



East High School Alumni Foundation

Providing scholarships. Launching dreams.

Class Reunion Planning Tips

I. Picking a date

- Late spring and early summer are typically easier for travel and you may have attendees from all over the country and outside the USA.
- There are existing East High/eastside events you can align with to make a trip to Des Moines more worthwhile:
 - Scarlet Celebration (alumni banquet) – typically the 1st Saturday in June
 - First Friday (eastside night!) of the Iowa State Fair in August – check iowastatefair.org for dates
 - East High Homecoming – during football season

II. Event format

- Two days/nights of activities are typical – which is more attractive to travelers.
- Classes are seeing declining interest in “formal-dress” events; more casual activities are preferred.
 - That said, the Scarlet Celebration may be ideal to align with – the EHS Alumni Association can assist with table reserving planning for you (for that evening), and it’s a full-fledged East High event.
 - Your class could plan additional activities for the Friday before. An informal gathering for Friday doesn’t normally require dealing with pre-payment, making it easier on the planners. (See Paying for your Reunion below.) Example: reserve a backroom or space at a favorite restaurant or bar; let everyone pay for their own tab.
- Classes can also plan daytime events around a reunion weekend, including golf outings, bowling, or school tours.
 - It’s important to note the Annual East High Golf Classic is a great way to bring your classmates together. The Golf Classic is normally held over a Friday and Saturday in May – and has a large gathering at Prairie Meadows on Saturday event. Check ehsgolfclassic.org for the dates.

III. Formal and Informal event venues on the eastside

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| ○ Chuck’s Restaurant | ○ Grand View University |
| ○ Prairie Meadows | ○ Captain Roy’s on the River |
| ○ Adventureland Inn | ○ State Historical Museum of Iowa |
| ○ Copper Creek Golf Course | ○ Montana Mike’s (NE 14 th St.) |
| ○ Toad Valley Golf Course | ○ Depot @ Iowa State Fairgrounds |
| ○ Grandview Golf Course | ○ Hilltop Restaurant |
| ○ Embassy Suites in East Village | ○ A/C Marriott Hotel in East Village |
| ○ Des Moines Botanical Gardens | |

IV. Reunion committee and planning timeline

- Usually, classmates who were active in committees in school will be those most interested in assisting with reunion planning.
- Designate one leader for the committee that is organized. Also designate one point person for social media and email communications.
- Be as diverse as possible with your committee, so your reunion does not cater to certain groups. You want to draw as many classmates as possible!
- Plan your meetings in quiet settings and avoid loud public social spaces such as bars & restaurants unless you are assured a private room.
- End planning meetings with specific action items designated to committee members along with deadlines for those items.
- For a late spring or summer reunion, groups typically begin planning during the fall of the previous year. This will give you enough time to plan venues and activities and promote it to all your classmates.
 - Committees meet more frequently the closer to they get to the reunion.
 - Assign “take-aways” with dates to multiple members, by stating them at the conclusion of the meeting.

V. Class database and promotion

- The East High Alumni Association can maintain and update your class database for you, so efforts are not duplicated. Share all updates with us at info@desmoinesehsalumni.com.
- Sending postcards can be effective but costly to your current account. Social media and emails are great promotional ideas to get the word out.
- The East High Alumni Association will also promote your reunion on its website, and through its social media channels and mailings. Fill out the reunion form on our website: desmoinesehsalumni.com/reunion-form-submission.
- It's common for local Des Moines classmates to not pre-pay. Encourage pre-pay through an attractive door-prize giveaway. Plan on pay-at-the-door classmates. Charge more at the door in your planning efforts.

VI. Paying for your reunion

- If you are planning a formal reunion that requires reservations and pre-payment, there are several options for your classmates to pay:
 - Paying by check or cash: the monies will need to be deposited into a checking account that will be used to pay for the event. This requires some extra work and reporting to be transparent. Some banks will set up a checking account for your class and not charge fees as long as they know that the funds raised will go towards a non-profit organization. Discuss options with your bank. We recommend having at least two people have access to the checking account along with sharing bank statements with the committee on a frequent basis.
 - Credit Card payments: there are several options for this. Some banks offer this option with their checking accounts.
 - Other options: Set up a Square account (which has typical fees like PayPal) or Venmo (which has lower or no fees). If you think that many are going to be paying by credit card, please consider the fees that will be charged for this convenience and adjust your reunion ticket prices accordingly.

VII. Class scholarship

- The East High Alumni Foundation typically awards more than \$200,000 in scholarships to East High students each spring, and many classes have endowed scholarship funds that contribute to this.
 - A class scholarship fund level needs to be \$10,000 to be able to award a \$500 scholarship forever. Increasing the endowment to \$20,000 increases the scholarship to \$1000 in perpetuity.

- Endowing a scholarship or increasing an existing class scholarship are wonderful ways to celebrate class milestones, birthdays or a memorial to honor a fallen classmate.
 - Ideas for raising money:
 - Challenge classmates to contribute their age (\$50, \$75, etc.), or the year of the reunion (\$30, \$50, etc.)
 - Challenge multiyear giving such as \$46 their 46th year, \$47 their 47th year, \$48 their 48th year, etc. leading up to \$50. That challenge adds up to a \$240 giving per person.
 - You can also promote recurring giving on the website donate page: desmoinesehsalumni.com/donate
 - Help out with or manage existing EHS fundraising events like the “Big E Dinner” at Chuck’s Restaurant. Proceeds can go to your class scholarship!
 - Sell merchandise at East High events.
 - Seek out larger contributions from classmates able to do so. You can provide recognition for those classmates, if they wish. However, many larger donors wish to remain anonymous.
- To find out how much your class currently has in your scholarship fund, contact us at info@desmoinesehsalumni.com

VIII. East High Alumni Association contacts

- Website: desmoinesehsalumni.com
- Email: info@desmoinesehsalumni.com