



COVID has impacted our lives and our work over the past two years.

In 2020, most communities experienced a 4-5% decline in district and charter public school enrollment overall and a drop of up to 20% in Kindergarten.

However, our experience last year has shown that, when done safely, many of our direct outreach strategies are still effective.

Each community is unique. Outreach tactics that may be acceptable in some areas could be poorly received in others. School leaders must judge for themselves what types of outreach activities feel safe to the individuals in their community.

As in-person instruction has returned, we anticipate a rebound in kindergarten enrollment for most areas over the next year.

Opportunity



7,500 Schools

+ 240,000 Students

+ 40% in 4 States



Big Investments

NEW: \$750M from Bloomberg

\$3B from Feds

\$1B+ from Others



Thousands of
Under-Served Students
COVID Disruptions

Despite a significant increase in school choice competition, especially in most of the country's larger cities, there's still a tremendous need for more high-quality schools.

"I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat."

This work is hard. There is no secret formula nor silver bullet, especially in communities with an abundance of school options. A successful student recruitment effort depends on an integrated strategy of outreach tactics, and A LOT of hard work.





When most people think of marketing, they assume it means billboards, radio ads, and other mass media tactics.

The truth is that the most effective and sustainable recruitment marketing strategies are built from the inside-out, activating families, engaging partners, and reaching new prospects.

The reason to focus on your current families first is two-fold: it's cost-effective and it works. The single highest referral source for schools that are delivering on the promise they are making to families they serve. Most schools are doing very little to drive those results. Before spending a lot of money on tactics with little measurable return, successful schools look to optimize the organic activity that is driving their enrollment results.

Community partners, especially longstanding organizations that are serve the same families as your school, are another excellent and cost-effective source for new students. Engaging those organizations takes a long-term commitment to developing mutuallybeneficial partnerships, but the impact can be tremendous.







Larger schools, fastgrowing schools, or schools in communities with a lot of competition usually need to go beyond their current families and community to reach full enrollment.

Schools looking to recruit larger numbers of new families will have better results with targeted a marketing strategy than making big financial investments in tactics that reach large numbers of people outside of their targe audience and are largely ignored.

Successful organizations focus on building a target audience and reaching them with a series of coordinated and measurable outreach and engagement tactics.

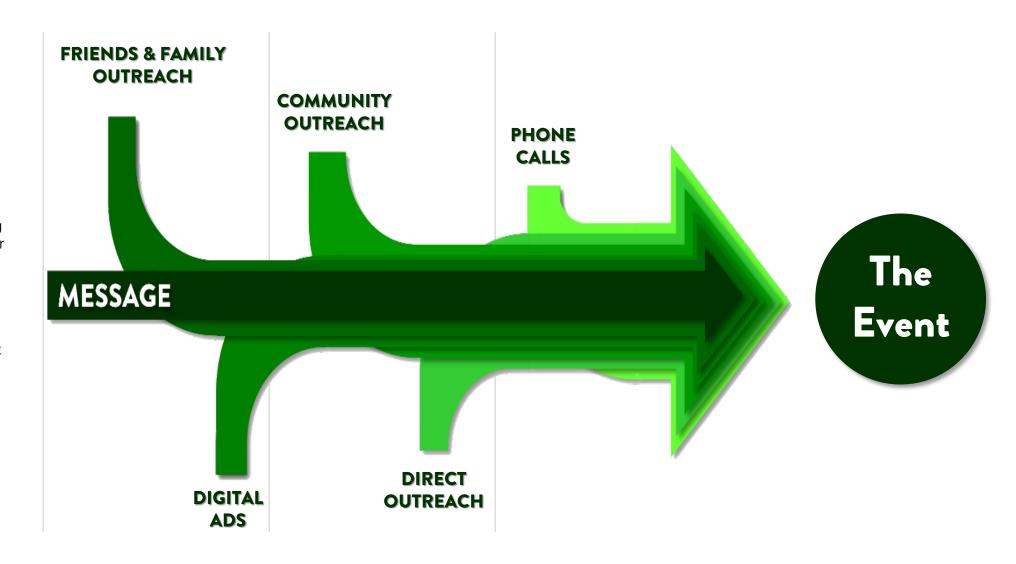


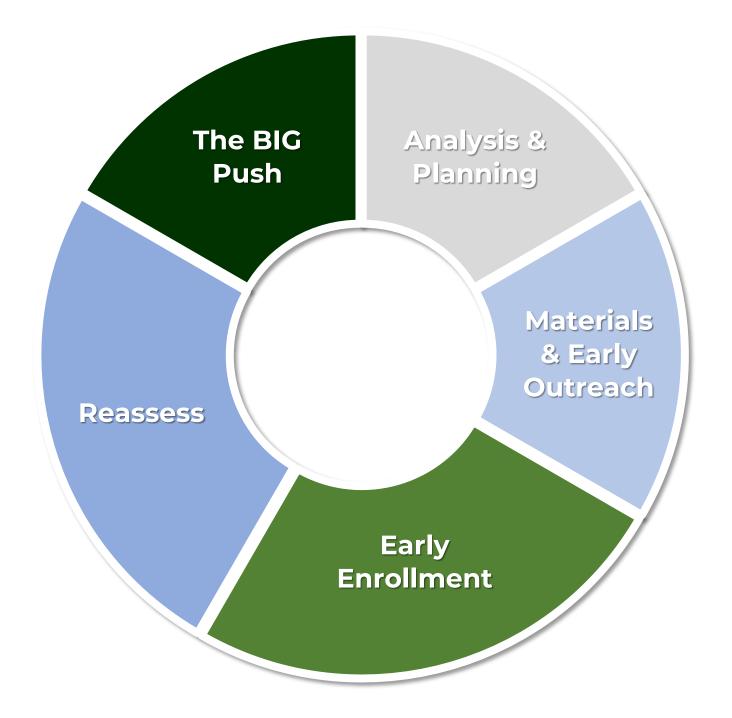
The most effective recruitment campaigns are built around an event.

It gives your marketing a focal point, allowing you to create a series of outreach tactics that build on each other.

This strategy integrates your family, community, and direct outreach tactics. It also creates multiple points of contact for your target market.

The other advantage of building around an event is that its easier to get families to attend a 45-minute info session than commit to enrolling their child. What they don't know is that the conversion rate for families who attend a recruitment event is typically 90%.





For schools that have built strong enrollment, student recruitment is a year-round activity. The enrollment cycle is unique to each school, grade level (high school enrollment is often mush earlier than K-8), and community. Regardless of the timing, most cycles follow this general pattern:

Data Analysis

Looking at key performance indicators like attrition, new student no shows, inquiries and applications by date, enrollment conversion rates, referral sources, expenses by tactic, and return on investment

Planning

Setting grade-level goals that account for attrition and no shows, updating messaging, setting the budget, developing the annual calendar, creating tactical plans, temporary staff recruiting and training, developing marketing materials, initial community engagement

