



# *Enrollment Management & Marketing* **TOOLKIT**

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## **How to Give a Tour that Closes the Deal!**

Many principals agree that a high-quality, well-prepared school tour provided by the principal is one of the most effective marketing “tools” he or she can acquire! Some principals say, “Give me an hour with a prospective parent, and I can have them signed up before they leave the building!” So, how can you develop a process for delivering that type of tour at your school? Perhaps you, the principal, are not the best person to give tours, for whatever reason. Then, designate one or two people with the interpersonal skills and availability necessary (knowledge of the school, a positive attitude about the school, a “script” prepared by the enrollment management team, etc.) to give a comprehensive overview of the school and answer any questions.

Some points to consider—

- If possible, invite parent(s) and child to attend an all-school Mass before their tour.
- Meet family at front door of church and have reserved seating prepared for them.
- Have a Student Ambassador show them to their seats.
- Having studied the inquiry form, learn and use names of parent(s) and child(ren).
- Greet parents and children by name.
- If there is a family or other connection (family member is an alum, neighbor, etc.) refer to it.
- Alert teachers and students, if possible, that there is a tour scheduled for that morning/afternoon so they will be prepared for a possible “interruption.”
- Teachers should greet a visitor with the principal/tour guide when they enter a classroom, re-state simply what the lesson for the day is, and continue teaching.



- The principal/guide uses “walk time” between classrooms to talk about the history, culture, Catholic identity, special programs, etc. of the school. Make it personal and interesting! Tell your story! (Example—“Mrs. X, our middle school math teacher, won the Emerson Excellence in Teaching Award last year for her outstanding instructional skills.” “Our seventh and eighth graders learn leadership skills through their participation in student council, the Student Ambassador program, leaders of school families, etc. Recently, they...”)
- The school community should become “comfortable” with visitors to the school and understand why they are likely there when the principal is giving a tour. A friendly hello between principal and student and acknowledgement of visitors says a lot about social skills students acquire at your school. This should NOT appear to be an “artificial” practice, but part of your culture, because you have made it so!
- Principals should incorporate the mission and core values of the school into his/her talk to ensure nothing important is missed.
  - The core values of Sacred Heart Catholic School in Valley Park are:
    - The heart of faith—forming children in Gospel values and Catholic tradition
    - The heart of family—partnering with parents, parish, and the local community
    - The heart of teaching—guided by a dedicated, professional, faith-filled faculty
    - The heart of learning—committed to academic excellence for each student
    - The heart of our future—preparing children for life
- End with explanation of admissions process, parish registration, upcoming events.
- Express enthusiasm for welcoming them as a new family to your school!

