Plan your back to school event

Starting the year with positive expectations and enthusiasm

"Expectations don't magically change reality. Expectations do something even more powerful--they change the way you deal with reality."

Unknown

Since I'm sure you all followed my excellent advice in May ;-) and scheduled a back-toschool event, you can now focus on planning for it.

As a quick reminder, your goals are to:

- Integrate new families by connecting them to current families AND giving them copious information on the logistics of your school.
- Reinforce each family's choice for your school by sharing sound, documentable reasons that your school is great. (Let your school's cheerleader brag about you and the school if you are a teaching principal.)
- Set a positive tone.

Shun the temptation to verbalize all the dos and don'ts...

"But," you say, "I have (nearly) all my parents in one room and I need to tell them these important things that help the school run smoothly and safely. Why shouldn't I tell them

_____ (e.g. where to park at pick up time, how to talk first with the teacher before complaining to the school board chair)?"

- I don't care how big a smile you have on your face when you say these things, they still sound like a list of dos and don'ts.
- Do and don't lists communicate a sense that parents are there to serve the school, not the other way around.
- More than three minutes will sound negative. (Remember your goal is to set a positive tone.)
- Very few will be taking notes and they will have forgotten by the next morning.

Rather, keep your verbal presentation focused on great plans for the year and indicators that demonstrate your school's successes.

...and, instead, give them a written reminder of helpful policies.

Giving parents a written list of dos and don'ts will:

- Keep your meeting time shorter,
- Help keep the tone of your meeting positive, and
- Give them something to take home and keep as a reminder.

Make sure this reminder:

- Fits on one page, (Yes, I said you should give new parents copious information so the information sheet for them can be longer.)
- Is written in the friendliest tone you can manage, and
- Explains the "why" of your rules.

Binder tab: July School size: All