Early Enrollment

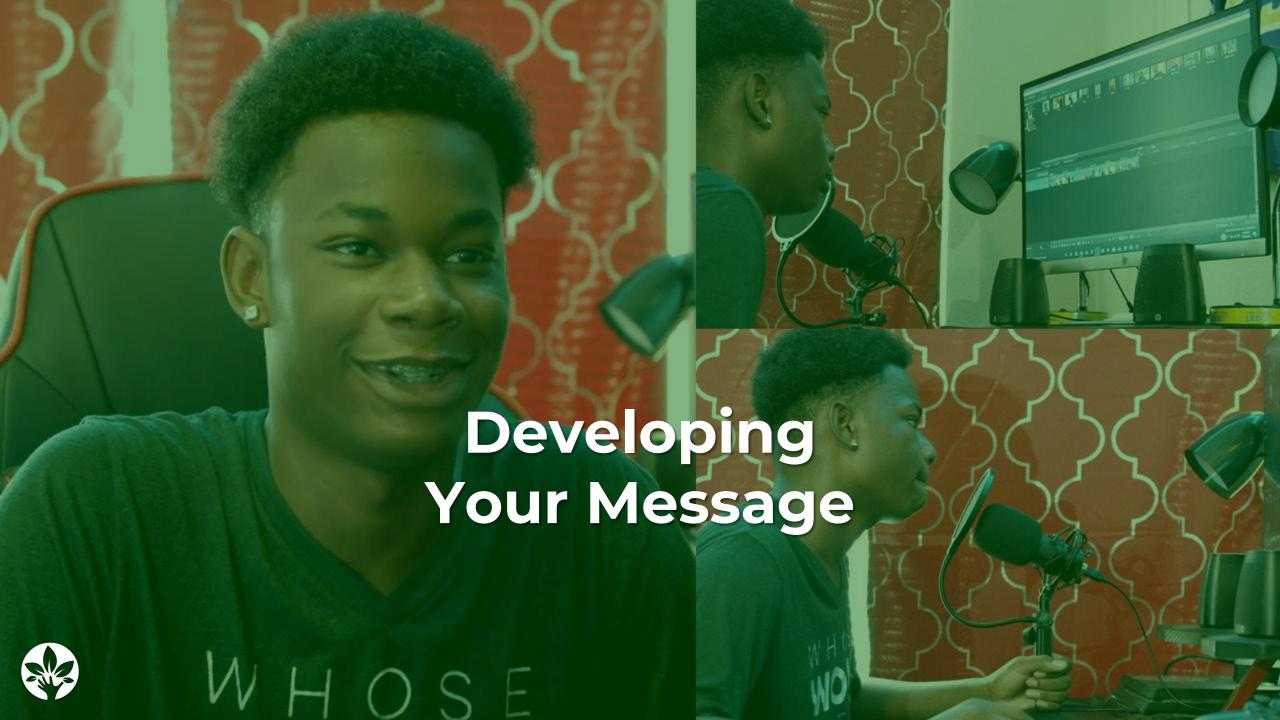
Open enrollment launch, family engagement, community outreach, direct outreach, and lottery

Reassessment

Post lottery analysis of grade-level goals, interim marketing analysis, adjustments to tactical plans and budget reallocation

Final Push

Deployment of revised tactical plans and calendar, summer engagement, no show reduction strategy





Your target audience is the 80% of the families you are trying to reach. Understanding their demographics, where they live, and what they want both in a school and for their children's future is critical to developing a compelling message.

What prospective parents are looking for in a school is often different from what school leaders think makes their school unique or successful. It is especially important to understand the vocabulary your target audience uses to describe what they want in a school.

The good news is that, for existing schools, your target audience is already in your building. If you want to know who they are, where they live, and what they want, you just need to ask them.

The consumer research published by General Mills is an excellent starting point. While they focused on low-income families in Minneapolis, our own surveys of families across the country aligns well with these key findings. Still, nothing is better than conducting your own research with your own families. While it may sound daunting, a simple text message survey asking families (especially new families) why they were looking for a school, why they chose your school, and what they tell their friends and family about your school is incredibly valuable in crafting a message that resonates with your target audience.

Prompt prompted you to look for a new school?

What







Search

Where did you find info about your new school?



My Circle Family/Friends/ Neighbor





My Community
Neighborhood Community
Center/ District Office
Resource Center

Decision

What were the top factors that determined your choice?



Transportation Is available and free

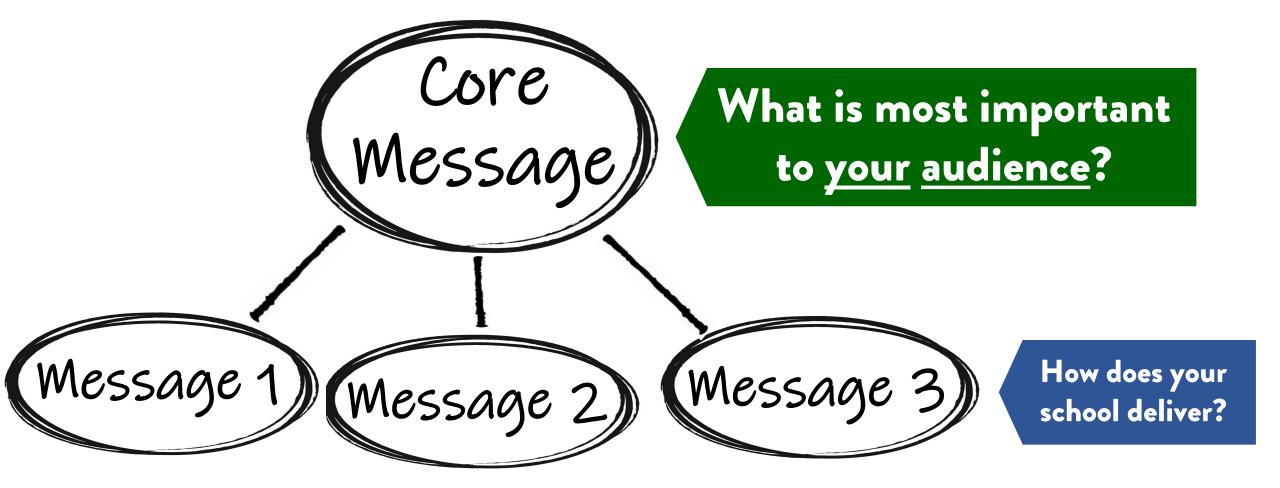


Friendly & Welcoming (No bullying/ My child belongs/ Discipline)



Academics:
Teaching
(Paced learning, Student-teacher ratio, Qualified teachers and staff)





Most strong messaging follow the rule of threes.

They start with a core message or promise that speaks simply and directly in aspirational and inspirational language. This message is often future oriented, focusing on what you can help make possible for their children and their family.

Your core message should be supported by three messaging pillars. These speak simply and directly to the ways in which your school delivers on that promise. Avoid education jargoon. It may be important to your school staff but will confuse prospective families. Keep your messaging pillars grounded in what your families want and the words they use to describe it.

Consumer researchers have developed an understanding of the journey people go on when they make a decision. As school leaders, we're often eager to jump to straight to the end of the journey; "To ask people to marry us before we've had our first date," as a colleague put it.

Understanding where families are in their journey and allows you to choose what information they need to take the next step. A strong journey starts with your advertising and outreach, based in what families want. Convert that awareness into interest through your website, print materials or outreach staff. The education phase typically takes place at an info session, open house our school tour, where you have the chance to go deep into your school model and what sets you apart.

Unfortunately, most schools stop communicating once they've gotten an application. At that point it's almost impossible to overcommunicate with families. Weekly messages help ensure your new families show up on the first day of school.

AWARENESS INTEREST EDUCATION ENROLLMENT Level of Detail/Engagement **APPLICATION** We Want You School's Philosophy You Here! & Curriculum Reasons to Believe What They Want



Before you develop a recruitment plan that relies on traditional – and expensive – marketing tactics, consider optimizing your most successful and least expensive source of new students: your current families.

For schools that are delivering on their promise to families, friends and family referrals generally account for 40-50% of all new students. Still, most schools do not have a strong plan for optimizing their most successful ambassadors to their community.

Your families represent hundreds of people who understand your school, the value it provides, and the impact you are having on students, families, and the community.

By activating these families to assist in your recruitment efforts, you are not only drawing on many more people than you could afford to through other means, your families are also able to reach parts of your community that your paid outreach staff cannot.

