

Schedule a “back to school” event for next school year

Setting the tone for satisfied parents

“Begin with the end in mind.”

Stephen Covey
Author, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*

“It starts the year well when we tell parents what to expect and reinforce the positives that make our school great.”

Rick Nelson
Chico Oaks Adventist School

If you don't already have a “back to school” event on your calendar, please choose a date and publish it now as part of next year's calendar. From a marketing perspective you'll have two goals for this event.

Integrate new families into your school and school family

It is important for new families and students to become part of your school community as quickly as possible.

Why? Because families won't stay if they feel like outsiders. This is especially important if they are not members of your constituent church. And even more important if they aren't Adventists.

How do you do it?

- Connect them to current families.
- Give them more information than you think they could possibly need. No one likes to feel ignorant—showing up at the wrong time, driving the wrong direction in the parking lot, etc. They will feel more comfortable, more quickly if you've told them what to expect. (A+ work: Ask a new family from last year to list the things they didn't know that would have been helpful.)

Inoculate current and new families with information reinforcing why they made a great choice with your school

Since parents have enrolled in your school you can assume they value your school's benefits. But you should also assume this attitude and belief will be challenged—by the pain of paying their bill each month, or by the frustrations of their child being disciplined or not fitting in, or by the questions from skeptical in-laws, or...

Give them sound, documentable reasons to validate why they made a wise choice. This is a great job for your cheerleader who can brag about your school in ways that would seem immodest from you.

(For background, and if you are bored this summer, you could google: inoculation theory and William J. McGuire.)

Credits:

Rick Nelson

Thank you for sharing Chico Oaks' "Back to School" night.

Binder tab: April

School size: All