

**The Case for Student Council Fundraising**

TASC develops active, positive citizens in schools and communities while building a better world – one student, one council, one school at a time.

The Student Council is the one organization in a school that has the interests of the entire school as well as the community at heart. The council conducts transition programs for incoming students and special groups in the school, hosts spirit events, promotes academics, support charities, provides staff appreciation gifts and meals, decorates schools, purchases items needed for instruction, hosts assembly programs with professional speakers, and often “gifts” schools with beautification projects, picnic tables, and murals. In order to function well, the council needs training that requires sending students and advisors to workshops and conferences. All of this requires money; and student council is not a school, state, or federally funded program. Students must raise the money for projects, training, and travel.

**Funding Options for Student Councils**

TASC is led by a board consisting of students, advisors, and principals dedicated to the development of success in the classroom, civic participation, the journey of leadership, and student voice. They know it takes not only students and advisors who are passionate about improving their schools and communities, it also takes resources to fund projects and to obtain the training that prepares students to become the employees and leaders our businesses and country want and need. To that end, we endeavor to keep every program as affordable as possible while maintaining a financially strong association.

There are a variety of ways you can fund your program. Before requesting funding, become familiar with the training provided at those events, especially college living at summer workshops, and the TASC State Reports and our articles on how StuCo can help principals. TASC is not the governing agent of any of these funds. Advisors can meet with agents of the funds to see if they may be used based on expected learning outcomes.

Among others, the [Meadows Foundation](http://www.mfi.org/display.asp?link=AW46CY) provides grants for community service. [Say What!](http://txsaywhat.com/resources) with the Texas School Safety Center provides grants for tobacco education projects. [Dairy Max](http://www.dairymax.org/) provides a gift card after certain steps are met. You can also pursue Do Something grants ([large](https://www.dosomething.org/about/do-something-awards) and [small](http://www.expandedschools.org/funding-opportunities/do-something-seed-grants#sthash.AhgB8LHA.dpbs)), [GenerationOn grants](http://www.generationon.org/service-clubs/resources/grants-opportunities), and grants and gifts from local businesses, etc. [Citgo](https://www.facebook.com/CITGOFuelingGood/app_844900732230251) has a program in which you can enter to win $1,000 of classroom supplies which could be used for your program. Below are listed some other ideas for funding options. By searching, you may find other options.

1. State and Federal Grants. Talk with the grant coordinator of your district/school to understand the currant usage of their funding and learn how TASC training, especially summer leadership workshops, fits into the overall vision. You might inquire specifically about the following:
* [Title IV-21st Century Schools, also known as Safe and Drug Free Schools](file:///%5C%5Ctassp-srv01%5Cvol1%5CTASC%5CFunding%20for%20Councils%5C%E2%80%A2%09Title%20IV-21st%20Century%20Schools%2C%20also%20known%20as%20Safe%20and%20Drug%20Free%20Schools)
* [SIG-School Improvement Grants](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html)
* [Title I grants](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/index.html)
* [Free Funding Sources for Anti-Smoking Programs](https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0155.pdf)
* [Small Learning Communities grants](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/slcp/index.html)
* [Gear Up! Grants](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html)

Your council should be an enhancement to nearly every school wide program on your campus. Ask about money that has been dedicated to support the development of (but not limited to) the following:

