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Catholic School Enrollment Talk

ISPD is your Catholic School Enrollment Solution for maintaining and/or increasing the quantity, quality, or diversity of your elementary or secondary Catholic school enrollment.

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Enrollment Management & Human Resources

By John Cooper, ISPD Enrollment Specialist

The Resurrection experience invites us to look upon life differently, especially during this Easter season. With this in mind, how does your school view the human resources side of enrollment management? This edition of *Enrollment Talk* is intended to walk you through that question. To use an ISPD term, you need to find the right amount of "people fuel" to sustain and grow a healthy enrollment.

Here are some things to consider relating to enrollment management and "people fuel."

- It takes more than one person to fully implement a successful enrollment management program. Everyone within the school community must embrace enrollment management as the #1 priority of the school. They must do more than embrace the concept. They must act.
- Key persons like the pastor, president, principal, and board of education must step forward to provide overall strategic leadership. Part of this strategic leadership involves helping the community to expand the notion of enrollment management to include every aspect of the school. The bus driver, custodian, kindergarten teacher, biology teacher, school or parish secretary and the list goes on and on, manages enrollment in specific ways related to their individual job responsibilities. Those in key leadership positions must constantly help everyone understand their distinct contribution.
- It is essential that key faculty, staff, parents, volunteers, and alumni assume tactical leadership for carrying out the various components of enrollment management. The principal can't do it alone!

- It is important that a core enrollment team is formed. The core team must be a diverse group of people within the school community. Each core team member brings to the table a unique perspective on how enrollment is being managed within their particular area of influence. The core team provides oversight of enrollment management strategic implementation steps.
- High schools have identified the need for admissions/marketing/recruitment related positions for some time now. More and more elementary schools are turning to paid admissions/marketing/recruitment type positions. Creating these types of positions is a step in the right direction, but there is a risk that the focus is too narrow and will miss the greater responsibility that enrollment management demands.
- This is not to say that director of marketing, director of admissions, director of recruitment, director of public relations, director of development, director of advancement are not all worthy and important positions for any school to have. What I am saying is that if your school doesn't have a part-time or full-time director of enrollment management, it should consider creating a new position or re-structuring those positions that already exist. Position titles and redefined responsibilities can signal to an organization an important paradigm shift in thinking.

Here's a shot at job responsibilities for a director of enrollment management.

The director of enrollment management at St. Example Catholic School is responsible for overall leadership and direction of the school's enrollment program. In managing enrollment at the school, the director's responsibilities include:

- **Coordinating the school marketing efforts and helping all those associated with the school to understand that good marketing is good evangelization.** The director of enrollment management works with the school's board and administration to identify targeted marketing efforts aimed at reaching enrollment goals that fit within the framework of the school's strategic plan. From big picture "branding" on down to press releases that are generated, the director of enrollment management provides leadership and oversight. In order to maintain a web site that is marketing and enrollment oriented, the director of enrollment management is responsible for the school's web site. The director of enrollment management administers the school's marketing budget. Note: If your school has a marketing or communication person on staff, it is recommended that the position report to the director of enrollment management.
- **Recruiting the right quality, quantity, and diversity of prospects into the school's enrollment funnel.** The director of enrollment management works with the school's board and administration to identify targeted enrollment goals that fit within the framework of the strategic plan. To this end, the director of enrollment management leads efforts to identify those goals as well as develop a timeline for achieving those goals over a period of time. The director of enrollment management is responsible for proposing and maintaining a budget that is in keeping with the school's enrollment goals. Note: If your school has positions responsible for admissions, diversity, and/or registration, it is recommended that those positions report to the director of enrollment management.

