

Painless Fundraising = FREE MONEY for Schools!

A Guide for Coordinators

What is Painless Fundraising?

Everyone buys groceries! And many grocery stores--plus online vendors and restaurants--offer rebates to schools. Why not have people's everyday shopping bring money to your school?

Corporate-school rebate programs are called "painless fundraising." These programs can be a goldmine for schools and PTAs, replacing typical buying/selling fundraisers. Shoppers contribute at no extra cost to them. School parents and staff, coworkers, friends, neighbors—even family living a distance away--can support your schools, painlessly!

Some examples are Giant's A+ School Rewards, eScrip (includes rebates from Safeway and ShopRite, and rebates from online purchases and many restaurants) and Target's Take Charge of Education. Bloom, Food Lion and Harris Teeter also offer school rebates. Shoppers register their grocery loyalty cards and/or credit/debit cards at particular Web sites, and then select schools to benefit from their shopping. Box Tops for Education (for K-8 grade schools) involves collecting special coupons printed on many products that schools mail in, and now also offers eBox Tops. Snider's and Chevy Chase Supermarket (both independent stores) will pay schools from tallied grocery receipts. Each rebate program has different requirements/deadlines/payment criteria.

Getting Started

Painless fundraising programs must have coordinators. Learn how each program works, and then promote the programs in creative ways throughout the year to encourage participation.

Plan your painless fundraising campaign early—do not wait until the school year begins! Work together with your school administration and PTA leadership to agree on specific funding goals. Understand how and when each program pays, and plan the steps needed to achieve your goals.

eScrip funds can be earned all year, so begin to work on that program right away! If you do not know who's listed as the coordinator on your school's eScrip site, there's probably no one currently heading that program. Without a coordinator, your school likely will have unrenewed supporters whose Safeway rebates have stopped (many shoppers do not know about Safeway's annual renewal requirement). Obtain your school's eScrip site password to access your group's eScrip archive, and then learn how to work with the database. Maximize success with eScrip by encouraging your articulating or consortia schools to find coordinators, and then work together.

Important Web Sites and Phone Numbers:

Giant A+: www.giantfood.com/aplus A+ School Rewards hotline: 1-877-ASK-APLUS
eScrip: www.escrip.com where supporters can register and update their accounts
www.groups.escrip.com where coordinators access their school eScrip data
eScrip Customer Support: 1-800-700-5655 for coordinators OR supporters to reach eScrip
Safeway Customer Service: 1-877-SAFEWAY (answered 24/7) for shoppers to obtain their
forgotten Safeway card numbers or update any information in their Safeway accounts
www.backtoschools.escrip.com 10% promotion site to redeem codes and card numbers
10% promotion recorded message: 1-877-561-8048 (with critical deadline details)
www.escrip.rewardsnetwork.com to find restaurants participating in the eScrip program
Electronic Scrip (eScrip): Facebook page to share info/network with other coordinators
Bloom: www.bloomforyourschool.com
Food Lion: www.foodlion.com/CommunityOutreach/MVPRewards
Harris Teeter: www.harristeeter.com/community/together_in_education/tie.aspx
Box Tops: www.btfe.com 1-888-799-2444 Visit Box Tops' Facebook page to connect with others
Target's Take Charge of Education: www.target.com/tcoe

Collect Grocery Numbers on PTA Membership Forms and Flyers!

Below is suggested wording that PTAs can have on their membership forms for collecting grocery card numbers when people join your PTA. Coordinators then can register members' cards for Giant A+ and eScrip (some other info for this registration process will be on the membership forms, such as their name, address, phone number, email address). PTAs should not ask for people's credit/debit card numbers—instead, inform them how they can add those cards to their eScrip accounts (in My eScrip). Have a system in place with your Membership Chair to receive membership data so you can register these cards immediately and maximize earnings!

Your grocery shopping can help <name of school>!

Giant A+ School Rewards: The PTA will register your BonusCards for Giant's 2011-12 school program for <name of school>. You **MUST** register your cards EVERY school year. If you want your Giant shopping to support one additional school, list that other school below.

Giant card number (12 digits): _____ <your school> ___ School 2

Safeway and ShopRite school rebates: The PTA will register your Safeway and ShopRite cards with eScrip for <name of school>, or renew your existing eScrip account (if you signed up for this program before, you **MUST** renew each school year so Safeway continues to pay). First call 1-877-SAFEWAY if you don't know your Safeway card number, then we can register your card. If you want your Safeway and ShopRite shopping to support up to two other schools, list them below.

