

Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend

Volunteers on Your Enrollment Team: Parent and Student Ambassadors

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Kathy Link



- 10th year of consulting to Catholic schools on issues of sustainability
- Former Senior Director of Schools for the Healey Education Foundation
- Extensive experience in enrollment management, advancement, governance and work planning
- National presenter on recruitment and retention

“Enrollment is everyone’s job!”


Parent and Student Ambassadors have unique roles on the team by sharing authentic, peer-to-peer perspectives and experiences.

A Parent Ambassador Program

- Organizes and prepares parents of current and past students to be part of the school's enrollment team.
- Connects them with the community to build relationships with parents of prospective students.
- Tracks the progress of the interactions as efforts to move families through the funnel.

Roles and Responsibilities of Parent Ambassadors

- Mass Presence
- Outreach to Other Parishes
- Admissions Events Ambassador
- Religious Education Outreach
- Personal Contacts
- Community Presence
- Digital Marketing Support



In advance of the meeting pick 2-3 of these that will work best for your school.

3 Steps to Develop a Parent Ambassador Program



Communicate: Find the Right Parents

- Involved and passionate about the school
- Reliable, dependable volunteers
- Strong leaders, action-oriented
- Comfortable sharing their stories and experiences with others

Teach and Train: The Kickoff Session

- Provide an overview of the Parent Ambassador Program
- **Be specific as to how your Parent Ambassadors can help**
- Provide Ambassadors with key bullet points
- Invite parents to share their ideas and suggestions
- Set follow up procedures and the next meeting date



VOLUNTEER

Training should:

- Include a 30-second “elevator speech”: Who are we? What makes us different?
- Explain Enrollment Management basics: data, R&R, how marketing fits in, the timing of the enrollment cycle
- Share goals and priorities for the year: attendance at events, growth in social media followers, recruitment and retention goals
- Set milestone goals
- Share data as a way of measuring success, tweaking strategy, measuring year over year progress
- Celebrate wins!

Keep the Momentum Going: Follow Up

- Leave each meeting confirming that everyone has a specific job
- Email next steps
- Update on progress/challenges along the way
- Be available for questions
- Meet as a group, as needed

Roles and Responsibilities of Student Ambassadors

- Host “Student for a Day” Guests
- Admissions Events Greeters
- Give Tours at Information Sessions and Open House
- Visits to Schools/Bonding Events
- Speak at Mass, Community Events, Other School Events

5 Steps to Develop a Student Ambassador Program

1. Invite to Apply
2. Interview
3. Select
4. Train
5. Recognize



Invite to Apply

- Students should be recommended by faculty or staff as being exceptional representatives of your school
- Students are typically middle schoolers/upperclassmen

Interview and Select

Looking for students who are:
CONFIDENT
ARTICULATE
FRIENDLY
INVOLVED
POISED

Limit the number of Ambassadors selected. This is an honor, not an open call for volunteers, not a “consolation prize.”

Train and Recognize

- Core talking points/elevator speech
- “Mission Moments”
- Must-see Tour Stops
- When to defer a question
- Guidance for peer-to-peer communication
- Consider a visible way to recognize your Ambassadors: a name badge, a different color polo, etc.
- Recognize as a service club
- Looks great on college app



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