

Get Busy!

Try these proven project ideas

By Ana Ribero

After years of coming up with new and exciting projects for your student group, it's difficult to continue thinking of original ideas that'll keep your peers interested and involved. *Florida Leader* wants to help you boost school spirit and student participation by giving you ideas that successful high school groups have used in the past. Try these projects with your student group, or use them as a basis for unique projects. Submitted by the Florida Association of School Administrators, these projects have been used by Student Councils and other high school groups throughout Florida.

Freshmen Day

Starting at a new school is stressful, so the Student Government Association of **Pace High School** offered a day of learning and fun where freshmen find out vital high school information and get a boost of school spirit before the real school year begins.

The day began with future freshmen munching on doughnuts while getting a chance to meet and socialize with their future classmates and teachers. After a couple of icebreaker activities, groups of freshmen took workshops on everything from "How to Survive High School" to "Sports and Clubs." After a pizza lunch where students got a taste of real cafeteria food, participants took part in a pep rally.

Overall, Freshmen Day was a great success. Freshmen got acquainted with the high school and were able to get involved, meet new friends, and have some fun to ease the difficult transition into high school.

The Drive-In

Inspired by old drive-in theatres, **Bloomington High School** SGA provided a fun evening for students by projecting a movie on a canvas screen at the stadium and charging students \$2 to attend. Students brought blankets and lawn chairs, and SGA sold drinks, popcorn, and candy. In order to prevent inappropriate items from being brought into the event, students' blankets were searched as they entered and they were not allowed to bring coolers with them. Movie night can be used to provide a safe social activity for students or to raise funds for an activity or club. Pick a movie that's popular and well liked by students and it should be a successful evening.

Unity Quilt

Jupiter High School's clubs and athletic programs got cozy and made a tradition and keepsake to boot. Clubs, sport teams, and other student organizations were able to buy squares of fabric in the school colors to represent their group on a quilt. The squares sold for \$5 each and were decorated by each group. After SGA's School Service and Publicity Committee received all the squares, the members sewed them together into a single quilt, which was displayed in the school for everyone to see.

This project not only united Jupiter High School groups and provided a larger picture of the school's many faces but also became a student tradition.

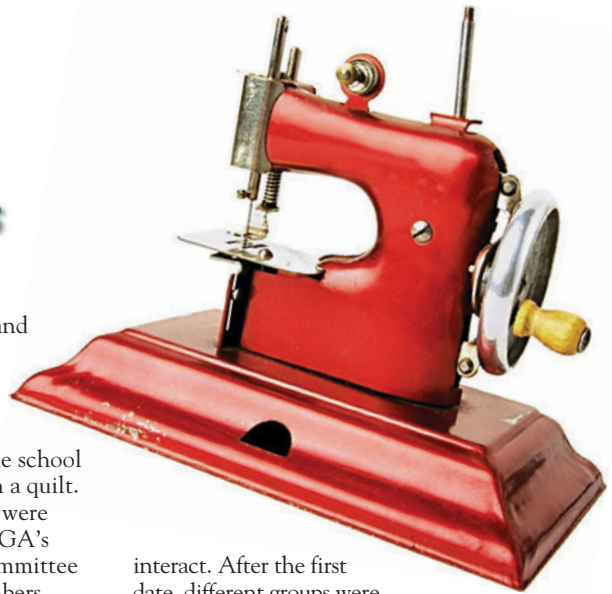
Basketball Bash

In order to promote attendance to basketball events, **Miami Sunset High School** SGA held a tailgate party in the school's back patio from 4 to 6 p.m. before each basketball game.

Student clubs and organizations signed up to set up food tents during the party to raise money and awareness of their particular group. Twenty-two clubs participated in the bash, selling food and spirit items. SGA provided a disc jockey to play music at the function, and students were admitted for free. The event was advertised for three weeks and approximately 300 students attended the event.

Date Night

Student Council members at **Royal Palm Beach High School** noticed that social groups often kept the council from becoming completely unified. Project Date Night was meant to let council members get to know each other, helping them to work better as a group. The 40 council members were divided into eight groups randomly by the faculty advisor and were given a two-week period to go on their group's "date." The date could range from a casual get-together at a member's house to dinner and a movie or any other fun activity that would let the group members



interact. After the first date, different groups were chosen so that each council member would interact with every one of the other 39 members. Students got to know each other outside the school environment, building friendships and promoting more unity in the council. After all the groups had rotated and dated, there was a final event for all of the 40 council members at Fort Wilderness in Orlando.

Wheel of Misfortune

This fundraising event provided a fun way for students to relieve exam stress while watching their favorite teachers go through some hilarious feats. **Boynton Beach High School** students built a chance wheel that after being spun would land on "misfortunes" such as getting a pie in the face or a water balloon thrown at them. Teachers who volunteered for this event had their pictures taken and placed on jars to collect money from students during lunch periods. The top three teachers who collected the most money from each lunch were the contestants to spin the wheel. Student and teachers raised \$200 for the children's charities of the Salvation Army.

Dog Wash

The **Jupiter High School** SGA put together a team to participate in an annual dog wash with all proceeds benefiting the local non-profit animal shelter, Safe Harbor. Members of the community brought their dogs to this all-day event that included booths selling pet accessories, vets who provided answers to pet owners' questions, and a full service dog wash, courtesy of local volunteers. Members of the SGA leadership class were given pledge sheets to collect donations for the shelter. A total of \$150 in donations was collected.



