

Casting your school's vision

Writing a mission statement to set your course and inspire your community

“A mission statement is not something you write overnight... But fundamentally, your mission statement becomes your constitution, the solid expression of your vision and values. It becomes the criterion by which you measure everything else.”

There are many approaches to writing mission statements, vision statements, core values, guiding principles, etc. Let's simplify.

You need one statement that communicates why your school exists and which your school community can rally behind.

How do you create one? This week's Marketing Corner addresses the process. Later I'll give you tips and examples for the actual writing.

Ask your board for input on the school's mission.

Please notice I did not say, “ask for their input on a mission statement.” You need their input and buy-in on the _____ that your mission statement should address.

First, you must start with prayer. Not token prayer, but going around the room and allowing each member a chance to pray.

Then, you should ask them questions like:

- Why do we exist?
- In what ways _____ from other Christian schools in our area?
- In what ways will a child be different by the time he/she graduates from our school, as compared to attending another school?

The August board meeting is a good time to have this discussion since (unless your board meets late in the month) your agenda shouldn't already be full of day-to-day issues. Gather their input. Take careful notes. Promise to bring back a proposed mission statement for their vote. And prep them to expect this discussion: Does the proposed statement communicate the concepts you all outlined together?

Work by yourself, or with one other person, to write the mission statement.

Writing by committee is just as disastrous as water-color painting by committee. You need to create something concise and memorable. That won't happen if your board spends time parsing each word.

Bring back your proposed mission statement for their vote.

Please notice I did not say "for their discussion." Yes, there will be discussion. But talk with your board chair in advance about the need to focus on whether or not the proposed mission statement addresses the concepts you all agreed on—not each word.

Credits:

Lynal Ingham:

Thank you for suggesting "writing a mission statement" as a useful topic for the Marketing Corner.

Binder tab: August

School size: All