

Get your school board on board

Starting the process for next year

“Let our advance worrying become advance thinking and planning.”

Attributed to
Winston Churchill

Even if you are too late to implement tiered enrollment fees for this year's budget planning, get started now for next year.

Get your board on board now

Explain to your school board the benefits of shifting your re-enrollment/new enrollment cycle to earlier in the year. Here are the primary points you can make to them:

- Having solid projections for next year's student enrollment will make budgeting more accurate and allow us to make wiser hiring decisions.
- In order to have reliable data for who is coming back next year, we have to ask them for a **substantial, non-refundable deposit** for next year. This has to be big enough that they will not want to lose it by not returning if they have re-enrolled.
- In order to motivate parents to make that decision by our deadline we need to offer them a substantial discount. (I recommend doubling the cost of the non-refundable deposit after the deadline.)
- By knowing early who is definitely coming back and who is still on the fence, we have an opportunity, as teachers and board members, to find out what the sticking points are for individuals families and try to fix those if feasible.

Ask for board votes on the following:

1. Deadline for lower re-enrollment/enrollment fee. This is the date after which the fee will double.
 - Recommendation: January 31
 - Rationale:
 - » This is after the end of first semester (ending Jan. 18 next year) so parents have had plenty of time to experience the quality of education at your school.
 - » This gives the school board time to create and approve a budget in advance of the conference's deadline.

- » This gives the board reasonably reliable data to base their budget and hiring decisions on. Having teachers or (better) board members ask parents about their intentions is a step above making a guess, but it is not as reliable as getting a commitment with a financial deposit included.
 - » This coincides with the typical time (January) parents in much of the US are considering school options for the next school year.
 - » This should coincide at least approximately with your January [Education Expo](#). (Remember... it's that fabulous event which showcases the great learning happening at your school. AKA, an open house that involves every student.)
2. The amount of the re-enrollment/enrollment fee before and after the deadline.
- Recommendation:
 - » Before deadline: +/- \$100
 - » After the deadline: +/- \$200
 - Note: This will vary greatly based on the economic status of your community. But keep it high enough to motivate parents to make a real commitment. \$25 is not likely to be enough.

Add the deadline to your school calendar

Start *now* telling parents about next year's approach to re-enrollment. You will not make parents happy if you surprise them by asking for a substantial chunk of money in January and they weren't expecting it.

Next time I'll outline what to say to parents and how.

Delegating:

I'm sorry, there is nothing to delegate this week.

Binder tab: January

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?