* Migrant programs
* ESL programs
* PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports)
* RTI (Response to Intervention)
* Character Education
* Anti-bullying
* AVID (Advance Via Individual Determination)
* Safe Schools, Healthy Students (sponsored by SAMHSA)
* SEL-Social and Emotional Learning
* Staff Development
* Accreditation Process
1. Parent, Alumni, and Student Clubs: Student Council is an excellent program for parent and/or other student organizations to fundraise for and support, especially if you ensure that your council represents and serves every facet of your school community. You will need to show how your program directly improves school climate and culture.
2. Foundation Grants: Some schools have had success presenting proposals for small grants to private foundations.
3. Corporate Donations and Grants: Many companies like Apple, Target, Wal-Mart, Sam’s Club, Best Buy, Wells Fargo, etc. have large corporate foundations interested in funding education. The process can be long and tedious. Think about inviting executives from these corporations into your school to see your council in action. Talk with them about ways their employees can engage in your events before asking for money. Then present them with a letter (hand delivered by students) explaining what you need and how they can help. Always find creative ways to thank any and all businesses that support your program. Keeping it local usually means that businesses will continue to support and invest in your school.
4. Individual and Private Donations: You might be surprised to learn how many people (including alumni) will help your program if they are asked. Always go back around. Once you write a letter, follow it up with a visit or a phone call. And once a donation is made, “thank before you bank” i.e., send a thank you letter before you cash the check.
5. City Council, Chamber of Commerce, other business clubs: These groups are concerned with keeping communicates safe, civic participation, and growing community leaders. Ask if you can present. Work hard to get an article in the paper about your presentation as well. Always let people know how they can support your program.
6. Your local community or education foundation: Find out what is out there to support your school and community.
	1. [Summer Santa](https://summersanta.org/summer-santa-programs/#camp) funds summer camps for over 300 kids ages 7 – 14 for a camp in North Texas. You must live in northeast Tarrant County to qualify.
	2. The National Association for Gifted and Talented as well as the Texas Association for Gifted and Talented provides scholarships for summer programs. Check early to learn about deadlines.
	3. Search for other programs such as these.

**Make the Case for Title I Funding for StuCo**

Title I: Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged

Title I is a federal program designed to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high quality education. Title I funds aim to bridge the gap between low-income students and other students. The US Department of Education provides supplemental funding to local school districts to meet the needs of at-risk and low-income students, helping them to reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments.

Schools with Title I funds may see that the programs implemented by well-trained student council members and advisors provide an effective way to achieve the goals Title I aims to address. Training and projects can help close the achievement gap between high and low performing students, especially for underrepresented students.

Texas Association of Student Councils (TASC) is not the governing agent of these funds. Advisors may want to meet with district/campus representatives to investigate the use of funds for TASC events based on the expected learning outcomes. Summer leadership workshop participation would certainly do that.

Read through the following to determine what reasons are most relevant to your program. Talk with funding experts. There may be other factors that are more important. Do not try to present every example. Prepare your “elevator” speech to include those that are most relevant and most important when you make your case for funding.

* Student Council can set up a structure within the school for ensuring that the entire school community has the opportunity to engage in and support the school’s defined mission and strategic goals.
* Student Council can reach those within the school population who might otherwise be disengaged.
* Student Councils serve all students, and advisors may include any students in their council in workshop delegations and event volunteers.
* Student Council enhances student responsibility and improves performance of both transitioning students and leaders. By engaging low achievement and underrepresented students, it also supports them.
* Transition programs planned by student councils intentionally and structurally supports all entering classes of students to provide connection and a sense of safety.
* Allowing students to attend events such as summer leadership workshop provides an avenue for experiencing college living. By learning from others across the state, students and advisors learn practical way to make a positive impact.
* Students at workshop and in councils engage in an authentic learning environment and are guided in effective problem solving and decision making experiences.
* The student council experience enables students to learn to take responsibility, to make decisions, and to solve problems in a descriptive rather than prescriptive environment. Students are engaged as leaders who have ownership of their schools. When that happens, everyone benefits, and teachers are able to create even more dynamic learning experiences that raise student achievement.
* TASC training not only improves classroom instruction of advisors involved, it also trains the members to take leadership roles within the school, district, and professional community. Trained student council advisors and members experience positive personal and professional transformations, a shared responsibility for student achievement and strengthened connections and communication between staff and students.
* Advisors trained at TASC events take valuable tools and ideas to their campuses and districts, thus providing more education for staff members. Advisors who serve in staff roles with TASC or who attend TASC trainings can return as master trainers of that material on their own campuses.

