THE MOVIE FUNDRAISING GUIDE FOR K–12 SCHOOLS

2026 EDITION

SWANK | Educational Streaming & Movie Licensing

ROLL FILM. RAISE FUNDS.

Looking for a fresh, low-stress way to raise funds this year? Host a movie night! These events offer a unique opportunity to bring your entire school community together, foster school spirit, and raise funds for programs, supplies, and special initiatives – without a huge time commitment, support staff or budget.

Movie nights are especially effective because they're inclusive and family-friendly. Parents, students, siblings and faculty can all enjoy an evening of entertainment in a relaxed setting – whether in the gym or under the stars. And when your school works with Swank for securing the necessary licensing, you can promote your event and even sell tickets knowing you're covered legally. That means coverage for thousands of the most sought-after films and blockbusters for Fall 2026 – including "Toy Story 5" and "Minions & Monsters" – plus expert support and helpful planning tools to make every step simple.

> ***"Family movie night has become one of the best things we have ever done at our school!"***
>
> **- DACUSVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**



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6 STEPS TO MOVIE FUNDRAISER SUCCESS

Use this step-by-step framework to plan an event that runs smoothly and hits your fundraising goals.

STEP 1. CHOOSE THE RIGHT MOVIE

Crowd-pleasing, family-friendly hits tend to draw the biggest turnout. Want a shortcut? Visit page 6 for this year's top pick.

STEP 2. SECURE YOUR PUBLIC PERFORMANCE LICENSE

Don't skip this step! To show a movie at school (even a free event), you must obtain a public performance licensing for copyright compliance. Swank's license is the only way to legally show major Hollywood films in public K-12 settings. If your school doesn't already have a license, reach out to Swank to get one in place before your event.

This license also allows you to promote the movie title and fundraise for your school, helping you maximize turnout and fundraising. See page 7 for more details on licensing and how to protect your school.

Click here to contact us about licensing for your movie event.

> ***"We want to have protection to pop in a movie for a special event, after school event or rainy day and not worry about the nuances."***
>
> **- ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT SIKESTON R-IV SCHOOLS**



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STEP 3. LOCK DOWN VOLUNTEERS AND FUNDRAISING STRATEGY

Movie nights are refreshingly low-lift. Aim for 5 to 10 volunteers total to help with setup, concessions, ticket-taking and cleanup. Teachers, parents and even older students can all pitch in. Assign clear roles ahead of time to keep things running smoothly. Decide on your fundraising approach early, whether through concession sales, donation-based entry, raffles or community sponsorships. Choose the option that works best for your school and gather the resources you need to support it.

STEP 4. PROMOTE THE EVENT

The more visibility, the bigger the crowd! Start promoting at least six weeks in advance using these channels:

- **Backpack Flyers:** Include all the event details.
- **Posters Around Campus:** Place in hallways, lobbies and pickup/drop-off areas.
- **Morning Announcements:** Use your student news or principal to generate excitement.
- **School Communications:** Add to your website, email newsletters and community calendars.
- **School Social Media Accounts:** Create a Facebook event or post in your parent organization group – encourage sharing!

> ***"Swank is a true partner for school events. We utilized their promotional materials for our movie craft table, and the kids and parents loved it."***
>
> **- DESERT MEADOWS ELEMENTARY**

Swank also offers free customizable promo materials, reach out to start customizing yours.



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STEP 5. PICK THE VENUE AND PREP THE TECH

Choose your screening location – gym, cafeteria, auditorium or outdoors.

Secure a projector, speakers and screen (or blank wall) early, and always do a test run in the actual space a few days before the event.

Plan seating that suits your space – chairs, mats or a BYO-blanket setup – and have trash bins ready for easy cleanup.

STEP 6. WRAP UP AND PLAN WHAT'S NEXT

After the movie, thank your volunteers and audience. If you know how much you raised, announce it! Then, ride the momentum by asking families to vote on the next movie, or set a date for your next screening.

With a Swank Annual Movie License, you're covered to host these events year-round – for clubs, parent organizations, reward days and more. The possibilities are endless, and each event builds more community support (and funds) for your school.

