

# St. John School Marketing Calendar 2018-2019

AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	JANUARY
Listing in Parent Map Annual Directory	Ad in Learning Map Edition		Sibling commitments and re-enrollment for PK & K	PK/K Christmas Program—invite prospective parents	Open House Ads in Parent Map NW Catholic Ad
PK Parent Social	First Day of School Coffee in the Courtyard	Endowment Dinner	Grandparent's & Friends' Day (2 <sup>nd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> )	Christmas Cards to Key Donors/No Ask	K & PK Info Night
K Student Open House			2017 Admission News E-Letter #1	Admission News E-Letter #2	All School Open House
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Social					Q & A Session
PK/K Play Dates			Annual Report Mailed w/Ask Envelope		Admission News E-Letter #3
					Online Applications Available January 1
Ongoing-- web page updates					
Ongoing-- press releases					
Ongoing—prospective parent tours					

FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY
Q & A Session	E-letter #5 Invite to musical, science fair, etc.	Auction Invite new families	K Welcome	PK/K Play Dates	PK/K Play Dates
Admission News E-Letter #4	Middle School Musical	Deposits & 1 <sup>st</sup> month tuition due (new families)			
State of the School/PM	K & 1 Grandparents' & Friends' Day	E-Letter #6 if openings	K Welcome		
State of the School/PM	Contracts due at facilitation appointments				
State of the School/AM	New Family Newsletter #1	New Family Newsletter #2	New Family News Letter #3		
Annual Fund Ask w/Registration*	Buddy Family Matching				
Ongoing-- web page updates & Facebook posts					
Ongoing-- press releases					
Ongoing—prospective parent tours					

## KEY

Advertising/PR Activities
Internal Marketing/PR
External Marketing/PR
Internal/External Marketing
Special Events
External/Internal Fundraising
Admissions/Re-Enrollment

\*St. John Annual Fund is primarily focused on current families

# Get Your House in Order Notes/December 2018

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## DO YOUR HOMEWORK--EVALUATE YOUR SCHOOL

- SWOT analysis (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats)
  - Environment/appearance
  - Program—curriculum, extracurricular, preschool, extended care, science lab, etc.
  - Personnel
    - Who answers the door/phone
    - Who gives the tours
    - How is your faculty perceived
    - Pastor?
  - Web page
  - Parish relationship
  - Competition
    - Public
    - Private
    - Other Catholic
  - Feeder schools
  - Where do your students come from?
  - Why do families choose your school?
  - What do current families like/dislike?
  - Why do families leave?
    - Exit interviews
    - May need fellow parents to follow up with candid phone calls

## FOCUS YOUR EFFORTS

- Review what you learned. Keep in mind that what you want to achieve might take several years to and requires the support of principal & faculty. You cannot do this alone. Recruit school commission members, key volunteers, parishioners, etc.
  - Personnel
  - Curriculum
  - After school activities

- Environment/facilities
- Focus on what gives you the most “bang for your buck”
- 1 kindergartener = a 9 year annuity
- Don’t get distracted by things that don’t directly result in increasing enrollment (alumni relations, grandparents’ day, endowment---even annual fund). You cannot do it all at once.
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MAKE A PLAN--Think in terms of both internal & external marketing

- Internal marketing
  - Don’t assume your families will return year after year
  - Current parents are your #1 marketing tool
  - Keep “recruiting” current families
    - Brag often
    - Use your high school/college alumni as examples
    - Use your State of the School to both recruit and retain
    - Curriculum night can highlight new initiatives, teacher continuing education, new materials, etc.
    - Cultivate a strong community
      - Grandparents’ & Friends’ Day
      - Grandparents’ Club?
      - Coffee with the principal
      - Parent education
      - Events
      - Family service projects
  - Establish re-enrollment protocol
    - Fall PK/K head count or “intent to register/re-enroll
    - State of the School
    - Facilitation/collection
    - Firm deadlines with financial incentives
    - Remind, remind, remind
    - Website
    - Newsletter
    - Social media
    - Text message/robocall
  - Note: you can tie annual fund to re-enrollment (make one, inclusive “ask”)
- External Marketing
  - Open houses—vary the format—small, large, Q & A
  - Host a community event/workshop/speaker
  - Tap into existing events—Cultural Fair, performances, etc.
  - Connect to your feeder schools
  - Parish newsletter/bulletin should have a school insert or page

