

Part One:
Marketing Guide

TIMELINE

A Month By Month Checklist

May/June of previous school year – when developing the calendar for the coming school year include the Catholic Schools Week dates, and any activities that are known. (i.e. Open House dates)

September/October

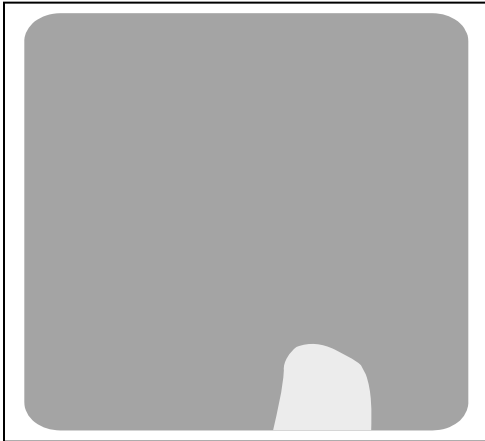
- CSW packages received at your school
- School establishes a CSW Committee. If possible involve all stakeholders (parish, school, parents)
- Establish committees or responsibilities depending on the size of the school
 - Liturgy
 - Student Activities
 - Marketing
 - Guest Speakers
 - Open House
- Preliminary sketch of day by day activities by individual schools
- Meet at diocesan level to co-ordinate areas such as Marketing
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Mid-December
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Marketing Your School: Telling the World about Catholic Education

It's true: Catholic schools mean "A-plus". Your school demonstrates that, day in and day out – you are nurturing spiritual growth and telling of the love of God, not only in religion class but with every action and subject; upholding high scholarly standards; making academic success not just a goal but a stunning achievement for hundreds of youngsters; serving community, church and nation; and, in short, truly making the future, part of today's world.

Your school represents a great success story, one well worth sharing with your neighbors and community. The process of doing so, marketing, usually involves



a number of interrelated activities and functions, with assorted names like public relations, communications, community outreach, public information. But all accomplish one essential task: explaining why your school is a benefit to the individual student, the family and the public at large, and why the community should support it. That's where your marketing campaign comes in.

Catholic Schools Week presents a terrific opportunity for marketing. Nonetheless, the truly effective marketing campaign demands ongoing effort, beginning as early as September. Preparing early not just for Catholic Schools Week but for highlighting everything significant your school does will allow you to be better equipped to recruit new students and their families, retain the support and enthusiasm of those already enrolled (as well as the backing of other parishioners and friends), win new boosters in the area and gain the interest of the broader community – including the news media.

the founder of the religious order that helps staff (or originally staffed) your school.

Browse through the school academic and liturgical calendars for ideas and marketing pegs. Sports competitions; open houses; parent-teacher nights; plays, concerts and musicals; report cards; semester breaks; success by your students in district spelling, geography or mathematics bees or science fairs; Christmas, Easter and feast days; summer school projects; your school's participation in local events and other activities offer excellent opportunities for marketing. Whatever the occasion, along with focusing on the immediate, unique, individual event, try to emphasize the enduring values of Catholic education and the theme for the year.

Be creative; let your imagination, tempered by your common sense, point the way! Remember, too, that marketing isn't really an exotic science. Moreover, it's fun – telling others about something you love and believe in.

It begins with a few basics:

- Determine the needs of your clientele (the parents, students, parishes and public served by Catholic schools).
- Offer something to meet those needs (Catholic education).
- Deliver your service effectively (providing a top-notch Catholic school).
- Eagerly spread the word about what you're doing.

In essence, this is public relations – explaining to the public who you are, what you are doing and why you are doing it and gaining the community's endorsement and abiding good will. An easy and effective way to begin is simply to provide all the data pertinent to Catholic education that the public might want, demonstrating that your school deserves support from everyone, and not merely from parishioners or those with school-age children. Catholic education saves the community money while offering children both education and ethics (religious beliefs and values); it represents both sound economics and sound academics.