Safeway card (11 digits): _____ <your school> ___ School 2 ___ School 3

ShopRite card (12 digits): _____ <your school> ___ School 2 ___ School 3

Also have separate flyers available throughout the year. People can fill out these forms for you to register their grocery cards. Here's an example:

Giant, Safeway and ShopRite Have Money for Schools!

Your Safeway and ShopRite grocery shopping can earn money for <name of school.> Register those cards at www.escrip.com or fill out this form and we'll register them. You later can make any changes in your eScrip account in the "My eScrip" section of the eScrip site; be sure to renew your eScrip account annually so your Safeway contributions continue.

Your Giant shopping can earn money for <name of school.> Register your Giant BonusCard EVERY school year at www.giantfood.com/aplus, or fill out this form and we'll register your card.

Name: _____ Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Giant BonusCard number (12 digits): _____

Safeway Club Card number (11 digits): _____

Don't know your Safeway card number? Call 1-877-SAFEWAY (answered 24/7) to get it!

ShopRite card number (12 digits): _____

If you want to support other schools in addition to <name of school>, list them here:

School 2: _____ School 3 (only for Safeway/ShopRite): _____



Giant's A+ School Rewards (Formerly A+ BonusBucks)

At the beginning of each school year, all schools MUST “re-register” for the A+ program at www.giantfood.com/aplus to confirm that they want to participate in that school year cycle again. Giant mails information to every school about A+ in August, along with the school's A+ password. Save your school's password—it does not change! The coordinator goes to the A+ Web site, clicks on “Re-Register Your School” and enters the coordinator area with the school's Giant password to verify the info that Giant has for his school. Check the names of the A+ coordinator and the school principal, your school's address and grade levels, and an estimated school enrollment, make any updates, then enter this information. Once you do this simple but required step, your school is all set for the new school year, and Giant shoppers and coordinators will be able to register BonusCards online for that school year's A+ cycle.

Giant's A+ program runs for almost six months, from early October to late March. Giant shoppers MUST register their BonusCards for the A+ program EACH school year—all previous year card signups have been deleted from the system. People can choose up to TWO schools to benefit from their shopping. A coordinator can register up to 30 BonusCards at one time, to support *only* their school, in the coordinator section of the A+ site. If families want to support two schools, individually register their cards on Giant's A+ site instead of using the multiple card signup area. Giant stores no longer have postcards for the company to register shoppers' BonusCards, and some stores may not advertise the program throughout the cycle. Shoppers or school coordinators must register BonusCards online, or by calling the hotline number, 1-877-ASK-APLUS. Cards registered no later than the end of a month will receive school credit for ALL purchases those customers made that month! Remember this monthly deadline, and try to get cards registered before the end of each month within the A+ cycle so your school earns more.

Friends or relatives who patronize Stop and Shop grocery stores in New England, New York, New Jersey and Delaware can register their Stop and Shop cards at www.stopandshop.com/aplus and select schools in our area too—Stop and Shop and Giant Food are the same company!

Giant does not allow coordinators to see a list of who has registered for their schools. However, anyone can view the total number of registered cards for any participating school and also the total amount earned. If shoppers want to support two schools, they should choose both schools when they register. If they later decide to update their school selections that school year, they must add ALL their school choices again; updates to their school choices override their prior selections. The A+ site shows how much money schools have earned, with monthly updates made several days after each month within the cycle. Giant pays schools before the end of the school year. The check is written to schools, not to PTAs; the school principal determines how this funding is used. Sometimes PTAs work with their principals to decide how to use this money.

Giant can provide a store employee for Back-to-School Nights or other school events, giving more visibility to this program and encouraging more people to register. Contact your local Giant store manager to make arrangements. You must provide card signup forms to use at your event; collect them from the Giant employee at the end of the evening so you can register those cards.



eScrip: Money from Safeway/ShopRite/Restaurants/Online Purchases

The eScrip company (www.escrip.com) has run Safeway's school rebate program in its "Safeway East" division (MD/VA/DC/DE) since school year 2002-03. Starting September 2011, all ShopRite stores in Maryland now partner with eScrip to run that company's school program. eScrip also can bring money to schools from many restaurants and from online purchases.

eScrip Enrollment: Is your organization enrolled? Go to www.groups.escrip.com and search by the organization's name, zip code or city, and then click on the group's name. If the page that comes up says "Your group is enrolled and active," the group had filled out the enrollment form and has a deposit account set up to receive payments. If the page says "Enroll Your Group"—or if you cannot locate your school after searching its name, zip code and city—fill out the enrollment form and submit it to eScrip with a voided check so the group can start earning contributions.