It can be an easy excuse to blame a lack of parent engagement on your families. If your families are not engaged, ask yourself what resources your school is committing to building engagement. Family engagement is not a fixed variable and schools can do a lot to impact the ways in which their families are involved.

Experience shows that, as with any strategic priority, schools with a strong plan and specific, measurable goals that are regularly evaluated experience significantly more family engagement and the ancillary benefits that comes with it.





To optimize your current families' participation in student recruitment, it is critical to have a strong family communications strategy.

Platforms

There are plenty of tools that help schools connect with families, but it is generally best not to rely on one communications channel. Mixing in the occasional email, text message, handwritten card, and phone call is a good way to make sure you are reaching all of your families.

Events

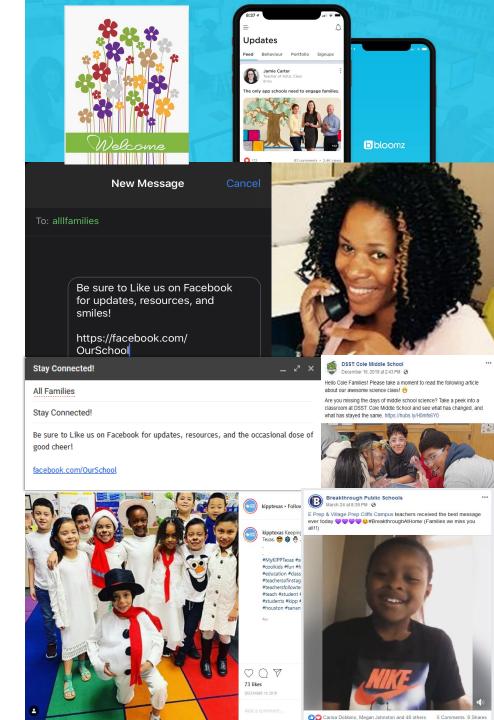
Bringing your families together for academic and social reasons is critical to building an engaged community. Black to school bashes, assemblies, awards ceremonies, and community meetings help develop in Planning, promoting, and providing incentives (like a dress down pass if your school has uniforms) ensures maximum turnout. Also, be sure to schedule events when it is most convenient for your parents and if it is in the evening, be sure to have food and childcare available.

Social Media

Social media is a powerful tool for engaging your families, but who has the time to build the audience and generate content? Make sure every electronic message has a link to your social media accounts and encourage families to follow you at enrollment and school events. Recruit a staff member who is heavily engaged with social media on a persona level to be your school's social media captain (a \$500 stipend is helpful!) with the task of posting daily photos of your kids or shout-outs for teachers, parents, and community partners.

Posting photos of your students gives families a sense of what's going on during the school day, reinforces that their kids are having a good experience, and increases their engagement with the school. This engagement also helps improve the success and decrease the cost of your digital advertising.





For most schools, the vast majority of attrition happens during the summer months. Setting up a summer communications plan with weekly touchpoints ensures you stay in contact with your families keep them engaged. Even if families still decide to leave, you are less likely to be surprised at the beginning of the next school year. Most communications platforms allow you to set up communications in advance. Changing the person that the message is coming from helps create the sense that the whole school is involved (again, most platforms allow you to send messages on behalf of others). It's important to mix in one or two personal messages – notes, cards, or phone calls – to let families know that they are known and valued. A monthly get together – like meet ups or ice cream socials – are low cost, low lift ways to keep the social connections going during the long break. Finally, home visits take a lot of planning, but they are an incredibly powerful way to demonstrate your commitment to your families, build personal relationships, and start the school year off with happy and engaged families.

Month	Details	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	
JUN	Message	End of the School Year Newsletter	Summer Activities List	Summer Reading Lists	Popsicles in the Park	
	Method	Email & Text Message Link	Email & Text Message Link	Email & Text Message Link	Mailing & Text Message	
	Person	Principal or School Ops	School Leader or Family Coordinator	Teachers	Parent Advisory Group	
JUL	Message	Have a Safe & Happy 4 th !	School Meet-Up at a Community Festival	Staff Pre-Service Kick-Off "Getting Ready for the New Year!"	Back to School Invitation	
	Method	Email & Text Message Link	Mailing, Email & Text Message Link	Social Media	Mailing, Email, Phone Calls	
	Person	Principal or School Ops	Parent Advisory Group	School Leader	Network Staff	
AUG	Message	Back to School Event (Live or Virtual)	New School Year Info	Home Visits	Welcome Back to School	
	Method	Event	Mailing & Email with Links	Email & Phone Calls	Email, Text, & Flyer	
	Person	All Staff	Principal or School Ops	Teachers	Principal & Teachers	



Building a culture of engagement with your families takes time, planning and effort, but it has an incredibly powerful impact on your ability to fulfill your mission. It has benefits throughout your organization.

An active and engaged family is much more likely to recommend your school to their friends and family members. Schools with strong recruitment plans build on this organic student recruitment activity in a few critical ways. While referral incentives can be tempting, in our experience they have little impact on enrollment, create a tracking headache, and you end up paying for many referrals that would have happened organically. Instead, focus on these key areas:

Friends & Family Landing Page

An enrollment web page is a great way to ensure your messaging speaks to the unique needs and interests of prospects that are referred by current families. It is easy to ask your families to share the link – text messages are especially successful – and provide an easy way to track family referrals.

Events

Making sure your current families know about each recruitment event and asking them to share the invitation with their friends is a great way to boost turnout. Current families also make great greeters, ambassadors, and speakers at info sessions and open houses. If you are going to be at a community event, invite your families to stop by and say hello (and bring a friend!).

Paid Staffing

The very best student recruiters have one thing in common: they're parents. Current parents connect more directly with prospective parents and are especially great for canvassing, phone calls, and events. Make sure you invest the time to set expectations, provide proper training, and provide a lot of clarity on their role as a staff member and as a parent.