Senior Parking Lot Painting

Seniors at **Southeast High School** used to express themselves by painting and decorating their lockers, but when lockers were removed, so was that opportunity for self-expression. To replace this fun senior privilege, the painting of senior parking spaces was instated. SGA informed seniors over the morning announcements about painting their spots one week before the event and provided paint and supplies for students to use. Seniors loved getting a chance to show their personalities and leave their mark on the school for a year. Faculty, staff, and other students enjoyed seeing everyone else's creativity in this new tradition. Seniors were supervised to make sure their parking spot "art" was appropriate.

A Day at the Spa

To reach out to the elderly in the community and at the same time get the student body involved in community service, SGA members at **Boca Raton High School** designed a spa program to pamper female senior citizens for an afternoon. They set a date when trained volunteers from Boca High would go to a local retirement home and provide participants with facials, manicures, and refreshments. Flyers in the retirement home advertised the event. About 30 elderly women participated, with students giving 27 facials and 30 manicures throughout the day. Students got acquainted and made new friends with the elderly in the community.



Teacher Prom

Students at **Bloomington High** wanted to show their appreciation for teachers in a unique way. They were tired of the typical apples and things as gifts for teachers and decided that their faculty would enjoy a chance to socialize in a formal atmosphere. They held a teacher prom, providing a full dinner, entertainment, and even babysitting. The meal was donated entirely by grocery stores and restaurants. The students hired a jazz band to provide

Fun and Fast Ideas

- 1. Trick-or-Treat Grams.** Print "trick-or-treat gram" cards and create goodie bags to sell. People purchase the bags, and they're delivered during class time.
- 2. Kiss a Senior Goodbye.** A cute way to give seniors a little love and to raise a few extra bucks is to sell Hershey Kisses for 5 cents each or a small bag for \$1. Students can send these kisses to their favorite seniors and SGA can deliver them during class time.
- 3. Pictures With Santa.** Hire a part-time Santa Claus or purchase a Santa costume and ask people to take shifts volunteering to take Polaroid pictures with students for a small fee.

entertainment and handed out donated door prizes, including coupons and gift certificates from local businesses. To keep costs down, student volunteers decorated the tables in a jazz theme.

In order to increase attendance, SGA decided to hold a babysitting service during the event, with student volunteers taking care of children for the entire duration of the prom and providing games and activities for them.

Give Life a Chance

Flagler Palm Coast High School's weeklong suicide awareness project met the needs of both parents and students. The week contained events including a school-wide assembly, banner signing, parent meeting, homeroom video and discussion, candlelight vigil, and a Hershey's chocolate inspirational note and Hug.

Guest speakers attended the assembly and gave information about suicide and suicide prevention to the students.

Students who signed the banner and pledged to get help for themselves or others if needed were given a yellow ribbon to show their commitment to suicide awareness and prevention. During a parent meeting to discuss suicide issues, participants were presented with SGA-made pamphlets regarding awareness. Homeroom classes watched a video to encourage a discussion about suicide and suicide issues. Then, a candlelight vigil was held to honor surviving families of suicide victims, and the week ended with the entire student body and staff receiving a Hershey's chocolate Hug and a note of hope that said, "A hug can't solve everything, but it's a good place to start."

Staff Birthdays

Teachers sometimes feel unappreciated by the students that they try so hard to reach. With this in mind, students at **Riverdale High School** designed the "Staff Birthdays" program. When a staff member had a birthday, students delivered birthday cards and balloons to them and put their name up on an electric sign in the cafeteria—which can be changed daily—so that the entire school would remember to wish them a happy birthday. Teachers and faculty loved the individual recognition and students enjoyed the chance to recognize and congratulate their favorite teachers. It's a great way to build student-teacher relations and create a friendly atmosphere in school.

Trick or Treat

Looking to provide a safe trick-or-treating environment for local elementary school children, Miami Sunset High students held "Trick-or-Treat on Sunset Street." Student clubs signed up to

decorate a classroom and pass out candy to trick-or-treaters. Parents appreciated the event because it eliminated the dangers sometimes associated with Halloween. Children enjoyed it because they got to meet high school students while attending an event designed especially for them.



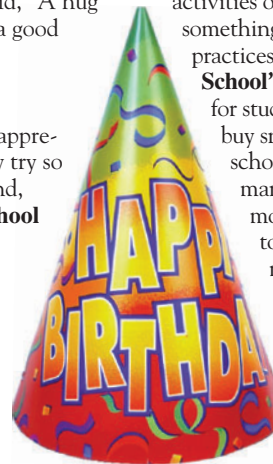
Teachers vs. Students Softball Game

This activity was started by **Southeast High SGA** members to boost school spirit and participation in school activities, as well as to begin a new tradition. Two teams were formed—one of students and one of teachers—from sign-up sheets available during lunch hours. The teams held practices after school and then had their face-off at a night game, which raised money through ticket sales.

They found it was very important to advertise this event for weeks before it actually took place, which ensured enough participation to make it worthwhile and successful.

Snack Shack

Students who stay after school for activities often don't have the time to grab something healthy to eat before they go to practices or meetings. So, **Estero High School's** SGA wanted to provide a place for students who stayed after school to buy snacks. At the beginning of the school year, organizations applied to man the school's "Snack Shack" for a month. Each group was responsible to stock the facility during their month and reaped the profits of that month's sales. The groups had to follow guidelines set by SGA on what foods to sell and what prices to charge. The concession stand opened from 2:15 to 2:45 p.m. every day after school.



Senior Citizen Prom

The **Fort Meade High School** SGA felt that senior citizens were sometimes neglected within their community and thought that an activity should be held to honor them and entertain them. They planned a senior citizen dance that they put together themselves and advertised throughout the community with newspapers ads, flyers, and word-of-mouth. Refreshments, entertainment, and seats made this event a huge success. 🍷

Contact FASA's Executive Director of Student Activities Services *Carrie Coons* at casons@fasa.net.