

The Faculty as AMBASSADORS

Best Practices Case Study

Trinity Academy
Shenandoah, PA

HEALEY EDUCATION FOUNDATION | Helping Schools Help Themselves

2040 Briggs Road | Suite C | Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054 | t: 856.235.5222 | f: 856.235.2522 | www.healeyeducationfoundation.org



“Our faculty understand that enrollment and retention are part of their job. They are enthusiastic professionals with the right attitude, a sense of responsibility, and the Gospel of Jesus at the heart of what they’re doing. And they’re 100% present, engaged, and grateful to be involved in the mission and branding of the school.”

– Sr. Mary Ann Spaetti, IHM
Principal
Trinity Academy

How TEACHERS FURTHER RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

PURPOSE: Established following the closing of several area Catholic schools, Trinity Academy (Shenandoah, PA) is a consolidated school *Founded in Faith and Family*. From the start, an engaged faculty was instrumental in delivering on the new school’s mission, which included making enrollment and retention a team effort.

APPROACH: The faculty and staff of Trinity Academy work closely with parents to provide children from preschool through eighth grades an excellent faith and academic education. They also serve as ambassadors for the school who:

1. Communicate Early and Often About Advancement.

Teachers participated with

other key constituents in developing the mission and brand for the school. The principal and advancement director share updates and seek input regularly at daily *Morning Circles* and other staff meetings.

2. Participate. By interacting with current and prospective families, faculty help foster a sense of belonging at Trinity Academy. They welcome guests and speak at open houses and new family orientation, serve spaghetti dinner during Catholic Schools Week, and join in the fun at *Make Your Own Sundae* night on Trinity Sunday.

3. Share Responsibilities and Talents.

Faculty share their time and expertise in constructive ways that



apply their unique talents: creating a hallway display to recognize families that re-register, launching a Kindergarten Facebook page, sewing aprons for the spaghetti dinner. They also “think advancement” in the classroom: keeping alert for students who may not be returning next year, updating the advancement director on class activities, recommending students for PR opportunities.

4. Celebrate Successes.

Faculty receive data and progress reports on re-registration and enrollment. The advancement director and principal thank them as a group and individually, with personalized letters.

HOW FACULTY CAN HELP WHEN MEETING WITH PROSPECTIVE FAMILIES:

- Introduction – find common ground, be hospitable, establish the timeline
- Question & Dialogue – ask questions, find and listen to needs, remove barriers without “problem solving”
- Connection – summarize, connect answers to their questions with what the school offers (mentioning features and benefits), tour the school
- Commitment – state next steps, determine who does what and when, drive to a decision

RE-REGISTER CURRENT FAMILIES, WELCOME THE NEW

“I was new to this family and welcomed with open arms,” said school advancement director Christine Fannick. “I’ve never had reservations about asking for support. We’re a team.” The school has introduced tiered fees (a reduced rate for early re-registration) to offer current families first priority in enrollment. During parent-teacher conferences, faculty determine who has returned registration forms and offer assistance. They also welcome visiting prospective families to their classrooms during tours.



OUTCOME: With faculty invested as educators and ambassadors, Trinity Academy delivers as promised. The principal, teachers, and staff pay conscious attention to serving families already at the school. What’s their experience? How is each child doing? How can we help? They also spread the word in the broader community about how a Trinity Academy education makes a difference and is a sound investment. The school achieved a 12% increase in enrollment in its first year applying new approaches.