


Boosting Lutheran School Enrollment

Webinar – December 11, 2013
3:00-4:00 p.m.
Principal Kyle Chuhran – St. Peter, Macomb
Admission Director – Renee Finkel
Assistant to the President – Supt. of Schools
Bruce Braun


How is enrollment and retention different today than in the recent past?

Responsibility for enrollment has shifted from school administration to a shared responsibility with faculty, staff and "raving fans". The best period of time used to be the Spring. That has changed dramatically to an ongoing, almost daily emphasis on retention and enrollment.



Traditionally, we had strong Lutheran congregational support so your emphasis could be external. We now need to remind ourselves to market both externally and internally.


Explain about the different roles involved:



Word of mouth, both face to face and electronically is important.

What are teachers and staff doing everyday to enhance our reputation?

What does an Admissions Counselor do?



- Update Facebook page.
- Be a communication liaison between the congregation and school.
- Plan and prepare the marketing strategies for the school.
- Field all school inquiries via phone, e-mail and web-site. Provide follow-up as needed.
- Provide great tours and answer all questions about your school. (Find the answer if you don't know it already.)
- Facilitate the mentor program for all new families. (making sure they are adapting well and happy.)
- Update website with current, fresh and accurate information.
- Host the Open House.
- Walk all new enrollees through the application process.

What promotional pieces have you developed for your Lutheran School?


- Refrigerator magnets
- Window decals
- Marketing folders with logo
- Information material for inside folder.
- Thank You cards with logo.
- Open House post cards.
- Banners for school interior and community events.
- Enrollment posters for pre-school hallway.

Describe the "Open House" experience

- Internal Marketing – postcards (invitations) given to each current family to share with a neighbor or friend. Each preschool family also receives one.
- External Marketing –local libraries and businesses.
- Held right after late service on Sunday.
- Parents or students serve as tour guides – all faculty on site.
- Light refreshments served – balloons.
- Open to community, but it has shifted to more of an internal event . (Preschool Families)

How does the principal interact with new families?

- Meet and greet at initial visit.
- Answer questions as needed.
- Provide contact information for questions during the deliberation process.
- Meet early on the process if there are special educational needs or unique circumstances to consider.
- Informational interview with parent(s) and student(s) prior to enrollment acceptance.



Walk us through a typical calendar

- Sept/Oct- How are new families adjusting? Are mentor families noticing any concerns? Ask the question "How can we improve the experience for these families?"
- Nov. /Dec. Working on updating and editing materials for upcoming year. Think about your Open House and Jan. re-enrollment kickoff.
- Jan. Market your Open House, prepare, communicate, prepare.
- Feb/August Give tours, engage families in the enrollment process, network with neighboring schools.


Strive for excellence everyday!



- Consider ways to utilize current families in marketing school
 - Window decals for cars -Being a good driver helps
 - Spirit Wear - school t-shirts that are attractive are great walking billboards
 - Website- www.splcs.com
 - Rate your school sites
 - Pictures/ News in local publications - Immanuel Lutheran in Macomb is amazing with this.

How do you connect with congregation members who don't use the school?

- Website/Facebook updates
- Intentionally invite and inform – narthex PowerPoint/video on school events, bulletin, school and worship connection
- Be aware of special situations in your congregation



How do you build community connections?



- Hoop It Up
- Veterans/Memorial Day
- Mel Ott Baseball
- Run the Plank
- Grandparents / Special Persons Day
- Community Service Projects
 - Singing in community,
 - Serving senior citizens in congregation
 - Macomb Recreation Center offerings
- Connect Early Childhood parents with school
- Connect pastors with Early Childhood Center

How do you market everyday?

- Remind teachers of Christian Mission – We desire heaven full and hell empty.
- Expect and encourage excellence!
- Train people for their role in enrollment – student tour guides, family members, teachers visiting with new students and parents.
- Personal communication
- Prayer
- Team effort



The Foundation of your Philosophy

- Whatever you do, do it well!
 - Professionalism
 - Excellence
 - Competency - evidenced to public
 - Part of Congregation Values and Mission!

Resources to Assist You

- In His Hands –New Synodical resource for Early Childhood Centers – to be available soon
- St. Peter New Student Packet at bit.ly/milcsmenrollment
- Marketing Christian Schools by Dan Krause and Bob Rogalski -- http://www.designerjobs-testsite.com/marketing_christian_schools_guide.htm
- Pure PR – Gretchen Jameson Consultant on Branding your Lutheran School at <http://pureprstrategy.com/>

Questions Comments Concerns

If this topic was of interest - watch for the following:

- Enrollment Webinar with Gretchen Jameson, National Expert on Branding and Lutheran Schools (Info from District Office)
- Admissions Counselor Training held on /at date location TBD
- 1-1 Follow up
 - Bruce Braun in person contact him at 888-225-2111 ext. 258
 - Kyle Chuhran or Renee Finkel contact at 586-781-9296 for phone follow-up. The St. Peter website is www.splcs.com
