participants.
* Compile evaluation data and share with National PTA.
* Hold a debriefing session with your planning committee to discuss what went well and what you would do differently next year.