Payment: eScrip pays monthly by direct deposit to the financial account that was specified during enrollment. eScrip, however, can pay either to schools, PTAs, booster clubs or school foundations. If your PTA will be promoting and managing this program, the funds can be changed to go to the PTA's bank account (of course, first discuss any change with your principal!). eScrip earnings then become PTA income—your members determine how this money is used!

The Coordinator Toolkit on your eScrip group home page describes all funding opportunities, and can be accessed without a password. There also are several short training videos about specific topics. Coordinators need their organization's group eScrip password to get into their eScrip site and see who's currently signed up for their school/who needs an annual Safeway renewal. eScrip registrations ROLL OVER into each school year; people stay registered for the school(s) they initially chose unless they change the schools they want to support! If your school or PTA cannot locate your group's eScrip password (sent when the school enrolled), contact eScrip's Customer Support, 1-800-700-5655. eScrip may email the password to the person who's listed as your school's coordinator, who then can give it to the new coordinator. You may, however, need to obtain your group password by writing a letter on school letterhead and signed by your principal.

The group password accesses the secure areas of your group's eScrip site. Be sure that the coordinator contact info in the My Assistant section is correct—coordinators receive important messages from eScrip via email. Coordinators can view two types of Reports: the Supporter List shows who's currently registered for their group; the Monthly Statement includes 13 months of detailed financial data. The My Assistant area indicates which supporters need to renew for Safeway, lists their email addresses, and shows who has registered grocery and/or credit/debit cards. eScrip should be promoted regularly, encouraging new people to register, plus informing registered supporters about Safeway's annual renewal requirement and how they can update any data in their eScrip accounts. Coordinators are responsible for maintaining their group's archive of already-registered supporters; they also can search eScrip's database to find some of their families' accounts that were set up earlier for prior schools, and then encourage them to update.

Coordinators can register people who want to support *only* their school in the Power Registration section on the group home page. People wanting to support TWO or THREE schools must be registered at www.escrip.com where more than one group can be designated.



Safeway shoppers who want to register but who don't know their card number (and instead use their phone number at the store) first must call Safeway Customer Service, 1-877-SAFEWAY; a company rep. will look up their card account/tell them their card number, and also can correct any data in their Safeway record. Coordinators cannot call to obtain a shopper's card number. Once you have a person's card number—along with his name, address, phone number and email—you can register him for eScrip so his Safeway shopping begins earning money for schools.

Safeway's school rebate runs all year long; ShopRite's school rebate runs from September-May. People can register for eScrip at ANY time of the year. Coordinators should promote the many parts of eScrip throughout the year, using e-lists, newsletters, flyers, bulletin boards, etc. People can register their cards with eScrip only once--eScrip signups remain in eScrip's database and ROLL OVER into each school year. People stay listed for the same school(s) they initially had selected unless they change their school designations. Supporters can go into their accounts in the My eScrip part of the site to see their earned contributions and to update anything in their accounts (change their school selections, add more grocery/credit/debit cards, change their address, etc.). Coordinators often will need to inform people HOW they can make any changes.



Annual Safeway Renewal: Supporters with registered Safeway cards must RENEW their eScrip accounts each fall so their Safeway contributions continue. The annual renewal grace period runs from August 1-October 31, when registered supporters can renew without any lapse in their Safeway contributions. Those with a working email address in their eScrip records--AND who have not opted out from receiving eScrip emails--will receive several emailed reminders to renew. People must renew each year BEFORE NOVEMBER 1 for no lapse in their Safeway contributions; renewing after that date re-starts their Safeway rebate from that date, but no back credit can be given. Coordinators can see who needs to renew in the Safeway Renewal area of their group sites. They also can trigger a pre-written renewal message, which will be sent to their supporters needing a renewal who have working emails in their accounts AND who did not opt out from eScrip messages. Alert people to renew during the grace period thru reminders on e-lists and in your newsletters. The number of folks needing to renew will decrease, but not everyone on your supporter list will see your school e-list or newsletter reminders. To reach more unrenewed people on your list (including those who have opted out from eScrip emails), coordinators then should send out ONE renewal message that they write, sending the message to themselves and copying all the unrenewed people's email addresses into the BCC field; your message also can tell supporters how they can go into the My eScrip section to make any changes in their accounts. If people's emails have changed, the email you send will bounce back to you; then try to find those people's correct emails, update their accounts with their new email address and send your message to them again. For supporters with no emails in their accounts, coordinators can alert them about renewing via phone. No later than October 31, coordinators should renew any remaining unrenewed accounts so all supporter contributions will continue uninterrupted.

