

Offer options for visiting your school

Designing promotional materials to do double duty

***“...Get more people into the building.
That's the goal of everything you do.
'Enroll now' is a waste, whether on a sign or a website.
They don't know you, they have to visit first.”***

Dan Krause, President
GraceWorks Ministries

Of course, you are planning a winter open house and doing all you can to invite potential parents to attend—along with all your current parents. For reminders on the how and why of a winter open house, see “Plan an open house” and “Open house attendance” behind the September tab in this binder.

But perhaps a potential parent is unavailable to come on that date. What then?

Offer other options for coming to your school

Would you pay thousands of dollars to send your seven-year-child to a place you have never seen? Neither will prospective parents. Which is why you need to get them on your campus.

Here are some options you can offer:

- **Shadow days:** Days that students can come spend all or half a day attending class while "shadowing" an existing student. Parents need to drop off and pick up their child and meet with you as principal.
- **Skip up or move forward days:** One day in the spring when all students move up one grade level to see what the next class will be like and prospective students can come for the day as well.
- **Weekly or monthly open days:** Days which you have advertised and have planned so you can welcome parents who come to meet you (the principal).
- **Education Success Consults:** An in person, on campus appointment for prospective parents made with you as principal.

I have described some of these and will explain them in more detail in the future. The point now is to choose which of these your school will offer so that you can...

Advertise these options in your open house promotions

The headline and copy should focus on the benefits of your school, and you can also list all the great things they can see and do at your open house. But you will get more bang for your buck by listing each of the options for seeing your school. That way, the materials you print and distribute in early January do not become obsolete the minute your open house is over.

You can see samples from Chico Oaks and Foothills schools in the next pages. If not, go to: [ncceducation.org>resources>marketing corner](http://ncceducation.org/resources/marketing-corner) and scroll to October. They are under “Tip-Offer option for visiting your school.”

Delegating:

You will need to decide which additional options to offer for inviting parents to your campus. Creating the materials that promote those alternatives can be done by a volunteer or other staff member.

Binder tab: October (Place this after "Tip-Create the materials for promoting your open house" in your binder.)

School size: All

Marketing process step:

- 1) Who are we?
- 2) What do families want?
- 3) What needs to change?
- 4) How do we tell our community?¹
- 5) How do we track results?

¹ Recommendations for #4 “How do we tell our community?” assume your school is doing a good job of pleasing and retaining your current families—specifically your *parent NPS is above 65* and your *retention rate is over 90%* (as listed in the "opening report supplement"). **If not, I want you to focus instead on learning how you can make your current families gloriously happy.**