The Marketing Committee

As you work to promote your school, few groups will prove more valuable than the permanent Marketing Committee or the Public Relations Committee of your staff and Local School Council. To really optimize your efforts and take advantage of all available opportunities, begin in late spring, before the school year ends, or in early summer. The first order of business always is to recruit members. In this, as in so much, both eagerness and experience count. It's not vital that everyone knows a lot about marketing or public relations in advance;

what is crucial is that each member be willing to devote time and talent to the committee and not be adverse to learning. Keeping the membership to a workable number helps; a half dozen active members (at most) will suffice.

Once your committee has been around for a couple of years or more, remember that both smooth continuity and regular revitalization are important. Experienced “old hands” who’ve been through the process and know the ropes are crucial to a committee, but so are newcomers with new abilities and ideas. Variety helps, too, so look for some breadth in the skills, professions and backgrounds of members and don’t rely just on parents of current pupils; draft other parishioners and even non-parishioners or non-Catholics who have relevant expertise and believe in your school.

Typically, a Marketing Committee might include:

- Teachers
- The principal or assistant principal
- A member of the non-teaching school staff
- Parents
- A member of the pastoral staff or clergy
- A benefactor
- The parish/high school webpage editor or coordinator
- An upper-grade student or pair of students
- The parish Director of Religious Education, for parish schools; or one from a parish served by the high school, for secondary schools
- A member of the news media
- A public relations, marketing or advertising professional
- A professor of English, journalism, mass communication or business from an area college or university

Also, be sure to tap the resources and expertise of members of your Local School Council. Many of your members will be familiar with committee routine – electing chairperson, setting a schedule, establishing priorities and an agenda, evaluation, financial possibilities and so on. Start keeping written records immediately. Circulate drafts of the secretary’s report or minutes and treasurer’s report from the last session before each upcoming meeting in order to jog everyone’s memory, to allow for necessary corrections and to help set the stage for upcoming action.

To reiterate succinctly: Determine your needs, set goals, evaluate resources and plot a course of action. Then commence!

Communications Tools and Individual Outreach

With the explosion in the communications industry in recent years, more ways than ever exist to inform the public of all that goes on in your school. Along with the old standbys of news releases, newsletters, radio campaigns, billboards and newspaper ads, school advocates now can make use of e-mail, Internet chat rooms and school web pages. But no matter how high-tech your outreach becomes, don't forget the value of old-fashioned, one-on-one interactions with

Words for the Wise: Marketing Terms in Brief

Marketing. An ongoing, several-step process:

- Determining the needs of your “customers” (parents, students, parish and public)
- Offering a product of service-Catholic education-to meet those needs
- Delivering the product or service
- Telling the world about it, beginning with your immediate community.

Public Relations. Activity conducted to influence the public favorably and enlist widespread support. Examples include:

- **Community relations.** Cultivating ties to neighborhoods, civic associations, other groups; dealing with the public; having mechanisms in place to keep your school approachable and welcoming (while secure) and ensure it interacts with the wider community
- **Internal communications.**

Examples include public service announcements, diocesan cable TV programs highlighting all the Catholic schools in your area, promotional material on your webpage, messages in local concert programs or newcomers' guides and news releases, as well as newspaper and magazine feature stories and radio or TV reports on your activities.

News Release. A basic announcement telling the news media of some noteworthy event involving your school. It should cover the six basic points of journalism: Who, what, where, when, why and how. Thus, a basic news release for Catholic Schools Week would say: Who (your school) does what (observes Catholic Schools Week) where (at the school, located at...), when (include dates), why (to celebrate its belief in a faith-filled future and honor its parish, community, students, nation, volunteers and faculty) and how (by focusing on a full range of daily events).

Typically, the basic news release for Catholic Schools Week also would include a quote from the principal or other significant figure and some facts about your school in particular and Catholic education in general. Whatever specific event, item or plans it describes, a news release should avoid clichés, unattributed quotes or other claims, and self-laudatory praise: (ÓOur schools, the greatest in the world, will celebrate the most magnificent Catholic Schools Week events ever held anywhere.Ó).

