Retention the Key to Success

The easiest customer is the one you already have. We spend a great deal of time on recruiting new students but often neglect our current ones.

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Put The Time Into Your Partnership

Relationship is like a garden. It's beautiful when watered with love, care, tears and cheers. But it dries up if left untouched.
Give ‘em the Pickle

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISJ1V8vBiil
Bad News Travels Fast

Rule of thumb - If your customer is not happy about something, the chances are that more of them feel the same way. LISTEN to your customers. Don’t fool yourself, although only a small percentage of customers will write to you or complain, their issues are surprisingly representative of popular opinion.
Divert the Bad News

If a satisfied parent tells three friends and angry one tells 30.

Establish:
- Trust and Authenticity
- Transparency
- Active Listening
- Responsiveness
Re-Recruitment Plan

• Re-Recruitment is the strategy and process of recruiting our current families for the next school year.

• Keeping our current families is imperative for strong enrollment numbers.

• A successful campaign is vital to maintaining your staff and faculty numbers.

“The art of marketing has changed, but in many cases the organization has not.” – Seth Godin in Meatball Sundae
Re-Recruitment Plan

• It is much more cost-effective to retain a family than it is to recruit a replacement. (Budget for re-recruitment.)

• Retention of the transition years (5th to 6th and 8th to 9th) is where greatest loss occurs.

• Understanding why families leave or stay, (listening and responding) making improvements.
Why do families leave your school?

Financial reasons
Rising cost of tuition
Relocate to another area
Desire a “free” education at a public school
Disciplinary issues
Lack of academics and/or programs - Lack of Communication
Perceived prestige of other schools
Conflict with school philosophy or specific issue
Other schools have more “extras”
Desire for more programs in athletics or arts
Academic program is too difficult/not challenging enough
General dissatisfaction
Lack of leadership and vision for the future
Why do families stay at your school?

Overall satisfaction with the school experience
Student and parent connections with faculty, coaches and peers
Strong communication….parents feel connected
Commitment to your educational mission
Environment and community of the school
Ability and willingness to pay tuition
They believe in your school and the difference it makes in their child
Better than the alternatives available
Survey Your Families

We cannot make changes and respond to families until we know what they think and how they feel.

Do this in house...it’s FREE.

Build an on-line survey for ease of access and downloading data captured.

Should be a SHORT survey.
Parent Survey

Student Name and Current Grade

Are you planning to Re-enroll? If yes, do you want to schedule a meeting to discuss next year’s planning for your Child?

The Academy has benefited our child the most from (please enter below).

We would like to see the following changed or improved (please enter below):

The best way and time to reach me for the meeting is:

Other feedback or comments?
Use Survey Results to Save Time

Use results as time management tool:

If Yes we are coming back. Just follow up if they want a meeting and follow up with hand delivered contract, etc.
Follow up with a Thank You (after contract)!

Spend time here:
If No, read reply and ADDRESS IT. Have the RIGHT staff person address the issues. Really follow up and discuss how to improve or resolve.

If Maybe, call and discuss what is going on. (Again divert the problem.)
Step One - Responsibilities

While retention is the responsibility of everyone at school, it must be “championed” by someone.

Head of School
Advancement Director
Admissions Director

Work with a Re-Recruiting Team:
Administrative Staff
Division Heads
Residential Life Staff
Key Parents
Step 2 - Reports

Track retention by grade/compile statistics
Track students probability of re-enrolling:

F – Firm = very likely to return
M – Moderate = on the fence
S – Shaky = unlikely to return
Z – Cancel = will not return

Use this as a time management tool.

Once re-enrollment begins, you should produce a weekly report showing the number of students that have completed the process by grade level.
Step 3 - Vision and Implementation

How does your school add value? Signature programs?

Enlist others in your shared vision.

Hold all employees accountable to uphold your vision and goals.

Use visuals on campus and campus events.

Make every effort to continually improve.
“Farragut has not only educated my son but has instilled high morals, ethics, and discipline. These are all attributes that will serve him well throughout life!”

- Laurie McNamara

Parent of Patrick ‘15
Internal Billboards

Inspired to LEAD

ENROLL TODAY - www.farragut.org
Step 4 - Connection and Customer Service

Families are more likely to remain enrolled when they are connected to the school.
Foster community connection to the school:

School Wide Events
Parent Ambassadors
Mentoring programs
School Spirit
Headmaster/Division Head Coffees
Home Dessert/Coffee gatherings

Customer Service Approach – Parents/Families are not always right
BUT we must listen and respond…DEMONSTRATE WE CARE
Step 5 - Identify At Risk Families

Families who:

Are not “plugged into” the school community
Continuously make late tuition payments
Are the disgruntled families
Have disciplinary problems

Make a plan to work with them:
Personal meeting
Discover and address the problem(s)
Progress plan towards improvement
Step 6 - Process

• Internal Campaign:
  Restate your BRAND and VALUES
  Remind parents of accomplishments (video)
  Present exciting plans for next year (email)
  Focus on Transition Grades (Hold step up Shadow Days)
  Communicate with visuals (billboards/banners)
  Communicate with e-mails and e-videos of recent alumni
  Have key staff schedule personal meetings with parents to discuss re-enrollment for the next year
  For international families try to schedule telephone calls or Skype calls
  Hold a school wide event (spaghetti dinner)
  Have staff with relationships call parents
Re-Enrollment Packet

What should be included and how should it look?
Personal Letter from the Headmaster or Division Head
Present the “value added” case
Tuition and Fees information
Contract for Re-enrollment
All in a professional package.

Hand delivered by Division Head, if possible.
Follow up after Re-Enrollment:
A nice gift to reinforce school brand and say “thank you” for your confidence in us.
(Class t-shirt for the next school year.)
Communication and Feedback

Communicate with parents each week.
Focus on the brand and value added
Share positive stories on the students and faculty
Get the “talkers” talking – Identify the parents who are positive about the school and ask them to “spread the love”

Parent Survey – Look for areas of satisfaction and places needing improvement
Conduct exit interviews
Respond to feedback so they feel valued
QUESTIONS
COMMENTS, INPUT
& SUGGESTIONS

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