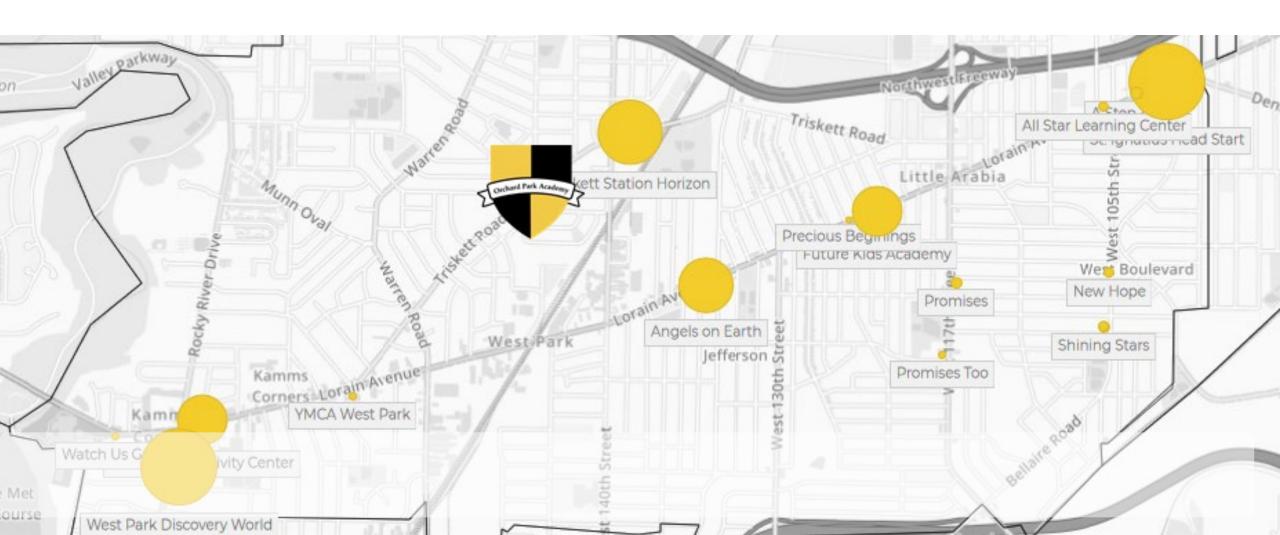




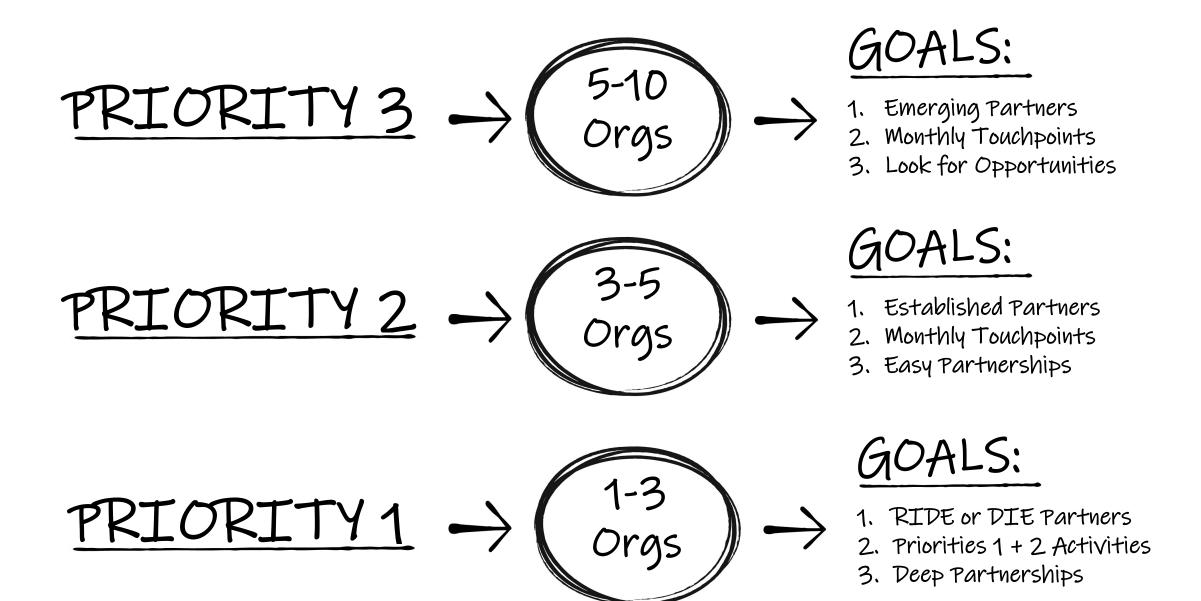
Organizations serving the same families as your school, like preschools, middle schools, sports leagues, service organizations, and pediatricians can be powerful allies in your student recruitment work. Since you have limited staff and resources, it is important to prioritize your outreach work. This ensures that you reach the maximum number of organizations possible while reserving your most time-intensive engagement activities for your highest priority organizations.

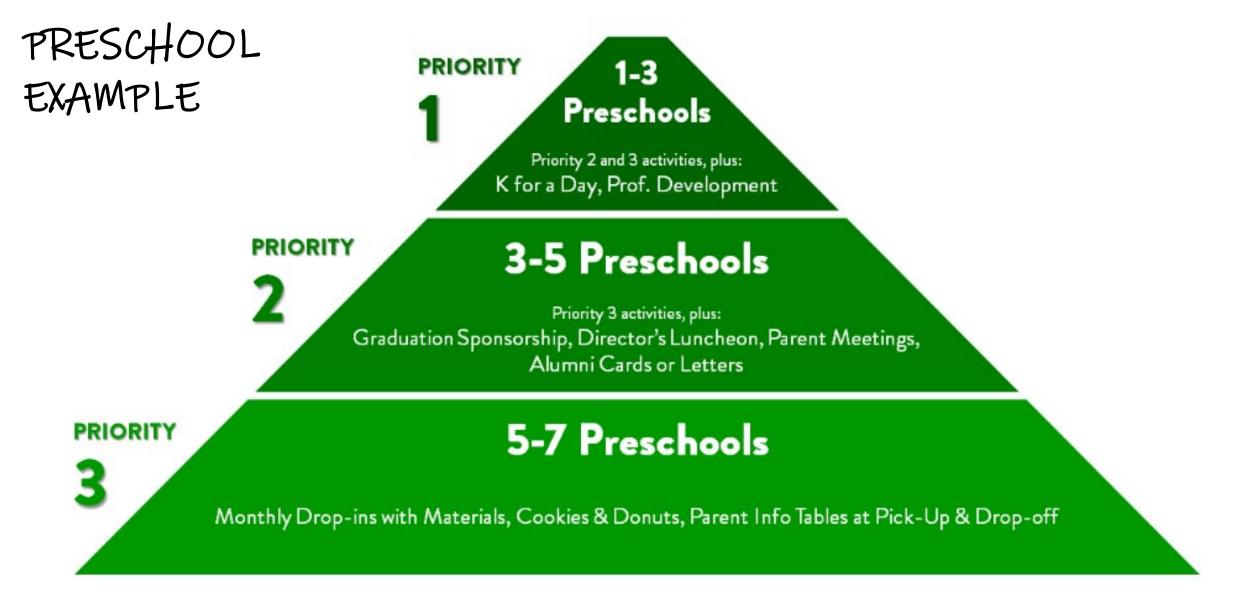
We prioritize engagement on a few factors: current relationship, size, proximity, and community reputation.

Listing your potential community partners and mapping them is a great way to understand which potential partners should be a higher priority. It is also helpful to mark (or estimate) the number of children that organization serves. Most communities have a resource that lists enrollment information for preschools. Mapline is a low-cost and easy-to-use mapping platform.



Limited staffing means you need to focus your efforts on the highest-priority organizations (based on size, proximity, relationship), but make sure even lower-priority organizations are still being contacted on a regular basis.





Connecting with each partner at least once a month while reserving your high-leverage activities for high-priority partners is the most effective way to develop long-term relationships. Build an annual calendar with a specific goal for each organization and monthly outreach activities. Be sure to check you progress at least once a month.

