On the School Front
Repeatedly we hear that Catholic schools “did it better,” meaning the extraordinary overnight pivot to e-learning. Parents across the nation have praised the high quality education program delivered remotely during the shelter in place orders.

Our amazingly dedicated teachers and staff can proudly proclaim in times of uncertainty, you can be certain of this...

Our mission and ministry—to teach the Children of God—has never been stronger or more necessary.

Our faculty dedication, already profound, has reached new heights.

Our adaptability, our flexibility and our creativity have been tested and proven remarkable.

We never stop learning how to best ensure and deliver the unparalleled experience of academic excellence, faith formation and character development in our Catholic schools.

A Summer Like No Other
Many of our usual summer plans have already gone astray, and the life of the school will be no different. Never before have we needed more PRESENCE in the lives of those who currently or soon will be our family of faith.

Ongoing faculty, staff and clergy outreach to students is a minimum. In addition to checking in on student/family welfare during these socially distant times, it also underscores a fundamental truth about Catholic schools—WE CARE. Be attentive to any signals that something is amiss and, if so, connect with the appropriate staff or external resources to find help. (See the newly released Catholic School Management letter on “Guiding Them Through the Storm.”)

Parents may fear a summer without much structure. Help them out beyond summer school with optional assignments, enrichment, app suggestions, prep for next year, social-emotional tips, etc. This would be a particularly good year for the summer reading assignments to be hilarious. Offer incentives for student activity in June, July and August.

Hold meet ups, virtually of course, but with a theme: 6th grade girls and ice cream; debate team on the pros and cons of e-learning; 3rd graders sharing favorite amusement park rides; sports team members competing in workouts; H.S. juniors in cooking competitions, etc. When the “all clear” comes for actual meet ups at a healthy distance, plan them for parents and students, ideally on campus.

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Keep Communicating  

*Communication is Job #1*

Absence will NOT make the heart grow fonder!  
Reach out creatively to all your stakeholders and donors to check on their welfare, update them on your organization and engage them as much as possible. What you do now will impact the future tremendously. Show how brilliantly you have responded to this crisis and invite your constituents to offer comments, advice and examples.

- Decide how often, when and who should reach out via telephone, email, email with videos, text messages, letters, handwritten notes, postcards, and to whom.
- Determine when and how to update your website to prompt return visits. Make sure any out-of-date webpages are removed.
- Schedule your social media posts in a serial fashion to keep them coming back for more.
- Have a facility? Use those windows! Put up messaging on first floor windows that changes every week and encourage your supporters to walk over and see the latest.
- Regularly post new items on outdoor signs.
- Pump out press releases and PSAs to papers, TV, radio, cable. With so much closed, they are eager for news.
- Make an event out of anything you can; video, send and post.
- Utilize multiple voices—staff, administration, board, service recipients, donors—to keep it interesting and keep them engaged.
- Establish new encounters and share them via email one week, video message the next, Zoom call with all, etc.

Keep Raising Funds  

*Fundraising More Vital Than Ever*

DON’T stop inviting philanthropic support. Your donors want to help, but you need to ask. Prioritize retaining donors over acquisition. Be specific as you position your funding priorities, especially those that are COVID-19-related. Promote bequest giving (there's nothing like a pandemic to prompt the updating of wills) and launch a bequest society if you don't have one yet. Maintain foundation contact, especially those who have taken the pledge (*www.cof.org*). Make sure your online giving options are functional, appealing and convenient. DON’T stop inviting philanthropic support (we really feel strongly about this as you can see). Don’t make decisions for your people – ask and invite.

Keep Promoting Yourself  

*Don't Hide Your Light Under a Bushel*

Don't be hesitant in the least about touting your rapid and remarkable response to the implications of COVID-19. Showing how well you responded, and in record time, reminds stakeholders of your commitment to those you serve. This is an excellent opportunity to educate about your mission. Share key stats, testimonials and examples of how you reach out. While modesty is a virtue, this is a time to politely boast and brag. What about the silver linings? Many of our members and clients have seen inspiring examples of faith, courage and generosity. Tell those stories too.

Keep Learning  

If you missed any of the resources provided these past several weeks, it’s never too late to take a gander, and you may have a wee bit more time in the coming days.

- COVID-19 Countermeasures for Schools
- Fundraising and Communication in the Age of COVID
- COVID-19: Understanding Legislative and Relief Programs
- An Audit for the Virtual Admissions Office
- Enhancing Offertory Giving During COVID-19
- Proactive Approaches to High School Guidance Counseling During Periods of Remote Instruction
- www.cbservices.org/webinars.php

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**Staying the Course–For ALL Organizations**

**Maintain Leadership**

*Leadership ~The Secret Sauce*

Typically June calls for the annual meeting of the board and later in the summer, the board retreat. Don’t abandon these practices and keep your board members busy in between as well. You can deploy them on numerous fronts; prepare a menu of options so they can choose. Remember, people who volunteer live longer! You’re just helping them out.

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Sign up for our mailing list to ensure that you receive word about upcoming programs and additional resources. Need help? We are here to serve. Contact us at csmoffice@cbservices.org, missionadvancement@cbservices.org.