CREATIVE WAYS TO ELEVATE YOUR MOVIE NIGHT

Once you have the basics down, consider layering in some creative touches to elevate your movie night from ordinary to extraordinary. Here are a few ideas seasoned parent organizations have used to boost engagement and fun (and sometimes revenue) at school movie events:



Theme It Around the Movie: Choose a theme that matches the movie and carry it through decor, snacks and activities. Families are more likely to show up when the event feels like a full experience, not just a screening.

Raffles, Contests and Prizes: Raise extra funds with raffles or contests. Offer prizes like themed baskets, VIP seats or spirit wear. Run a "Best Costume" contest to tie in with your theme and boost engagement.



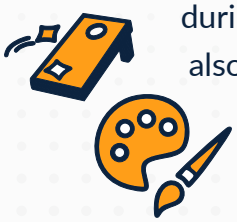
Pre-Show Performances or Activities: Kick off the event with a quick performance. Invite the choir or band for a "preview," or have the drama club do a skit or trivia game. These touches get students involved and make the event feel like an experience.



Community & Club Tie-Ins: Team up with student groups! The art club can decorate, the culinary class can bake and student council can host games. These partnerships lighten your load and increase attendance by bringing in families from those groups.



Craft and Game Stations: Especially for elementary audiences, a simple craft or game can keep kids busy as families arrive or even during the screening. You could also have a movie-themed quiz or trivia game (with small prizes for winners) before the show.



Concession Upgrades: Go beyond popcorn. Theme a snack to the movie, or invite a food truck or local vendor to sell treats and donate a portion. Bundle items into a "Meal Deal" (pizza, drink and popcorn) to boost your fundraiser.



"Our family movie night was a great success! We had 300 people. Attendees brought classroom supplies for admission. Everyone had a great time, and the teachers were thrilled with the stockpile!"

- WAMPATUCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

TOP PICKS FOR 2026-2027

★ Please Reach Out for Availability ★



Toy Story 5



Zootopia 2



The SpongeBob Movie: Search for SquarePants



GOAT



Hoppers



Star Wars: The Mandalorian and Grogu



Minions & Monsters



Supergirl



The Sheep Detectives



Moana



Paw Patrol: The Dino Movie



Akeelah and the Bee



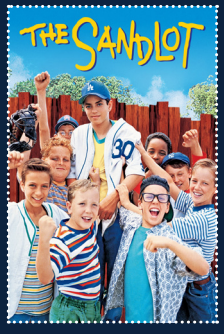
Hocus Pocus



Elf



The Greatest Showman



The Sandlot



A League of Their Own



The Best Christmas Pageant Ever



Hotel Transylvania



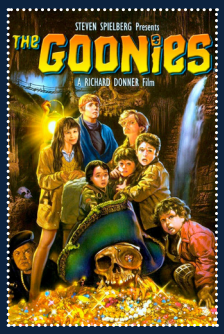
Charlotte's Web



Prancer



The Grinch



The Goonies



Inside Out 2

WHY YOU NEED SWANK

Even if your movie event is free and just for students, it still requires a public performance license to be legal. Streaming services and DVDs don't cover this kind of use. That's where Swank comes in. As the exclusive licensing provider for K-12 schools, Swank ensures you're covered to screen films from the top studios like Disney, Sony, Paramount, Warner, Lionsgate, Universal and more.

WITH A SWANK SITE LICENSE, YOUR SCHOOL IS COVERED TO:

- Host unlimited movie nights and fundraising events
- Promote your screening with movie titles and studio-approved imagery
- Raise funds legally through ticket sales, concessions or donations
- Share the license across your entire campus for use in classrooms, aftercare, clubs and assemblies

> ***"Swank helped make our movie night such a fun and affordable event that I've encouraged other schools in our district to make movie nights a regular event. I encourage anyone to do the same!"***
>
> **- FRED WILLIAMS ELEMENTARY**

To learn more about obtaining a public performance license for your school, visit swank.com/k12/licensing-copyright-compliance. We're happy to answer any questions and help you get set up for the 2026 school year!

NEED MORE MOVIE EVENT IDEAS?

Visit Swank's website or scan the QR code to download our full 2026-2027 programming calendar filled with monthly film picks, seasonal ideas and ready-to-share resources to keep the movie magic going all year long.

