



School Promotion: Word of Mouth Campaign, Website and Social Media

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History:

Quinte Christian High School is celebrating 40 years of God’s faithfulness this year, and yet there are many people in the broader community who do not know the school exists. We had a family at our open house two years ago who said, “We always wondered what was behind the doors of Quinte Christian High School.” When I became principal four years ago, many things needed improvement—upgrading promotion, creating a new strategic plan, financial plan, and retention plan—yet it became evident that although all were important, and should be a task for the board, unless we concentrated on promotion, with the decreased demographics in the area, we would have a difficult time maintaining our numbers. We needed to do something about our presence in the community and give a clear message about what we have to offer.

Van Lunen Project:

With the help of Jim McKenzie, we decided to begin a “Word of Mouth” campaign. Members of the board took part in a conference phone call with Jim discussing how to host a promoter’s reception, which would prepare our parents to assist promotion by sharing the stories of our school in a non-threatening way and also gain permission for the school to make contact. We sent out a large number of invitations to people in our community who have spoken positively of the school and are connected to people in the broader community. Of the 150 invites, 35 were able to attend the promoter’s reception. We participated in some mixer games, reviewed the vision, mission and core values of the school, and discussed the opportunities which each person has to share his or her story with people outside the school community. The main point of the reception was to guide the promoters in asking other people for their contact information and permission for me to contact them. We gave each promoter a stack of business cards to carry with them, which we had created from a model Jim supplied. The promoter does not need to market the school, only create an opportunity me to call or invite people inside the doors of QCHS so they can experience the school and understand how their student would flourish.

We also began taking a serious look at our website and use of social media. We understand an update is necessary, since it has not been changed in the last seven years. We have had one conversation with Jim McKenzie and will continue to seek his wisdom as we make changes in the next year. In order for this to occur, we have created extra time for our IT person so he can work on the website and keep the social media pages active and up to date. I am looking forward to these changes in the coming year.

Things I learned:

The response of many who attended the promoter’s reception was that they didn’t have a clear understanding of what the purpose of the reception was; therefore, I need to give a clearer explanation of the evening before we host our next reception in the fall.