- Cultivate a positive parish relationship—joint events, Growing Families, pastor engagement, etc.
- Website
- Social Media
- Direct Mail
- Print/Other Advertising
- Press releases
- Neighborhood blogs
- Build a database of prospective families
  - Track & respond to all phone calls (intake form)
  - Create a “Request for Information” button on website—goes straight to admission person
  - Follow up promptly—focus on getting them in for a tour
  - Never turn away a prospect—even if you have a wait list
  - Face to face opportunities are golden. Never let them get away.
  - Peer to peer marketing has the most value (current parents, recent alumni parents, etc.)

#### MAP IT OUT/ESTABLISH A RECRUITMENT & RETENTION CALENDAR

##### Fall

- Admissions newsletter
- Tours/Open Houses
- Create a special event to drive traffic (parent education, family friendly entertainment)
- Take a “headcount” for PK/K

##### Fall/Winter

- Open houses
- Tours
- Reminder e-mails about registration/re-enrollment
- Establish deadlines/penalties even if they feel “artificial”
- Meet the principal coffee

##### Winter

- Pre-school re-enrollment
  - Deadline
  - Not first come, first served
  - Treat like K-8
- State of the School
- Prospective families—last chance to recruit
- Returning families--re-enrollment—keep them coming back
- Try financial incentives (ie break on re-enrollment fees)

### Late Winter

- Wait List
- Deposits
- Signed Contracts

### Spring

- “Assumptive close”—don’t wait until summer/fall to start including new families
- Invite to school events (auction, performances, etc)
- Include in communications—add to e-newsletter list ASAP
- Host retention events
  - Middle School social
  - K welcome
  - Summer play dates
  - Assign buddy families

### Summer

- Be available for tours
- Keep in touch with new families/buddy families
- PA or similar can host summer play dates for younger families
- Middle school can have an event if there are a lot of new students

### Back to School

- Back to school socials—1<sup>st</sup> day coffee, bbq, etc.
- A strong, connected community is hard to leave

### IMPLEMENT

- Recruit key people to support you
- Start small
- Do it well
- If it’s working for you keep going
- Stay focused—enrollment is your number one priority
- Each kindergartener = a 9 year annuity

### REVIEW & REVISE

- Critique your efforts
- Ask for feedback
- Consider asking families who did not enroll why not. Be careful to ask in a genuine, non-confrontational way. Consider engaging a team of current parents to help. Sometimes you will get more info this way than if an employee is asking.
- Accept that not everyone will go to your school
- How can you differentiate your school from the one down the road?
- Get ready for next year!

# Avoiding Personal Burnout & the Role of Volunteers

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- Prioritize
  - Enrollment is probably #1
  - What is one preschool/kindergartener worth over their lifetime in the school?
  - Don't get sucked into the auction
  - Dividing your time between annual fund and enrollment
- Set Goals
  - What can you reasonably accomplish in a year given the time you are allotted?
  - How do your tasks build enrollment and/or bring more resources into the school
  - Consider what you have to work with
    - Don't be shy about asking for what you need
    - Access to parish databases
    - Neat/clean/freshly painted school
    - Polite and friendly front office
    - Sound financial management—record keeping, acknowledgement, etc.
- Your Job Description
  - Don't allow pastors/principals to hijack your job
  - Be clear about what you can do
  - Don't come in on your day off—drive to school in pajamas
- Do What You Do Best
  - Tag team with your principal/pastor/committee
- Communicate Always
  - Principal/pastor
  - Faculty
  - Parents
- Network
  - Get to know parents—this is why being the face of admissions helps with development
  - Find out where they work

- Engage people who can help your program grow—encourage ownership
- Hire Support—as the program grows, *you will require help/more* hours to do your job.

## Volunteer Recruitment

- Personal Recruitment
  - Matching job to person—get to know parents and their talents
  - Asking
    - Personally ask for big jobs
    - Sign-up Genius is good for routine/shift work
- Using Web Tools
  - Event/job descriptions
  - Start/end time
- Management—balancing freedom & guidance
- Job Descriptions
  - Team Leaders
  - Core Volunteers
  - Working parents
- Acknowledgement
  - Personal notes
  - Thank you gifts
  - Events