Sociables 101

A Short Primer on Sociables

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Sociables 2019-2020 Co-Chairs

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What Are Sociables?

Sociables are parent-sponsored parties and events hosted throughout the school year that build community and raise funds for the school through ticket sales. They are a great way to get to know fellow St. Catherine’s families and have fun!

Each year, a team of parent volunteers serves as Sociables co-chairs. They work with Advancement and event hosts to brainstorm party ideas, encourage families to get involved with Sociables as hosts and guests, support the hosts in their planning, promote the parties, and make sure everyone has a great time participating in Sociables.

What Kind of Parties and Events?

Hosts can plan a Sociable for specific levels (Infant Community – High School), for entire families, or for adults. Past parties for children include: Infant & Toddler Art Party, Fairy Tea Party (Primary), Bubble Soccer (Elementary), Harry Potter Potions Class (Elementary), American Ninja Warrior Training (Upper Elementary and AC), and Escape the Room (AC and High School).

Family-themed events have included Family Yoga, a VIP experience at the Houston Art Car Parade, Christmas Lights Tour, and Lunar New Year celebration. In previous years, parents have attended adults-only events like Italian Wine Extravaganza, ¡Fiesta Cubana!, and game nights like Ladies Bunco and Men's Poker Night.

Party planning can be as simple as booking a bowling alley and covering the cost of food, or as elaborate as hosting a bash for 75 in your own backyard.
How Does Hosting a Sociable or Buying Event Tickets Support St. Catherine’s?

By sponsoring a Sociable, hosts are creating fun social activities that allow St. Catherine’s families to get to know one another, which helps build and strengthen community. Guests help build community by attending, and proceeds from the ticket sales support the school’s budget. Each year, the school sets a goal to raise $25,000 in Sociables ticket sales.

How Do I Purchase Sociables Tickets?

Ticket sales opened on Monday, September 23, 2019 at Sociables Kickoff. On this day, members of the community gathered to purchase tickets, enjoy coffee and light bites, and visit with co-chairs and event hosts.

Online ticket sales opened Tuesday, September 24, 2019 at 8:00 AM. Events that have been designated to include grandparents, alumni children and/or alumni families will become available to those groups only after current families have been given ample time and opportunity to buy tickets.

How Do I Host a Sociable?

- Join a committee of co-hosts for an event and/or create a new event to host or co-host. We can match you with an existing event, find more co-hosts for your committee, or help brainstorm ideas for something new.

- Decide your event budget. Hosts cover the costs of Sociables. The events are considered in-kind donations to the school, and we are happy to provide a gift acknowledgment to be used during tax time. Contact Advancement to arrange.

- Determine the ideal month(s) for your event. The co-chairs will provide you with available dates from which to choose.

- Identify one (1) point of contact for your event. This person will email the Sociables co-chairs with your ideal month(s) and serve as the event contact person. This person is responsible for gathering and relaying group decisions back to the Sociables co-chairs.
Once your event date is confirmed, complete the Sociables Host Form (the co-chairs will provide the link). You will need to consider the following:

- **Who is this party for?** Children (which age group(s)?), Adults (men, women or both?), Families? Would you open your party to grandparents, alumni children, or alumni families? *The school would do targeted sales to these groups only after current families have been given ample time and opportunity to purchase tickets. Additionally, where applicable, all guests would be aware at the time of purchase that these groups may attend.*

- **Can parents drop off their children, or must they also attend?** If parents do attend, are they required to purchase a ticket for themselves?

- **How many tickets can be sold for your event?** Keep in mind that hosts and host children (if applicable) must be taken into consideration. If your event can only support 20 people, and host families take up 5 spots, only 15 tickets can be sold.

- **How would you describe the event?** Write a short and catchy description to entice guests. This text will be used in the Sociables Catalog and in other promotional communications.

**Promote your event.** This could include attending Sociables Sign-up Day and decorating your event table to draw would-be guests; contacting friends and class parents via email, text and phone; talking up your Sociable at birthday parties, parent potlucks, and other school events; sharing on your social media; posting on SCM On a Whim.

As your event draws near, contact your guests to finalize their attendance and confirm event details.

At the event, **welcome all guests, introduce yourself as a host, and thank them for coming.**

Take photos at your event and share with Advancement for posting in *The Globe*, on the school website, and in the annual report and yearbook.
How Does the School Assist Sociables Hosts?

Advancement coordinates with the co-chairs; organizes Sociables Sign-up Day; manages ticket sales and guest lists; and promotes events via:

- The Sociables Catalog, which is emailed to the entire SCM community, posted online, and linked in The Globe
- Sociables Kickoff
- Monthly Red Folder flyers
- Sociables Spotlight in The Globe
- Dedicated e-blasts
- The school’s online calendar
- Facebook, where applicable

Upon request, Advancement can provide an in-kind donation letter to hosts who wish to include their party expenses as a charitable contribution on their taxes.

Subject to availability, the school gym, athletic field and Welcome Center may be used as venues for Sociables.

Also subject to availability, the following school items may be borrowed by hosts to help throw their parties. We ask that all items be returned in good condition.

- School buses
- Folding tables and chairs
- Table cloths (blue & white checkered)
- String lights
- Lightweight easels
- SCM Athletics canopy/tent
- Props for Sociables Sign-up Day

Hosts might also consider using SCM On a Whim to source items from the school community.