Engagement Planning

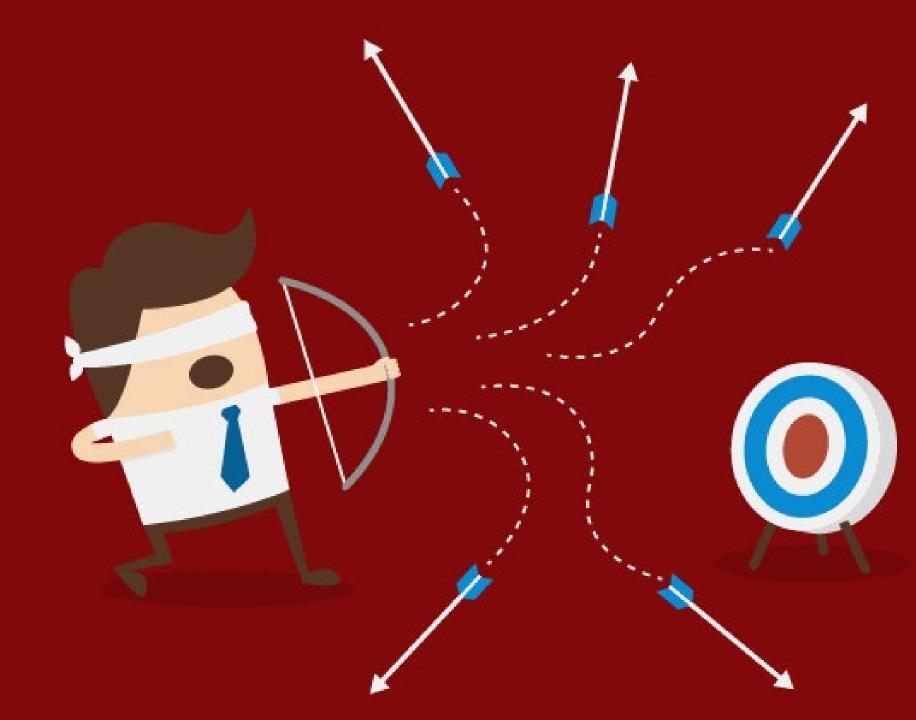
Community Outreach							MONTHLY GOALS					
Name ▽	Type =	Address ₹	Phone 😾	# of Kids	PRIORITY =	LONG TERM - GOAL	Last Visit	Follow _ Up	DEC =	JAN =	FEB =	MAR =
Carl B Stokes Heastart	Preschool	1883 Torbenson Dr., Cleveland, OH 44112	216-692-4010	239	2	Directors' Luncheon	12/15	1/12	Holiday Trays	Postcard	Postcard & Valentine's Day Candy Dropoff	K Readiness Guides & Info Session
Early Steps Learning Center	Preschool	468 Richmond Rd., Richmond Hts, OH 44143	216-381-4600	67	1	K for a Day	12/16	1/13	Holiday Trays	Postcard & Plan Info Session	Postcard & Valentine's Day Candy Dropoff	K Readiness Guides & Info Session
Kidtopia	Preschool	798 E. 185th St., Cleveland, OH 44119	216-383-9671	79	1	Professional Development	12/17	1/14	Holiday Trays	Postcard & Plan Info Session	Postcard & Valentine's Day Candy Dropoff	K Readiness Guides & Info Session
Mini Miracles Learning Academy	Preschool	22620*/22656 Shore Center Dr. , Euclid, OH 44123	216-731-7655	118	2	Graduation Sponsorship	12/18	1/15	Holiday Trays	Postcard	Postcard & Valentine's Day Candy Dropoff	K Readiness Guides
Stair Steps Enrichment Center	Preschool	18482 Lakeshore Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44119	216-303-9322	66	2	Graduation Sponsorship	12/19	1/16	Holiday Trays	Postcard	Postcard & Valentine's Day Candy Dropoff	K Readiness Guides

- 1. Set Short & Long-Term Goals for the Year
- 2. Check-In at Least Bi-Weekly
- 3. Adjust the Goals As Needed



Too often, schools use a "spray and pray" approach student recruitment marketing.

They turn to traditional, often very expensive, mass marketing tactics like billboards, bus ads, print ads, and radio. These tactics reach broad audiences mostly made up of people who are not relevant to your goals. It is also nearly impossible to understand how well these tactics are working.



Instead of relying solely on mass media tactics, successful schools are targeting specific families with a series of trackable outreach tactics.

Integrating digital advertising, to mailings, phone calls, canvassing and events helps you reach your target families in a variety of ways, increasing the effectiveness and decreasing the cost of your marketing.





Some states require school districts to share student directory information as part of their public record laws.

This information is the gold standard for targeting prospective families, especially when you are trying to fill openings in older grades. While many school districts have preschool programs, the number of children enrolled is often very small and only represent a fraction of the prospective kindergarteners.

If you have access to this information, you will likely get a quicker response if your attorney makes the request on your behalf. Keeping your name off the request will also help your school maintain positive relations with your home district.