**FUNDRAISING FOR SUMMER LEADERSHIP WORKSHOPS**

If students need financial assistance to attend a TASC Summer Leadership Workshop, they may want to see a sponsorship. Provide the following information for interested students.

**Sponsorships**

There may be sponsors waiting to be asked for support. Ask you advisor or school counselor for ideas. Ask if your counselor and advisor will also write you a letter of recommendation you can include with a letter to potential sponsors.

**As you seek sponsorship, keep the following in mind:**

* Asking someone to sponsor you shows you have faith in their generosity.
* Know exactly what you are requesting and be knowledgeable about the summer leadership workshop so you can explain it. If sponsors have questions about the program, they can contact Terry Hamm at terry@tassp.org.
* Be ready to explain how you will use what you learn to better your school and your community.
* Be ready to explain how you will share what you learn with your peers.
* Show potential sponsors your respect for them and their time. Ask to make an appointment to meet at their convenience. Dress appropriately, be punctual, and do not take more time than necessary.
* Double check your spelling and punctuation. Be sure about the spelling of their names and job titles.
* Send a personal hand-written thank you note after a meeting, even if you do not receive a sponsorship.
* Do not be discouraged when you do not get a sponsorship. Ask if there is anyone else they know who might consider this and keep trying.

**Try this three part process:**

* Send an introductory letter (See the template TASC has provided.)
* Make a follow up phone call to set an appointment.
* Write a thank you note.

**Possible sponsors include the following:**

Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, Kiwanis, Knights of Columbus, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion Posts, Chambers of Commerce, League of Women Voters, Business and Professional Women, local political organizations, church groups, local banks, PTA’s, local businesses, law firms, your Education Foundation, etc.

**Your council may want to send representatives to some of these groups to ask if they would consider partnering with the council on a yearly basis to send students to leadership training. Always offer to provide a program for them about what was learned and what you are doing to better your school and community.**

**Scholarships**

* The National Society for the Gifted and Talented and the Texas Association for Talent and Gifted have provided scholarships for students to participate in leadership programs. Deadlines are usually in March and April so check their web sites for information.
* [Summer Santa](https://summersanta.org/summer-santa-programs/#camp) funds summer camps for over 300 kids ages 7 – 14 for a camp in North Texas. You must live in northeast Tarrant County to qualify. Search for other programs like this.

Date

Sponsor’s First and Last Name

Sponsor’s Title

Sponsor’s Business/Organization

Sponsor’s Address

Dear Mr./Ms. Sponsor’s Last Name:

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I have the opportunity to participate in a Texas Association of Student Councils Summer Leadership Workshop, and I hope you will partner with me in this leadership development program. By attending, I will enhance my leadership skills and learn to promote student voice and student ownership in my school and my community. I will share what I learn with my peers so that we can work together to better our school and our community. If I can participate, I would welcome the opportunity to share what I learned with you and your organization through a letter or a presentation.

This four night, five day workshop is an invaluable experience during which I will gain a deeper appreciation of civic participation and will gain knowledge about goal setting, project planning, evaluation techniques, team building, and meeting skills. Through experiential exercises I will also improve my skills in collaborating with others and learn more about my own strengths, talents and values. I will attend with a team from my school, and we will begin planning our year at \_\_\_\_\_\_ School. During this week, I will also have a college living experience which will better prepare me for educational success beyond high school.

In order to participate, I need to earn a fee of $\_\_\_\_. This includes four night’s lodging, meals during the program, curriculum materials, and instruction. The fee will be paid to TASC which is a 501 (c) 3 educational nonprofit organization, and donations may be tax deductible.

To learn more about TASC and the opportunities it provides, you can visit [www.tasconline.org](http://www.tasconline.org). You can also contact TASC directly at 512-443-2100 ext. 233. I would be delighted to visit with you at your convenience. You may also contact my student council advisor to learn more about my leadership potential. His/her name, phone number, and email address is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

Your signature

Your First and Last Name

Your contact phone number

Your address