Coordinators should advertise the different parts of eScrip throughout the year, inform their registered supporters about Safeway's annual renewal requirement, and also let people know how they can update their eScrip records. Shoppers usually will not learn about eScrip at Safeway stores, since that company does not run its school program. Safeways nationwide participate in eScrip (except stores in CO, WY, SD, TX and NE). Safeways in some parts of the U.S. operate under different names (such as Genuardi's in NJ/PA, Dominick's in IL and Vons in CA)--they are all part of Safeway. Remind your families that their friends and relatives who shop at Safeway and its affiliate stores can register for the eScrip program and support our schools too!

Since September 2011, Maryland ShopRite stores' school rebate program is run by eScrip. In addition to promoting ShopRite, be sure to inform your eScrip supporters that if they have a ShopRite card, they can add that card to their existing eScrip records, or you can add it for them.



Restaurant rebates. Find participating restaurants at this site: www.escrip.rewardsnetwork.com (search by city or zip code). Sign up for the eScrip program, register a credit or debit card, and then pay at the restaurant with that card. People who already have signed up for the eScrip program can go into their eScrip accounts (in My eScrip) to register a credit/debit card. You can find participating restaurants in many areas of the U.S. and Canada; encourage other family members and friends to support your school throughout the year!



Online Purchases. There are two ways for online purchases to bring money to schools. 1) Have your webmaster install the “eScrip Online Mall” link (encoded with your eScrip group’s ID number) on school and/or PTA Web sites (the link will look like the middle image above). Instructions for webmasters are here: http://www.groups.escrip.com/online_mall People start their online purchases by first clicking on a school’s eScrip Online Mall link to earn rebates for that eScrip group; using this encoded link, they do not need to be registered for the eScrip program, OR do not need to have credit/debit cards registered in their eScrip accounts. Over 1,000 online merchants participate, including travel/hotel sites. 2) To earn rebates from your online purchases if your school does not have an encoded Online Mall link on its site, add one or more credit cards to your eScrip account, and then start every online purchase at the eScrip site; sign in, click on the Online Mall link, select the desired vendor, pay with a registered credit card.



Safeway 10% Goes Back to Schools. This MAJOR annual promotion happens at all Safeways nationwide, and can earn thousands of dollars for your school or PTA within a short timeframe. The 10% promotion consists of two parts--the “shopping period,” followed by the “redemption period.” The shopping period runs for about five weeks (around mid-August to mid-September). If shoppers’ Safeway cards already were registered with eScrip (see note below about a cut-off date), their additional 10% rebate from buying participating products during the shopping period automatically is credited to their designated schools. ALL other Safeway shoppers who bought these products in the shopping period will receive redemption codes on their receipts during the redemption period (from mid-September to mid-October). eScrip groups collect these receipt codes from shoppers, and then redeem them at the 10% site (www.backtoschools.escrip.com) to benefit their groups. Coordinators also should encourage any shoppers whose receipts have redemption codes to register their cards with eScrip so their Safeway shopping can earn money for schools all year! Either receipt codes OR unregistered Safeway card numbers can be entered into the 10% redemption site to bring in shoppers’ 10% earnings. A recorded message (at 1-877-561-8048) gives details about the promotion, including a critical cut-off date that determines whether people’s recently-registered Safeway cards will automatically credit their 10% rebate OR their card numbers will need to be redeemed separately at the 10% site to capture that rebate. This cut-off date is important since many families’ Safeway cards are registered with eScrip at the start of the school year. Because the majority of shoppers’ Safeway cards are not registered with eScrip, most of their receipts will have redemption codes. Find volunteers to help collect these receipt codes, AND also provide forms or flyers so shoppers can learn how to register their cards so their Safeway shopping earns school rebates all year. Often \$1,000 bonuses are awarded to the top-earning groups that raise the most 10% funds. As you increase the number of registered Safeway cards throughout the year, more 10% earnings will automatically accrue for your group.

Interested in raising thousands of dollars for your PTA or school, but have no volunteers to run these programs? Need help navigating the online registration systems? I’ve coordinated these rebate programs for over ten years--raising up to \$15,000 per year--and can work with your school, PTA or eligible non-profit.

For additional information, contact Carol Smalls at carols@sprintmail.com or 301-585-9682.

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