Squire Patton Boggs (US) LLP 2550 M Street, NW Washington, DC 20037

O 202-457-6000 F 202-457-6315 squirepattorboggs.com

June 1, 2022

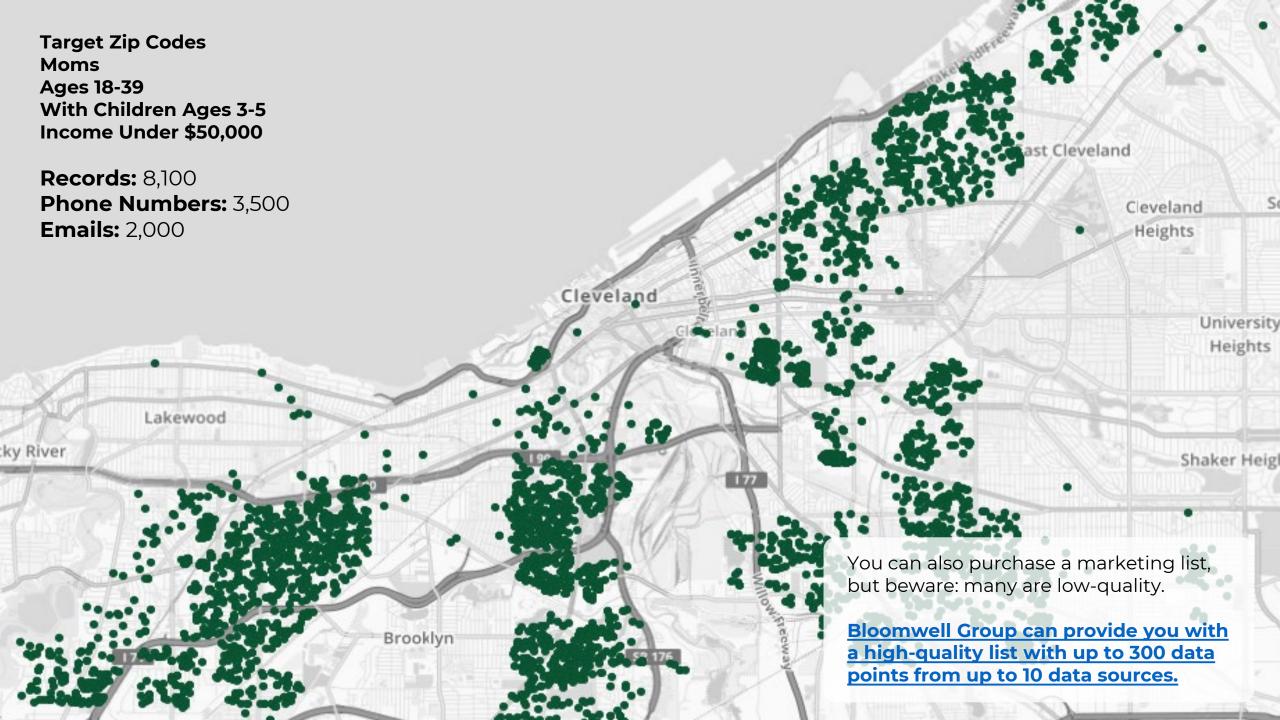
To Whom it May Concern,

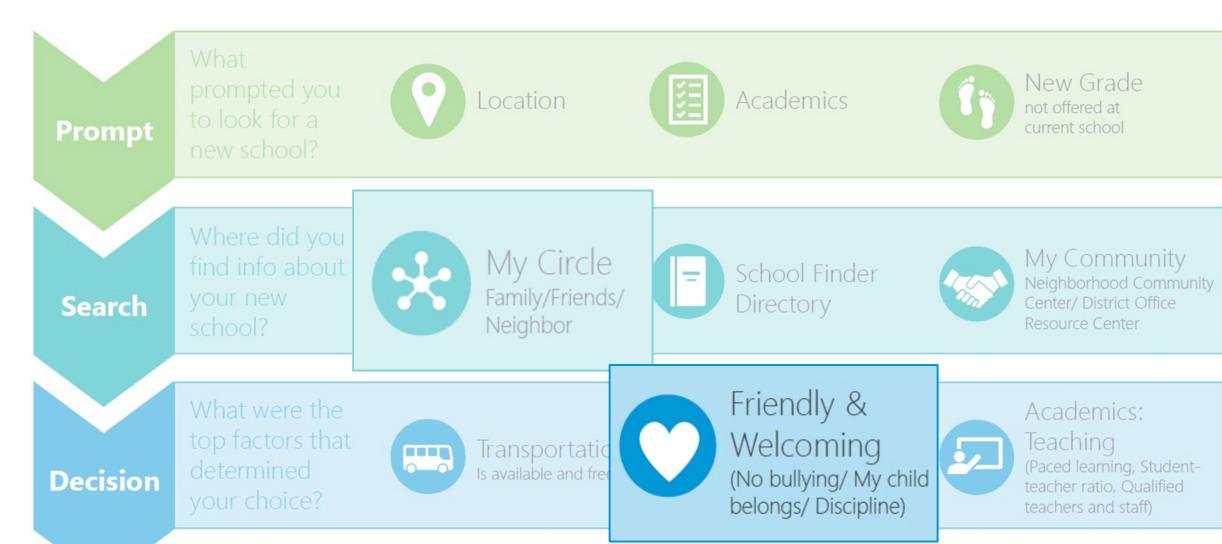
Pursuant to State Revised Code 3145.85 governing the handling of public records, specifically school directory information, my office requests an extract of your school district's complete directory for the current school year in a timely manner via electronic file, preferably Microsoft Excel, including:

- Parent Name
- Address
- Phone number
- Student's School Name
- Student's Grade Level

Per the provisions of State Revised Code 3145.85, I affirm that these records will not be used for commercial purposes.

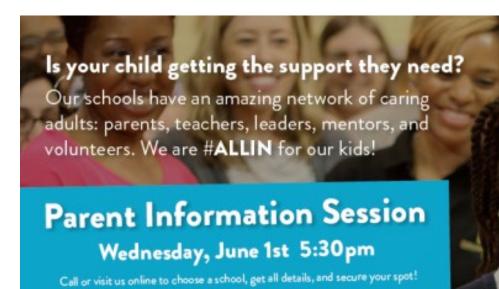






In designing your materials, emphasize your school culture and hopes/dreams for your students.





(216) 367-5720 ExploreBreakthrough.org

School Nearest You: Citizens Academy Southeast Kindergarten Spaces Remaining: 8

BREAKTHROUGH SCHOOLS

Ohio's #1 Rated Network of Public Charter Schools

Starting your outreach with targeted mailings builds awareness.

Understand what message will resonate with families (survey your current families) and stick to it. Leave the list of programs and features for your website and parent info sessions.

It usually takes at least 3 mailings to see results.





Phone call follow-ups are an excellent next step. Using a data app helps streamline effort and track your results.

(CallHub

CallHub X ecanvasser





People

Volunteers

Staff (Full or Part-Time Bilingual Call Center



Tools

Script > Event or Tour

Prescreened List

Cell Phones or App



Plan

Evenings

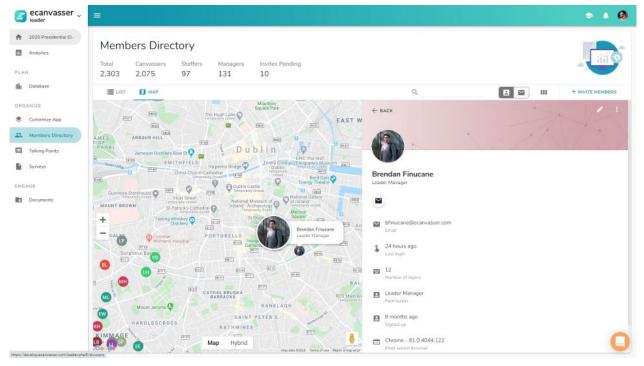
Dial & Track

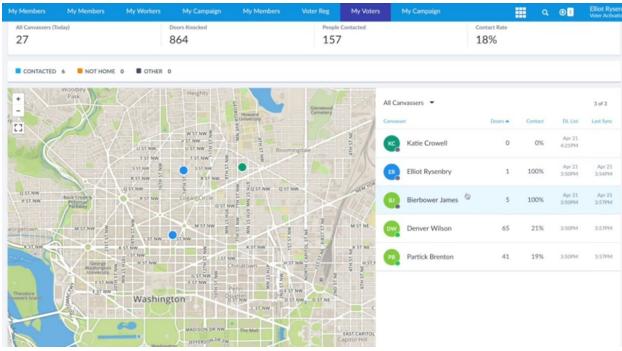
Multiple Calls

Finally, going door-to-door with the same target list, being sure to track your results.











People

Volunteers

Staff & Teachers

Part-Time Street Team



Tools

Script > Event or Tour

Response Cards

Maps & Lists or App

Car



Plan

Nights & Weekends

Canvass in Teams

Multiple Hits

Citizens of the World Cincinnati is a FREE charter public school that will help your child develop the academic and social skills they need to thrive in our diverse society. **HANDS** HEART MIND Messaging Pillars Bold Colors Our small classrooms We focus on developing Exceptional academics encourage your child empathy so your child to prepare your child for success in high school, to learn by exploring can build understanding across lines of difference. the world around them. college, and beyond. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS We're proud to partner with these amazing organizations to provide a unique and enriching educational experience for our students and families. Differentiators Heroes Rise teaches the fundamentals, history, and culture of street dance, **Brick Gardens addresses** and combats racial inequity in the food system, by providing access to food, creating a fun and enjobs for youth, and education gaging movement-based around healthy eating. experience for students. Located in NEW STUDENT INTEREST FORM Madisonville Complete this short form to learn more about giving your child an amazing education that develops their hands, heart, and mind. Name QR to URL Phone Email Grade(s) Kindergarten First Grade Second Grade

Call (513) 445-4793 or visit cwccincinnati.org

Cute Kids.

Lead Info

ITS ALL ABOUT THE LEADS!



Platform	White	Black	Latino	18-24	25-29	30-49	<\$30,000	\$30,000- \$74,999
You Tube	71%	77	78	90	93	87	68	75
4	70%	70	69	76	84	79	69	72
O	33%	40	51	75	57	47	35	39
	22%	28	29	73	47	25	27	26
	21%	24	25	44	31	26	20	20



