

Tanglen Elementary PTO Uses Qgiv Auctions to Raise Nearly a Third of Annual Fundraising Goal

CHALLENGE:

Tanglen Elementary PTO is a nonprofit Parent Teacher Organization in Minnetonka, Minnesota. Their work benefits the children of Tanglen Elementary. The organization is 100% staffed by volunteers made up of parents, caregivers, and teachers in the community who strive for the success of the students of Tanglen Elementary, a title one school in which 48% of students are on a free or reduced fee lunch program. Their goal is to work together to help each and every one of their children learn and thrive.

To achieve their goal, Tanglen Elementary PTO volunteers host fundraising campaigns and events year-round to ensure students have everything they need to succeed and teachers and staff at the school are supported and appreciated.

Their Parents Night Out typically featured a pen and paper auction hosted at a restaurant. During the pandemic, Tanglen Elementary PTO was presented with a choice: cancel their in-person auction event and miss out on significant funding they use to support kids and teachers or find a way to hold the auction while keeping families in their communities safe.

Jen Cameron, the Fundraising Chair for Tanglen Elementary PTO, quickly got to work looking for a digital platform they could use to keep their auction event on the table.

"I researched and made phone calls but found that a lot of auction tools wanted thousands of dollars or required a one-year commitment. We're a volunteer PTO so we couldn't afford that. Qgiv's auction platform was just a couple hundred bucks and no commitment."

Jen Cameron, Fundraising Chair, Tanglen Elementary PTO

Raised more than
\$9,000
with virtual auction

Provided
108
appreciation gifts to school staff

ROI on auction item spend was
1,150%



SOLUTION:

Jen presented the Qgiv auction platform to the PTO board and got approval to host a virtual auction fundraiser. She worked closely with the Qgiv customer experience team to learn the platform and then set up their auction.

Despite not having digital design experience, she found it possible to set up her auction in a matter of hours.

“It was so easy! All I did was put the auction items in my basement. Then I’d find a picture of that item online and drop it into your platform. So much better than bringing a grill in a box to an event! I could just go online, get a picture of that grill, and upload it to Qgiv. That takes 25 seconds, as opposed to me dragging around a 300-pound grill. — Jen Cameron, Fundraising Chair, Tanglen Elementary PTO

The PTO volunteers got items donated for the auction and asked the board for a small budget to acquire additional auction items. The PTO president donated bottles of wine from his restaurant so the group could host a wine pull. They priced bottles of wine at \$15 each to make a small profit while driving interest to their auction.

They got away from pen and paper auctions by using Qgiv’s auction software. Instead of using paper bid sheets, bidders could download the Givi app to participate in the auction or use web-based bidding to bid directly from their auction event page.

RESULTS:

When bidding closed on the Tanglen Elementary PTO auction, bidders had raised more than \$9,000. Typical auctions before Qgiv raised around \$2,500 when taking payments with Shopify.

“Our average fundraising year is probably about \$30,000, so for us to do a \$9,000 auction with Qgiv is huge!” Jen Cameron, Fundraising Chair, Tanglen Elementary PTO.

In addition to auction items and the wine pull, the PTO also knew they could use the auction platform for staff appreciation. They sold teacher appreciation packages using Qgiv’s fund-a-need feature. Enough parents purchased teacher appreciation packages that the entire staff of the school was able to receive something.



During previous auction events, bidders could pay for winning bids via the PTO’s Shopify site. While being able to take electronic payments benefitted Tanglen Elementary PTO, they found their experience with Shopify to be clunky and labor-intensive for donors and volunteers.

By comparison, the Qgiv auction platform was intuitive for both Tanglen Elementary PTO volunteers and auction bidders, which led to a successful fundraiser that raised nearly 1/3rd of their entire annual fundraising goal.





The board of the PTO gave the team \$720 to acquire auction items. Because the auction raised more than \$9,000, the return on that investment was a staggering 1,150% of their initial investment. That's a major success!

Their success didn't stop at selling auction items. They sold between 45 and 50 appreciation gifts. With the profit from selling teacher appreciation gifts, they were able to purchase enough gifts for the entire staff of 108 people.

Not only were they able to raise nearly a third of their annual fundraising goal in a single event, they also were able to provide gifts for every member of staff without spending any money from the PTO's budget for them.

"I just, love, love, love the Qgiv platform and I started telling our sister schools in our district about it. They're doing a really good deed in our world, and I hope they keep it up."

Jen Cameron, Fundraising Chair, Tanglen Elementary PTO

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