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK: SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

PLANNING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK:

Celebrate...with the Parish

Celebrate...with the Civic Community

- Open House promotion placing the CSW poster in highly visible places
- Provide a kindergarten information session, “Ready, Set, Learn” by bringing in a speaker on readiness

Outreach



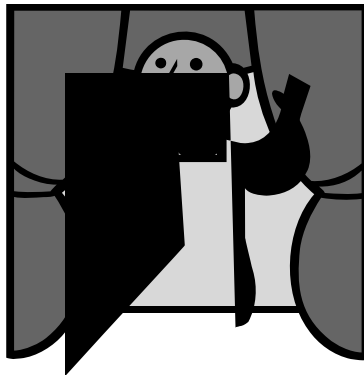
Celebrate...with Parents/Volunteers

- Open House – provide enough time for visitors to get a feel for your school
- Invite parents to a school liturgy
- Parent and Volunteer Appreciation Day
 - Recognition certificates
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Celebrate...with Students

- Student essay or poem contest, “Why I’d Like to Be Principal (or Vice-principal) for the Day”
- Set up a classroom in a local mall for a day
- Dress up or dress down day; school colours day; hat day; slippers day, etc.
- Student led opening prayer and daily announcements
- Entire school gathers for photo on the field; release balloons as culminating activity
- Complete the word games provided in the appendix
- Field trip and tour of diocesan cathedral
- Reach out to retired religious or seminarians (create a valentine; mail or personally deliver a valentine or red carnation to each)
- Has anyone seen my teacher? Teachers switch classrooms for the morning.
- Theme day – for example, red day, or pajama day. Try something that will encourage school spirit.
- Bring a friend, senior, grandparent, etc, to school day
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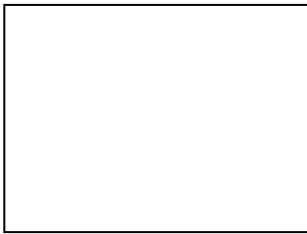
- Calendar contest with student drawing
- Have one class each day attend noon mass (in the parish)
- Produce a video tape with highlights of your school
- House Team Spirit Day
- Storybook Character Dress Up Day
- Make cards for incoming kindergarteners
- Have buddies write what they like about their school on footprints and place them around the school



Celebrate

CelebrateÉwith Administration

- Host a breakfast one morning – everyone needs affirmation
- Give staff a 15 minute break coupon redeemable during CSW
- Encourage the Parent Support Group to host a teacher appreciation lunch
- Invite the Bishop, Mayor, and or other dignitaries to visit
- Plan a special early morning liturgy (followed by a Continental Breakfast)



- Place a note or treat in a each teacher's mailbox

SUCCESSFUL Ideas from Previous CSW

(Consider adapting these great ideas for your school celebration this year)

**Thanking the Staff for giving their hearts
to Catholic education
and Cloverdale Catholic School, Surrey
(Archdiocese of Vancouver)
Contact: Trudy Desjardine**

Monday

Catholic Schools' Week Table Quiz
Contact: Gemma Gillis, St. Joseph's School Vanderhoof
(Diocese of Prince George)

St. Joseph's School is a small school of less than 100 students in the community of Vanderhoof, a town with a population of approx. 4500. Our school depends on a lot of volunteers, our School Council and Parent Support Group members, parents who listen to children read and help in the classrooms, coaches for sports, parents who help with hot lunch, etc. etc. During Catholic Education Week the school staff decided to recognize the work of all our volunteers. Volunteers are invited to a breakfast prepared and served by the school staff.

Another event held during the week and looked forward to in the community is our annual table quiz. This event is organized in two sessions. Grade 4/5 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and Grade 6/7 from 12 noon to 2:00p.m. All schools in the town receive an invitation and this year we had groups from all the local schools, with a total of 280 students attending the two sessions.

Students are arranged in groups of 4, with each of the 4 students being from a different school. Each of the students attending brings 4 snacks to share with others at their table.