PROS

CONS



Top Platform Across Demos

Engaging Content

Excellent Targeting

Requires Good Video Content

Platform is Clunky

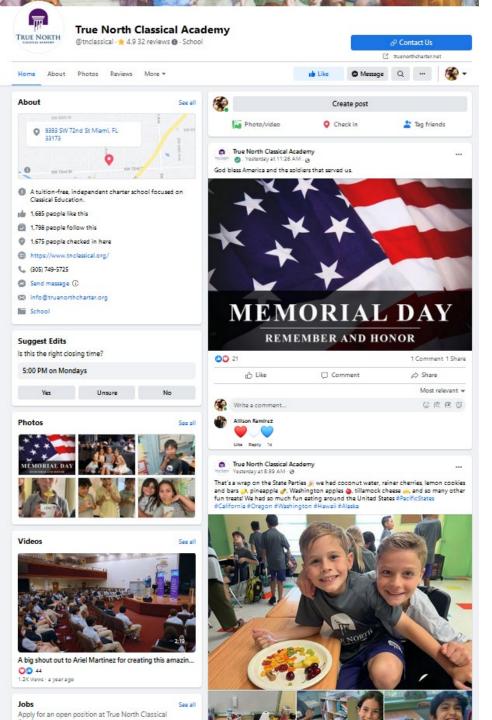
Content Partners



Fastest-Growing Platform

Demo Skews Younger

Requires Good Video Content
City-Wide Targeting Only
Limited Benchmark Data



Grow Your Organic Audience

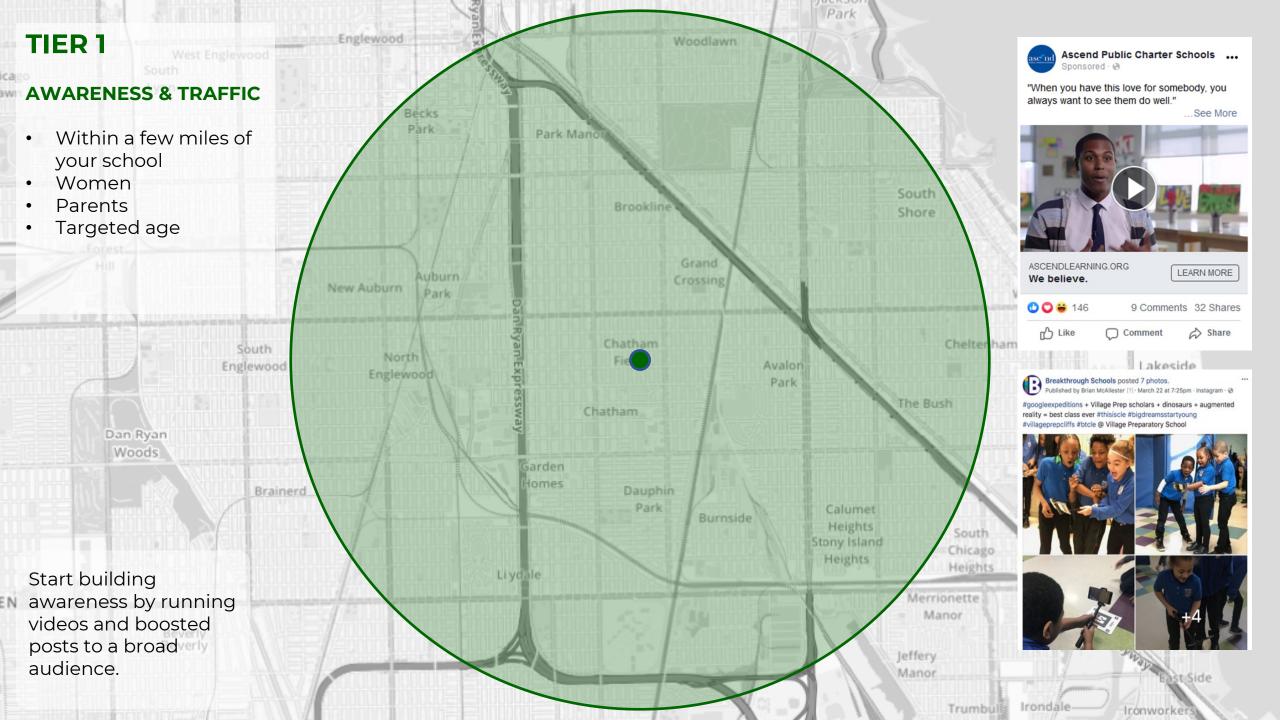
Cross-Link Facebook & Instagram
Lots of Posts (3-5x per week)

