

Marketing Messages

- Monitor GreatSchools.com (and others) – who does it, though? Are your satisfied parents encouraged to contribute their experience (suggesting the message to families)?
- Claim your profile on rating pages as business owner (Yelp, etc.)
- Answer all the questions people have, build a set of FAQ's based on what your prospects are asking (Who, What, Where, When, Why). Statistics and data, along with the stories.
- Consistency of message
- Leverage your strongest program (e.g. Rowland's SuperKids, technology, science)
- Use templates on <http://ocs.archchicago.org>, translated into Spanish
- Separate brochure for PreK, include daily schedule to help new parents – teachers contribute
- Enrollment Team – gathering feedback, parents/faculty as listening posts
- Outreach to Parishes w/out schools – how to gain access, particularly where cultural barriers exist? Difficult if it's a larger community issue.

Marketing Messages

- Provide folders for every prospective family with relevant info
- Get events in the paper
- Reach out to baptized children through bulletin and personalized letters
- Address issues before they are even raised
- Focus on follow-up
- Talk up the good things at your school
- Parent “ringer” in the parking lot works as a sponge and promoter for the school
- Staff bios with personalization- what they teach and why it is important to the child’s education- use for new family folders and also to communicate with current families

How We Handle Every Interaction

- Treat conversation as a consultation, not just trying to sell school; get to know families
- Answer and address relevant questions (e.g. preK parents)
- Promote early childhood staff as “second parents”
- Immediate follow up; invitations to upcoming school events (focus on immersion into school culture)
- Goal for every conversation is to get families in the school for a tour on THEIR schedule
- “As a parent...” point of view in all conversations with new parents
- Open door policy – parents and children welcome at any time to shadow in classrooms
- Proactively address issues raised by prospective families

How We Handle Every Interaction

- Standard form to fill out with conversations with new families; consistent questions asked and information gathered
- Teacher schedule posted in office so new families can meet/tour with actual teachers
- Personal tours during the school day
- New family mentoring
- Leverage current families
- Be prepared for any question
- Personalize conversations for each family

How We Handle Every Interaction

- Put prospective families on list and get information as soon as we get it
- Call people on waiting list periodically to gauge interest and keep relationship
- Have multiple people call prospective parents (Principal, parents, etc.)
- Have plans for impromptu visits, preparing teachers, students, etc. (“you’re always on” – have teachers greet parents/children on tours)
- Offer shadow opportunity
- Involve students in interacting with families, especially if language issues exist
- Focus on getting prospects physically in building for a tour
- Meet principal ASAP
- Build positive buzz in community
- Each prospect is unique and special – they need to feel this way

Initial Phone Call or Conversation

- Talked first about tuition – including fees, etc.
- Didn't sell the school first
- Nice welcome, invited in for tour and shadow
- Sounded like she was expecting my call – cheerful, check website
- Collect contact info, not upfront but work into conversation
- Tuition schedule not available yet, but gave this year's and expected increase
- Used the contact form, she had an agenda, while being very friendly – some consulting happened
- Asked 'How did you hear about us?'
- Voicemail or operator option, but then spoke with someone
- Called speaking in Spanish, needed to switch to English – have a Spanish-speaker on staff call back
- Shared statistics, invited for a tour

Initial Phone Call or Conversation

- Invite to school for a tour at their convenience
- Secretary repeated her name to make sure the parent heard it
- Took name and phone number to get back for questions because principal wasn't in
- Personable, knew the school very well, sent their kids to that school, and talked about it
- Referring questions to the right person
- FAQ's prepared – Party Line
- Immediate follow-up by the right people

Initial Visit

- Visiting relevant classrooms for prospective students; spending more time in specific grades
- Alert teachers of pre-scheduled tours
- Teachers have a plan with prospective families (e.g. greet family, continue teaching, explain the current lesson)
 - Designated students have a plan as well (e.g. Kindergarten greeters)
- Emphasis on strong programs (e.g. science & technology)
- Flexibility in tour path
- When possible, current parents give tours
- Current parents contact prospective families (neighborhood focus)
- Highlight and demonstrate programs or technology (e.g. Interactive whiteboards)
- Food and gifts (takeaways) for parents and kids
- Offer school 'Passports' to kids

Initial Visit

- Open Houses during the school day; involving students in experience/welcoming process; 8th grade tour guides
- “Tour training” includes key points as well as how to discuss outside activities (e.g. after school programs, sports through posters, pictures, etc.)
- Focus on improvements, upgrades, positive changes
- Consistent messages; designated back-up tour guides
- LISTEN to parents and ask questions to learn more about their needs
- PAY ATTENTION to current situations in schools (e.g. specific issues such as bathroom issues, issues in PreK classroom)
- Focus on both parents and students – do students feel comfortable and could he/she picture him/herself in the school?
- Interaction with students in the classrooms
- Prospective family photo with their new teacher

Initial Visit

- Distractions for young children (e.g. toys in the office)
- Survey given to parents after tour to complete before they leave (in addition to info packet)
- Back-up person for tours, questions
- Student ambassadors to lead tours
- Let teachers know a tour is coming around
- Let teachers know what you expect them to do when a tour stops by
- Always work around parents schedule
- Children greet visitors – “good afternoon and God bless you”
- Staff had children graduate and makes recommendation- right away – testimonial- can talk about her experiences – “legacy”
- Invite Pastor to come for the tour
- Make the environment friendly and welcoming- newspaper article front and center

First Financial Aid Conversation

- Emphasize partnership with new families to alleviate fear, overwhelming concerns
- Focus on discussion as a step by step process; not always cut and dry answer
- Help with filling out forms (e.g. PSAS)
- Combat “sticker shock” through real or perceived discounts (either scholarships or tuition discounts)
- “What’s comfortable” – using the right language
- Explain cost vs. pricing difference, i.e. explaining cost to educate versus tuition charged – [St. Stanislaus Kostka Tuition Page example](#)
- Relative cost discussion: Cost per hour, daily Starbucks, etc.
- Explicit limits on tuition discounts (e.g. scholarships up to 50%)

First Financial Aid Conversation

- Use outside agency
- Make sure all families, both new and returning , are aware of financial aid process
- When reviewing in a committee take names of applications and letter them A, B, C, etc..., to ensure confidentiality and objective decisions
- Overall, need more information about 'fill the airplane'
- Tuition letter always includes offer to discuss financial aid