Questions are taken from the curriculum, general knowledge, current events and topics of interest to the students. There are 10 rounds of questions, 10 questions in each round. Each team must agree on one answer, which is recorded on the answer sheet. Parent volunteers mark the answer sheets at the end of each round and results are posted. The winning teams, first, second and third, receives a small money prize. Lucky team draws are made during each session and small prizes donated by local businesses are awarded.

The Table Quiz is enjoyed by everyone. Many of the students look forward to the annual table quiz at St. Joseph's. This year the event coincided with Vanderhoof's Winterfest so the day was well advertised as it was also listed as a Winterfest event. All the events of Catholic Education Week are advertised in the local newspaper, and the church bulletin as well as in-school advertising.

Catholic Schools' Week Bulletin Board Idea
Contact: Vi Pagtakhan, Queen of All Saints School,
Coquitlam (Archdiocese of Vancouver)

Vi, a kindergarten teacher, sent a note home to parents explaining that the CSW was being celebrated in two weeks time. The kindergarten class planned and created a bulletin board that featured their parents during their elementary school years. Each parent was invited to send a few of his/her school photos (individual or group) to school the Friday before CSW. Several parent volunteers helped create the bulletin board. They made red heart frames of different sizes for all the photos. This display was a big hit and could easily be adapted as a school rather than class project.

Catholic Schools' Week Necklaces
Contact: Kelly Tries
(Diocese of Kamloops)

Each year, we make CSW necklaces for every member of our school community. We start with the theme for CSW and make a medallion out of paper, with the name of the school, the CSW theme, the school year and a number. These are then cut out and glued onto construction paper, cut into round medallions and laminated. We punch a hole in the top of the medallion and tie yarn through it to create a necklace.

The necklaces are given out at our Opening Assembly on Monday morning. Throughout the entire week, three or four times per day, we draw numbers for prizes. If a student's number is called, (s)he must come to the office, wearing the necklace, to collect a prize. (We make sure that everyone has his/her number drawn and each student gets a prize. The prizes are quite simple...gel pens, sticky note pads, little notebooks, journals, picture frames, etc. The Dollar Store is full of suitable prizes!) The students are so excited to hear their numbers announced there is complete silence in anticipation. The necklaces are a visible reminder of the celebrations taking place throughout the week.

Catholic Schools' Week Community Quilts
Contact: Kelly Tries
(Diocese of Kamloops)

This project really began at the Principal's Annual Retreat in Naramata several years ago. While there, I came upon the wonderful story, "The Quiltmakers Gift" by Jeff Brumbeau and Gail de Marcken. The school purchased copies of the book for each classroom and for our school library. We, too, soon became "Quiltmakers". For four years now, we have made prayer quilts for people in our school and parish community. We are blessed with a group of quilters that support this project each year. They are staff members, former parents in our school and people who just love to help.

Prior to beginning the project, this group meets to plan the design of the quilt and purchase the fabric that will be needed. We use only 100% cotton for the project. We often receive donations of fabric from people in our community who know about the project.

As a school staff, we decide who in our school and parish community is really in need of prayers and blessings. This year, we have made four quilts – one for Msgr. MacIntyre, one for a former staff member who has cancer and two lap quilts for some senior citizens in need of prayers. In the past we have made quilts for students, former staff members, parishioners and patients undergoing chemotherapy at Royal Inlands (single bed size quilt, or a lap quilt).

During Catholic Schools Week, each student and staff member is given a plain white or off white block (4.5" x 4.5" was this year's dimension) on which they can write a message or draw a small picture with a fine point sharpie black marker. We provide a paper template for the students to plan their message and/or picture in pencil first.

Once everyone has made their message block, they are handed in to the school office. The quilters meet again to piece the top together. At this stage we show the quilt top to the students so they can see what their tiny pieces of fabric have become.

We then call upon a professional quilter in our community who loans her quilting machine to do the quilting stitches. We gather at her home on a Saturday morning and complete the machine quilting. Once the quilts are fully assembled, we display them at the school so the students can see the finished product.

In some cases, the recipients of our quilts have passed away, but the family members find that the quilt's messages and prayers help them to get through the pain of their loss.

PLANNING CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday