



Enrollment and Revenue Growth Strategies, 2011

Enrollment is vital to the financial success of a school. The school administration must balance between the competing goals of making Catholic education accessible to all students for catechetical and evangelization purposes and ensuring that the school is fiscally viable for both the short and long term to ensure its sustainability and the good stewardship of parish resources.

Step 1: Determine a Realistic Budget

- Look at the annual report from the previous year, the 6-month report, and the current budget to actual report to ensure the numbers used in the budget are realistic
- When setting tuition, use the average tuition revenue needed per student to cover the net expenses after taking in to account other funding sources besides tuition and fee revenue (*Tuition Tracker can help the school do this*) as the basis for setting tuition

Step 2: Develop and Implement Enrollment Team and Plan

- Develop a team to help with enrollment (secretary, teachers, parents, others)
- Make and implement plan to increase enrollment (e.g., call families to re-register, work with families with objections, hold summer program, remind families about the start of school and ask if they have any leads, talk to religious education families and local parishes without schools, develop relationship with area daycares, etc.)
- Use Parent Ambassador Program, Enrollment Management Template, AMEN, OCS staff

Step 3: Track Enrollment Numbers and Expected Tuition Revenue for Re-Enrollment

- The Office of Catholic Schools offers *Tuition Tracker* for this purpose
- These numbers will give you a baseline of how you are doing and how many students and enrollment numbers you need to reach your revenue goal

Step 4: Implement Process to Determine Financial Need

- Need transparent, uniform process required of all families requesting financial assistance
- OCS currently works with Private School Aid Service (PSAS) as an independent way to do this
- School committee can make decisions based on the company's recommendations

Step 5: Build Enrollment by Working with Families to Increase Affordability

- Determine how many more students are needed to fill classrooms and how much more is needed in revenue
- Work with families to make tuition affordable to increase enrollment and to get incremental revenue from the family (more than if the seat remained empty)
- Need to balance between giving discounts and ensuring the revenue goal is achievable (*Tuition Tracker* give you the average needed per student to use as a basis for determining tuition)

Step 6: Monitor Tuition Collection and Develop Outside Funding Sources

- Consistently follow tuition policy and consider company for tuition collections
- Complete annual appeal using scholarships as the basis for the ask (use real stories from students in the school, changing names)

Frequently Asked Questions

1. *How can we give discounts/scholarships if we do not have the money to cover them?*

Answer: This model is built on the premise that it is better to get some revenue from a student than not receive anything from an empty seat. Most costs are fixed in schools regardless of the number of students (e.g., a teacher gets paid the same whether there are 10 or 25 students in a class and salaries/benefits are typically 70-80% of a school's expenses). Therefore, as long as you do not increase these major fixed costs (e.g., do not bring in so many students you have to hire another teacher unless you have enough students on a waiting list to make it affordable), the extra students will not only get a benefit of a Catholic education, but it will also help you increase your overall revenue in the school. The school should also better allocate funding it may already receive. For example, instead of the parish giving a straight investment to the school to pay for operational costs, that money could be seen as scholarship money that can be allocated to families to secure more enrollment. The school should also institute an annual appeal to raise money for the scholarships, which is often one of the areas to which people give the most money.

2. *How is this fair to current families and for families who pay full price?*

Everyone should be able to take advantage of this model as long as they go through the process (e.g., fill out a financial aid form). Catholic social teaching talks about a preferential option for the poor. By working with families to make access to a Catholic education affordable, the school will help make that a reality.

3. *Won't the families who pay full tuition hear about discounts and then demand discounts, too?*

This question speaks to the importance of having a uniform, transparent financial aid process that is open to all. If families understand how aid is determined and if they feel like there is an independent review of the application (i.e., PSAS or a similar company), then most parents are comfortable with this process. In addition, if the discounts are called "scholarships," the school can set written requirements for families in order to maintain the scholarship. Some schools choose to divide the scholarship in to four payments (one for each quarter). As long as families are upholding the requirements, then they get all the payments. The school can make one of these requirements to keep their discount amount confidential.

4. *How is this sustainable? Won't the family want to pay the same amount each year?*

It is important that a balanced approach is used as the program is implemented using the Tuition Tracker as a guide. Everyone in the school cannot receive a major discount. If a discount is given to families, it should be expected that they will need a similar discount for the following school years. However, they should go through the financial aid process each year and the principal should review the amount the family pays each year, probably increasing the amount the same percentage tuition is being increased over all. It is also important the schools develop outside funding sources to cover the scholarships.

5. *What help can we get to implement this process?*

The Office of Catholic Schools has staff that can help you start this process, deliver resources to ensure a smooth transition, and provide follow-up to ensure success.

Progress Monitoring and Timeline

Progress Monitoring

The goal of this program is to help schools both increase enrollment and increase the amount of revenue they receive from this increase. Tracking the following information will help ensure both of these things happen.

Enrollment as of October 1 Last School Year	
Enrollment Goal for Next School Year	
Enrollment as of May 15	
Enrollment as of June 15	
Enrollment as of July 15	
Enrollment as of August 15	
Enrollment as of September 15	
Enrollment as of October 1	

Actual Tuition/Fee Revenue on Annual Report	
Budgeted Tuition/Fee Revenue for Next Year	
Expected Tuition/Fee Revenue as of May 15	
Expected Tuition/Fee Revenue as of June 15	
Expected Tuition/Fee Revenue as of July 15	
Expected Tuition/Fee Revenue as of August 15	
Expected Tuition/Fee Revenue as of September 15	
Expected Tuition/Fee Revenue as of October 1	

Timeline of Events

Event	Date	Person Responsible
Meet to discuss enrollment and revenue growth strategies		
Develop Enrollment Management Team		
Set-up PSAS or financial aid company		
Meet to go over Tuition Tracker and budget		
Check-in with Tuition Tracker and budget		
Check-in with Tuition Tracker and budget		
Training with Enrollment Management Team		
Check-in with Enrollment Management Team		
Check-in with Enrollment Management Team		
Set-up Annual Appeal		
Begin Annual Appeal		