

## Create “school maven” families

Connecting new families with enthusiastic ones at your back-to-school event

***“We are starting to see a trend in exit interviews and surveys. Families who feel they are part of the school family are more likely to be satisfied and stay. Families who feel like outsiders are more likely to leave.”***

Carol Tilstra Nash

The trend we are starting to see linking school connectedness and satisfaction/retention is not surprising. Church growth experts have long noted that for new members to stay in a church they need to feel part of the church community.

Ideally, new families become friends with current families, develop a team spirit with their child's teacher and happily jump into helping at school events. While you can't force any of things, I do want you to prime the pump.

### **Recruit "school mavens"**

Doubtless, your school has families who are enthusiastic, involved and informed. Ask each of these if they would be teamed with a new family as a "school maven."

School mavens are there to:

- Get to know the new family they are teamed with
- Answer questions for their new family
- Make a point of inviting their new family to school events, both as a guest and as a helper when appropriate
- Make a point of introducing that new family with other families in your school and church

### **Team each new family to a "school maven" family**

Before your back to school event, team new families up with a "school maven"--and let the maven family know. The best case scenario: two families with similar interests and kids of similar ages.

### **Give each new family a resource list that includes their "school maven" family**

By giving each new family a written resource page, you are legitimizing the "school maven" family as one resource amongst others. If you only introduce them to each

other at back-to-school, the new family is likely to hesitate to "bother" someone they don't know well.

An editable MS Word school resource list is available at [ncceducation.org/marketing/corner](http://ncceducation.org/marketing/corner). For A+ work use Word's mail merge to customize this list for your new families. Otherwise, write names and contact information in the blanks.

## **Introduce new families to their "school maven" family**

If you have too many new families to do this for personally (hurray!), delegate some of your friendliest teachers to help.

### **Delegating:**

Recruiting and working with "school maven" families be delegated to someone who knows your families well. But unless someone else has become well acquainted with your new families you should team up new and maven families--and introduce them.

**Binder tab:** August

**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?
- 5) How do we track results?