

Plan your back to school event

Starting the year with positive expectations and enthusiasm

***“Expectations don't magically change reality.
Expectations do something even more powerful—
they change the way you deal with reality.”***

Unknown

Since I'm sure you all followed my excellent advice in May ;-) and scheduled a back-to-school event, you can now focus on planning for it.

As a quick reminder, your goals are to:

- **Integrate new families** by connecting them to current families AND giving them copious information on the logistics of your school.
- **Reinforce each family's choice** for your school by sharing sound, documentable reasons that your school is great. (Let your school's cheerleader brag about you and the school if you are a teaching principal.)
- **Set a positive tone.**

Shun the temptation to verbalize all the dos and don'ts...

"But," you say, "I have (nearly) all my parents in one room and I need to tell them these important things that help the school run smoothly and safely. Why shouldn't I tell them _____ (e.g. where to park at pick up time, how to talk first with the teacher before complaining to the school board chair)?"

- I don't care how big a smile you have on your face when you say these things, they still sound like a list of dos and don'ts.
- Do and don't lists communicate a sense that parents are there to serve the school, not the other way around.
- More than three minutes will sound negative. (Remember your goal is to set a positive tone.)
- Very few will be taking notes and they will have forgotten by the next morning.

Rather, keep your verbal presentation focused on **great plans for the year** and indicators that **demonstrate your school's successes**.

...and, instead, give them a written reminder of helpful policies.

Giving parents a written list of dos and don'ts will:

- Keep your meeting time shorter,
- Help keep the tone of your meeting positive, and
- Give them something to take home and keep as a reminder.

Make sure this reminder:

- Fits on one page, (Yes, I said you should give new parents copious information so the information sheet for them can be longer.)
- Is written in the friendliest tone you can manage, and
- Explains the "why" of your rules.

Binder tab: July

School size: All