



**FAIR TRADE  
CAMPAIGNS**

# Fair Trade Schools

## Tips & Case Studies: Maintaining Momentum over the Summer

### Media-Providence Friends School Fans of the “Summer Plan”

Experience through the years has guided MPFS’ faculty Fair Trade committee’s move to meet during the quieter months of summer to plan ways to achieve our Fair Trade School designation commitments in the school year ahead:

1. Executing at least 4 Fair Trade events/activities/lessons/assemblies
2. Sourcing at least 2 permanently available or 4 occasionally available products
3. Ensuring the staffing of the committee by at least 5 faculty members

A **primary objective is to enjoy a relaxed afternoon in each other’s company**, so, we plan a brunch get together at a committee member’s house. We use [Doodle](#) to easily poll everyone to establish the best day and time, and if we are lucky, we find something that suits all of us. Folks pitch in, bringing beverages, desserts, salads and such, so that we can enjoy each other’s contributions -- naturally, the food theme showcases Fair Trade ingredients as possible!

After brunch, we get down to business. We spend 30-40 minutes **reviewing the just concluded year’s activities**, month-by-month, to **remind ourselves of how much we’ve actually accomplished** as well as what was particularly challenging, and to pave the way for completing Fair Trade Campaign’s annual survey together. Next, we review the prior year’s spending, and learn from our business office liaison how much our budget will be for the year ahead. It’s small, so it takes a mere 5 minutes to review! Much of our budget is spent underwriting the Fair Trade products we use for events and everyday (tea, sugar, class baking ingredients, bananas for lunch, soccer balls, etc.), so an important task is to assess needs there and coordinate responsibilities for assuring that our inventory is always sufficiently stocked. Having thus established what funding remains for lessons and events, with school calendar in hand, the lengthiest part of our session commences... discussion about possible activities we might be able to accomplish, either independently, or in conjunction with regularly scheduled annual school events.

While all school calendars will differ, **we've learned to "front load" more involved activities in Fall and Winter months**, as Spring's busy-ness with field trips, culminating class overnights, plays, concerts and exhibitions make for too much competition for time. As it turns, out, at MPFS, Fall and Winter provide plenty of occasions for Fair Trade "infusion".

September's many back to school events, Field Day and International Day of Peace celebrations always afford good opportunities to educate students, parents and faculty about Fair Trade. Likewise, October (aka Fair Trade month) presents myriad prospects: social media campaigns, Reverse Trick-or-Treating for Fair Trade, class walking trips to Media to visit Fair Trade shops, and fun Fair Trade activities at the school's highly-attended annual family Pizza & Pumpkin Night. November's Thanksgiving food drive ties in well with teaching children about fairness, right-sharing of world resources, and appreciation, making it a good time for grade-by-grade classroom lessons of all kinds. January's MLK Day initiatives are also a fine match for Fair Trade education... each year students participate in lessons and service that relate well to Fair Trade themes then. The faculty-parent committee that plans the day welcomes the original lessons the Fair Trade committee provides to help make the time spent honoring Dr. King rich and meaningful. February holds MPFS' beloved Winterfest, where class fund-raising food stalls can easily feature home-made Fair Trade treats. Finally, in May, as the school year winds down, World Fair Trade can be acknowledged in an assembly, with a skit or presentation, to underscore the year's Fair Trade learning for the whole school community, connecting it to other learning themes that took place during the year.

Inevitably, more ideas arise through this initial brain-storming process than our small team can hope to implement, so we winnow down the list and divvy out responsibilities for communicating with others in the school as needed, and for the actual activity execution itself accordingly. We've been fortunate to **have committee members within all divisions of the school**, which ensures that all bases, and perspectives, are covered (and then some). At the close of our summer session, our annual plan always seems to include nearly twice as many activities as are required to maintain our Fair Trade designation, reflecting both committee members' enthusiasm as well as how easily Fair Trade concepts are woven into the core values MPFS espouses and teaches: Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community and Equality. Other **schools may find it beneficial to connect Fair Trade with school-wide themes** for similar effect.

Come September, we are all glad to have taken the time to have created our plan for the year ahead. It allows us to focus subsequent committee meetings, which take place in alternating months throughout Fall and Winter, on details needed to make upcoming events/activities go smoothly.

*Many thanks to Media-Providence Friends School for sharing these ideas for making the most of the summer months! Find more tips and other resources at [fairtradecampaigns.org/resources](http://fairtradecampaigns.org/resources).*