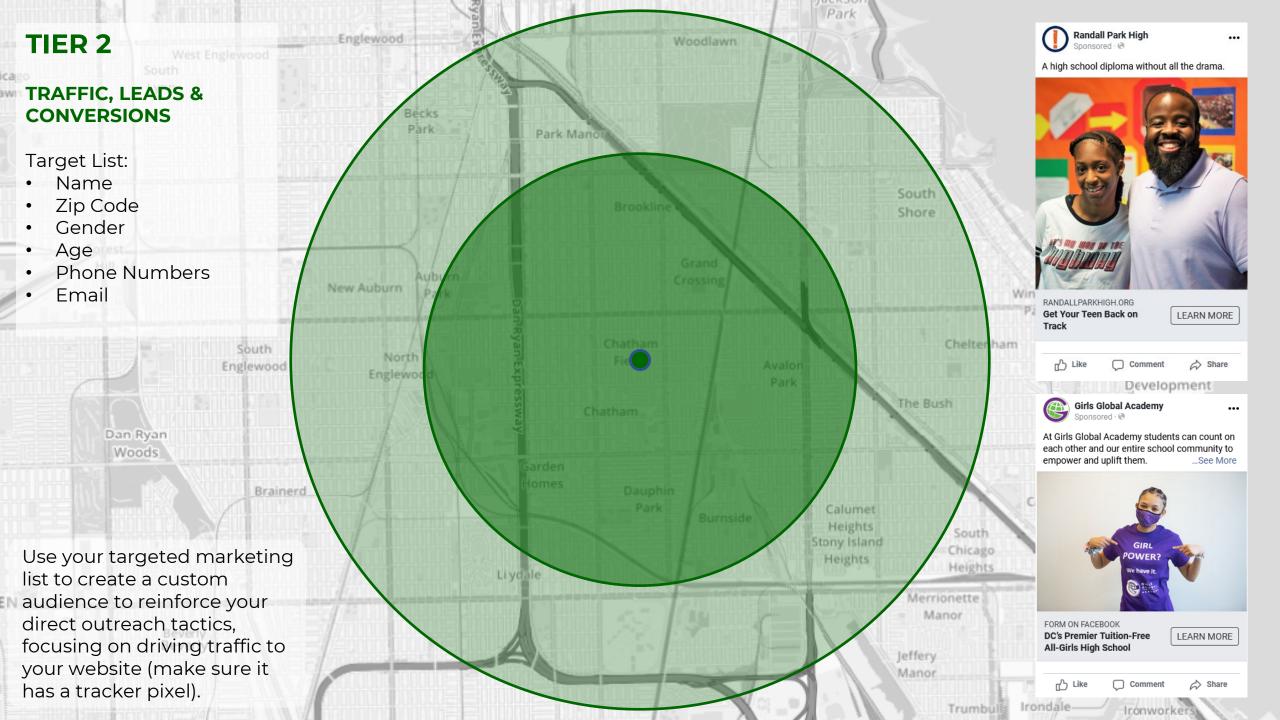
Day in the Life Photos & Videos

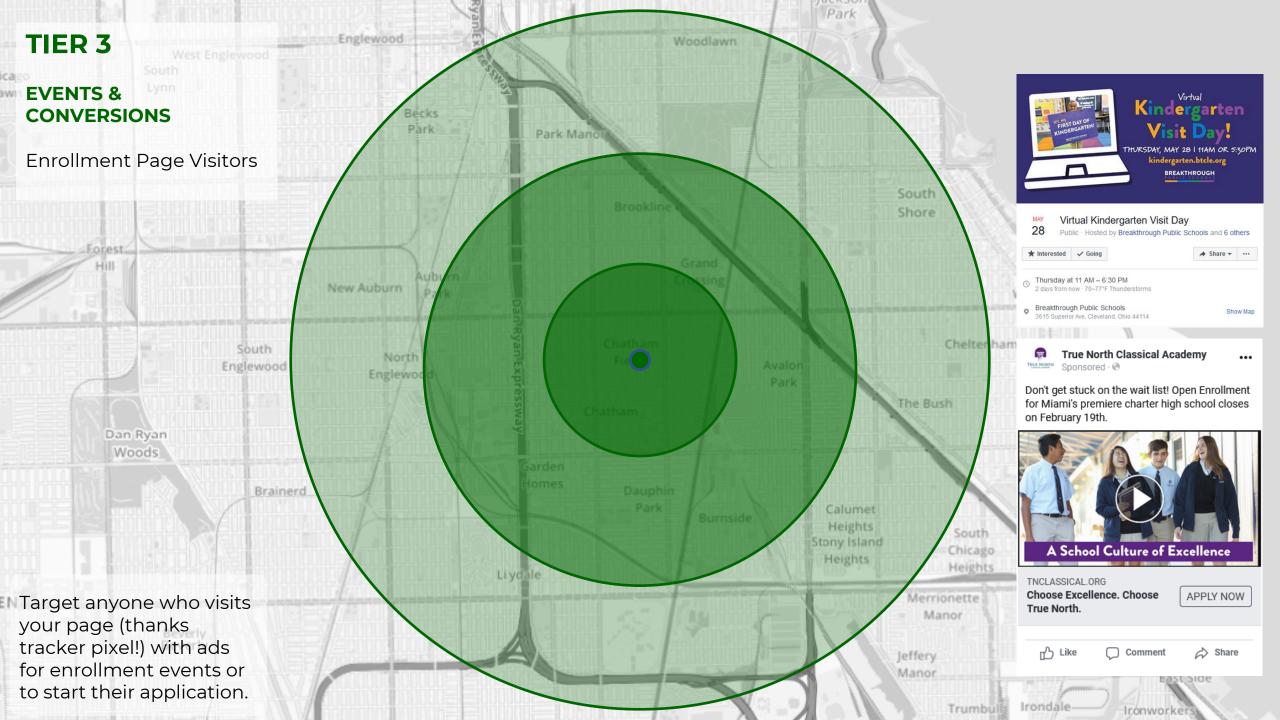
Celebrations & Special Events

Ask Your Families & Send Links

A paid campaign can only do so much without a strong base of organic support, built on a steady supply of relevant content.

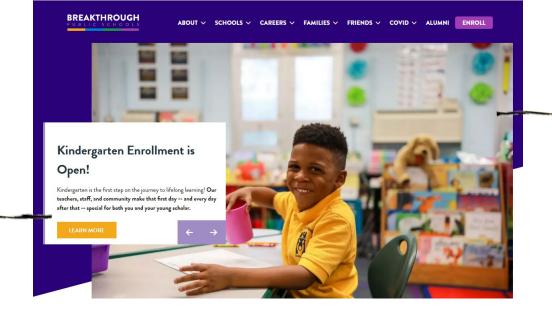






Landing Page

Call Outs for Target Grade Levels



Dedicated to Enrollment Traffic

Lots of photos or videos



Discover the Difference at BPS

Our network of K-8 free, public charter schools includes five campuses throughout greater Cleveland. In our classrooms, you'll find an immersive curriculum being taught with active, joyful learning to give scholars the foundation they need for a bright future.

> SEE MORE VIDEOS

Focus on the WHY not the HOW

Explore Our Schools

Basic Campus Info for Networks

CITIZENS GLENVILLE

12523 Woodside Ave. in Glenville Near E. 125th & Eddy

We opened our Citizens Glenville location due to strong community demand and support. Our elementary school, Citizens Academy (CA), and our middle school, Citizens Leadership Academy (CLA), are located in the same building.



Citizens Academy
Serving Kindergarten - 4th Grade

REQUEST INFO

ENROLL 🗸



Citizens Leadership Academy
Serving Grades 5th - 8th

O ENROL

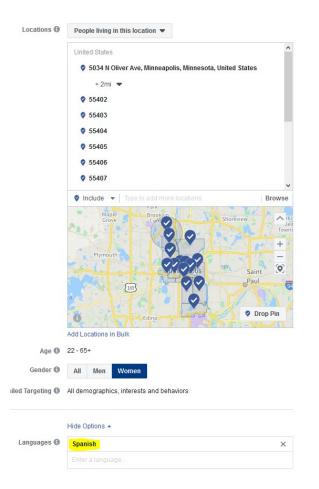
Offer A Variety of Next Steps

Spanish Language Audience

Spanish Language Ads

Spanish Language Landing Page

Spanish Language Lead Generation Form











Native language ads are very effective for reaching under-served families. Be sure to create an entire funnel (targeting, ads, landing pages, and lead forms) in that language.

Social Media Advertising Leading Practices

- 1. Set up pixels and conversion events on your website before you start
- 2. Run ads for at least 2 weeks, 4 weeks is better
- 3. Use lifetime budgets to optimize your spend across the campaign
- 4. Always run at least 2 versions to test images and messages

Expense Benchmarks									
Click Through Rate	Cost Per Click	Landing Page View	Lead Form	Enrolled Student					
.73%	\$1.00	\$2.00	\$18-25	\$100-250					







Learning programs

Find the training, courses and certifications most relevant to you.

Learn More

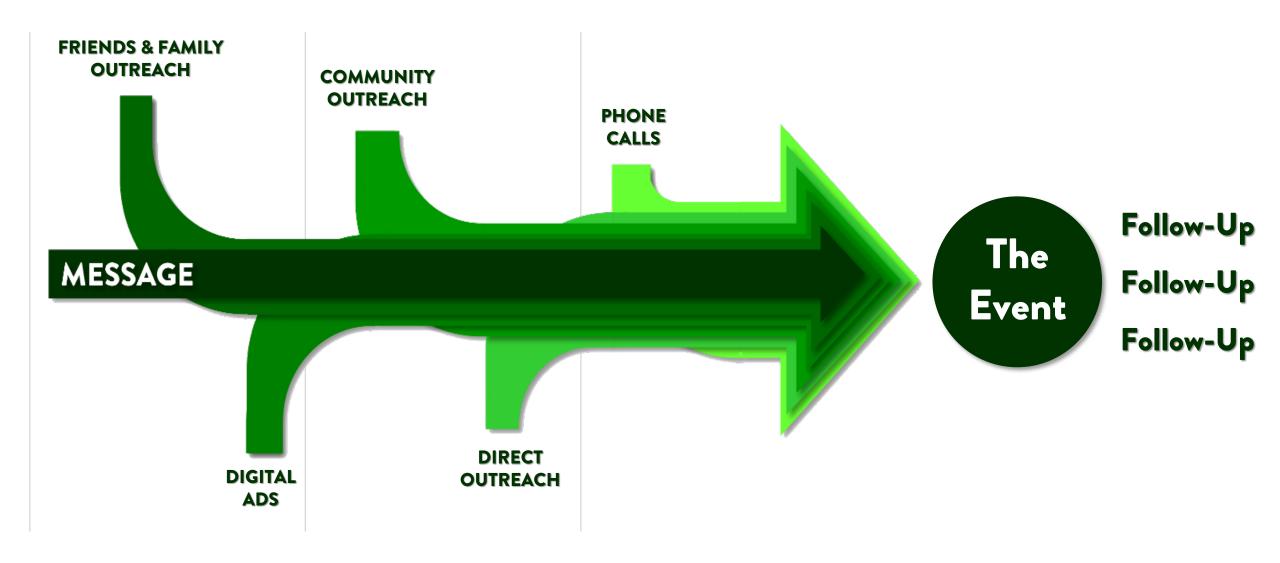
Blueprint is a great, free resource if you can't afford to hire a marketing company.

A Splash of Cold Water

Digital ads are helpful, especially in support of your more direct outreach tactics, but they aren't going to full your school by themselves.









Focusing your marketing on an event rather than "enroll now" is the most effective way to build interest that converts to enrollment. Setting a 3-4 week cycle of marketing ahead of an enrollment event, where tactics build upon each other, ensures that you get the most bang for your limited marketing bucks.

In-Person Preferred, Outside if Possible

Short & Sweet (~40 Min.)

Registration (for follow-up)

Food, Events & Activities

Parent Reps

Follow-Up Calls for No-Shows



FOLLOW-UP

All No Shows from Any Event or Tour

Vary the Times of Day

Call Until you Get a Yes, a No, or a Disconnected Number

The Friendliest Bill Collector You Ever Met

Just because someone didn't show up for an event or tour doesn't mean they're not interested. It can take weeks or event months on steady follow up for a family to finally convert.





Thanks so much for everything you do for your families.

Check out our website for more resources and feel free to reach out with any questions:

lyman@bloomwellgroup.com

(216) 346-3917