- **Establishing a system of communication with prospects, inquiries, applicants, and registered students that builds strong and lasting relationships that continue as they matriculate.** The director of enrollment management leads the school's effort to relationship build with both prospective and current students/families. Understanding that relationship expectations are established from the first time a prospect learns about the school, the director of enrollment management plays a pivotal role in helping the rest of the school community form a seamless relationship. This relationship begins with market positioning messages and ends with alumni whose hearts never leave the school. To this end, the director of enrollment management institutes customer relationship management strategies that begin with a prospect's first inquiry. The director of enrollment management will keep the board, administration, staff, faculty, and core enrollment team up to date with the progress of the school's enrollment funnel.
- **The director of enrollment management works closely with the business office to insure that financing tuition strategies are developed and implemented.** There will be a clear back and forth exchange of information between the director of enrollment management and the business office concerning both prospective and current students/families financial status. Tuition assistance leveraging strategies will be the joint responsibility of the director of enrollment management and the business office.
- **Organizes efforts to retain students through to graduation and beyond (if no alumni or development office exists) as alumni.** The director of enrollment management is the point person for retention. From the moment of new student orientation, the director of enrollment management makes the school community aware that he/she is available to help them address issues that arise during their time at the school. In this way the director of enrollment management serves in an ombudsman role for the school. He/she is also responsible for working with the board, administration, faculty, and staff in determining goals for retention and completion. The director of enrollment management works with appropriate persons within the school community to carry out strategies aimed at meeting the school's goals for retention and completion. As part of this responsibility, he/she will support efforts to monitor and respond to satisfaction levels within the school.
- **The director of enrollment management convenes the school's core enrollment management team on a regular basis.** The core enrollment team provides the director of enrollment management with feedback as well as assistance in implementing enrollment management strategies that are part of the school's strategic plan. Selection and training of core team members is the enrollment manager's responsibility.
- **The director of enrollment management has a solid line reporting relationship with the principal (president - if the school uses a president/principal model of leadership with a broken line reporting relationship to the principal).**

To accomplish his/her enrollment management responsibilities, the ideal candidate will have prior experience in the field of marketing or admissions in an educational setting. Minimal qualifications include a strong communications background in a sales type organization or business. Customer relationship management experience and skills are desired. Familiarity with technology, especially in using it to maintain customer relationships is important. A bachelor's degree in a related field is

preferred.

How's that for a start? I am probably challenging you with the concept of moving from a narrower view of "marketing/recruitment/admissions/public relations" to a broader embrace of enrollment management. Whether you currently have persons fulfilling duties related to enrollment management or you don't have anyone addressing enrollment in this manner, you need to spend some time thinking about how this work is going to be carried out today and in the future.

To summarize. If you don't currently have someone leading your school's enrollment management effort, think about filling that position in either a part-time or full-time capacity. Figure out how many new students you would need to enroll and how many current students you would need to retain in order for the position to justify itself. If you do have person(s) in positions that touch upon aspects of enrollment management, think about re-structuring so that there is a person devoted solely to managing and directing the total enrollment program from start to finish.

ISPD Offers Free Service A Place for You to Announce Job Openings in Catholic Development & Advancement

Beginning this month, ISPD is now offering a free service to any Catholic parish, school or diocese. We are opening up a separate button on our website at www.ispd.com entitled Development Job Postings. By clicking on this button, anyone can go directly to this page and view the job announcements and opportunities from those Catholic institutions who send them to ISPD@aol.com. Twice per month in our two e-newsletters, ISPD will mention this opportunity and invite all readers to go to the website in order to view the announcements. These e-mail newsletters reach over 6,500 Catholic leaders each month.

Each announcement should be no more than 200 words. The announcement should invite people to submit a resume to your specific address (e-mail or physical). In mailing your request (with the announcement attached in a Microsoft Word document) to ISPD@aol.com, please indicate for us the name of the contact person and a telephone number where we can reach you, just in case we need clarification on the announcement. Announcements will be put in alphabetical order by institution. This month there are five Catholic institutions that will begin this new service.

- [Click here to read more about these new announcements](#)

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Spiritual Thought

USE this edition of Enrollment Talk as a discussion starter among the key players in your school's community. During this Easter season we spend a lot of time looking at the Acts of the Apostles. What can we learn from this early community of believers? How might the actions that they took 2000 years ago be employed today for the benefit of our schools?

We read in Acts 4:31 "When they finished praying, the place where they were meeting was shaken. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to proclaim God's message with boldness."

Today like then, we need to pray in such a way that our school meeting places are shaken (maybe not literally). We need the Holy Spirit's guidance in this moment when the challenges that face our schools can seem to cover us in blanket of negative grace. And yes, we need to proclaim God's message in our schools with a renewed sense of boldness!

The Lord is risen, alleluia.

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- Long Range Planning
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- Catholic School Enrollment Solutions - Strategies for Catholic School Enrollment Growth
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- [Check Here for Spring 2008 Schedule and More Information on ISPD Development Training Workshops](#)

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