

Development/Marketing Plan

Historical Background

Our Lady of Victories School in Sayreville, N.J. is one of the oldest schools in the diocese and is celebrating its 120th anniversary this year. In the past the school did not have a marketing or development plan. Enrollment was sustained by word of mouth, bulletin announcements and newspaper advertisements during Catholic Schools week. In recent years the school also had a booth at a town fair to distribute information about the school. The goal of these activities was to sustain enrollment. However, this goal was not met as evidenced by the drop in enrollment.

Current Development

Since the creation of the School Advisory Council a development and marketing plan is being put into place and a number of steps have already been taken to promote the school. Members of the marketing committee have been meeting to create a plan to market the school and have been working in conjunction with the alumni association.

The Our Lady of Victories Alumni Association has been working on a number of activities such as a recruitment drive, newsletters and frequent electronic communication with members. They also sponsor social events such as baseball trips and host a parish wide celebration of the 120th anniversary of the school. The Alumni Association also works on service projects such as hosting a car wash for the benefit of St. Peter's Hospital.

Our Lady of Victories Parish currently has a capital campaign in place. Repairs to the school and facilities in Monsignor Dalton Hall are included as goals for this campaign. Other financial programs such as an endowment fund and planned giving

Our current development efforts are aimed at structuring a public communications program with a short term goal of building awareness of Our Lady of Victories School and will focus on supporting our branding efforts. To this end we are developing contacts in local media outlets such as local papers and the cable television station. We are submitting articles regarding school events with a subtle public relations message contained within the article. The newspaper advertisements for this year's Catholic Schools Week were considerably larger than in the past and we also put out lawn signs around town in prominent locations to advertise the open house which was held during Catholic Schools Week.

Our marketing committee has developed a presentation folder which was given out at the Open House for Catholic Schools Week. The information contained in the folder is in modular form so that it may be tailored to fit a variety of audiences. We plan to use this when we hold another Open House aimed specifically at the parents of preschool children.

The tri-fold brochure will be redesigned and a variety of other tri-fold brochures targeted to meet specific groups of parents are being written. We will include information on early childhood, elementary and middle school classes. Other brochures will focus on the fine arts department and other extra curricular activities.

The Our Lady of Victories Alumni Association currently publishes a newsletter which is distributed in print and electronically. The school's Home School Association publishes a newsletter of their events several times each year. The school administration also includes a newsletter with the monthly calendar which is distributed to the school families.

The school website is currently under study by a new consultant. This has been a weak point due to the prior consultant not meeting our expectations and we look forward to an updated presentation of our school when the new website is put into place.

Our principal and faculty prepared Power Point presentations of their grade levels. These were used during the Open House and were available in the classrooms for prospective families to view. We also have another Power Point presentation which features general information about the school and includes a variety of pictures of various school activities. This was used by the Marketing Committee at the Sayreville Community Day to present our school to the public.

We also look forward to receiving the help of the diocese as we move forward with this action plan for development. Key successful marketing techniques should be shared to flatten out the learning curve. Also, shared resources should be part of the marketing strategy of the diocese. We could use some assistance in getting our message into the local media on a wider basis. The contacts which already exist between the media and the Diocese of Metuchen should be put to use to help each of the Catholic schools promote themselves in their own town.

The marketing committee is currently designing an attainable, measurable plan with a defined time line. This plan will include ways to enhance current development efforts as well as the initiation of new programs and materials.

Development/Marketing

Goal

Increase public awareness of Our Lady of Victories School which would include the academic programs and extra-curricula activities.

Objective

To inform parishioners in local and surrounding communities of the academic, support programs, and extra-curricular activities offered at Our Lady of Victories School, thereby increasing the school's prominence in the community.

Action Steps

The development committee will:

1. Establish a well developed and designed website to present information regarding our school by September, 2009.
2. Present information about our school to Sayreville and surrounding communities by developing a planned use of print media and cable television by Sept. 1, 2009.
3. Present information about our school to families of preschool children through a modified Bear-ly Recruiting Program.
4. Present information about our school to the parish community by including the parish in school activities, featuring school news on a church bulletin board and including school news in the weekly church bulletin by September 1, 2009.

