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TEN DATA MARKERS FOR SCHOOL SUCCESS

How does *your* school measure success? What are the budget-related factors that contribute to that success? By these measures, how is your school doing relative to other peer schools? What are NAIS suggested measurable proxies for successful schools?

Source: *Financing Sustainable Schools: Six Steps to Re-engineering Your School's Financial Future* (2006 NAIS Workbook)

Goal: In the context of strategic sustainability the two most important goals are 1) Achieving outstanding student outcomes and 2) Achieving institutional financial equilibrium.

Utilizing *StatsOnline* and other data collection methods, determine your school's position in the arenas listed below. Each of these categories can be seen as data equivalents or proxies for school success. The goal should be to meet or exceed the NAIS markers in several or all of the following 10 categories. For each marker, NAIS has identified a goal that, if reached, would position your school as *outperforming the average NAIS school*.

1. Market Demand

Measures: Reputational Value

2.5 applications for each available space
75% yield accepted: enrolled

2. Low Annual Attrition for Faculty and Students

Measures: High Satisfaction

<5% Day Schools
<9% Boarding Schools

3. Generous Giving

Measures: Constituent Loyalty

>10% of budget supported by fundraising

Current Parents	65% participation	@ \$1000. avg gift
Alums	20%	@ \$300.
Trustees	95%	@ \$5000.

4. Competitive Faculty Salaries

Measures: Commitment to attract, retain, and award high quality faculty. In high-cost of living markets, add 33% to salaries below:

>35K starting salary >50K median salary >75K top salaries

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5. Relatively Low Tuition and Moderate Annual Tuition Increases

Measures: Affordability and moderate inflationary pricing

Tuition within the 25-50%ile of comparable schools in your area

Tuition increases: CPI + 2 percentage points or less

6. Financial Aid / Socio-economic diversity

Measures: Access and Commitment to Socio-Economic Diversity

Includes: Total of financial aid, tuition remission, merit scholarships, and discounting for net tuition revenue

Day Schools	20-25% of student body
Boarding	33% of student body
Average FA award	50% of tuition

Note on Affordability: According to SSS formulas adjusted for local cost of living, families in the top 15% of family incomes in your region can afford at least one child at full pay in your school. Is your tuition affordable? Does the 15% band include the middle class, and if not, does that matter to your mission? "Middle Class" in the USA defined as: \$44K-66K annual income (2004, www.census.gov).

7. Comparatively *high* student to faculty ratios

Measures: Institutional efficiency and productivity (9:1 is 2005 FTE median faculty for day schools, 6:1 for boarding and boarding/day schools).

Day Schools
> 10:1 student to faculty
> 7:1 student to staff

Boarding Schools
> 9:1 student to faculty
> 6:1 student to staff

8. Professional Development Budget and Technology Budget

Measures: Commitment to human resources and innovation

> 1% of operations to professional development
> 2% of operations to technology (non-salary, non-capital replacements for technology; ongoing tech operating expenses)

9. Growing Endowment

Measures: Commitment to financial security. Day school median for 2005 is \$19,000 per student; boarding schools, \$217,000 per student.

Day > \$25,000 per student
Boarding > \$250,000 per student

10. Student Outcomes

Measures: effective preparation and overall success of mission

Elementary Schools: =>95% graduate from secondary
Secondary Schools: =>95% graduate from college in 6 years or less

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Mike Connor
3052 Meridian Court
Placerville, CA 95667 {Sacramento - Lake Tahoe}
Voice 1 925.330.8876
Voice 2/FAX 530.621.2097
mike@connor-associates.com

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EDUCATION MARKETING AND ADVANCEMENT

It's What's Inside That Counts: Maximizing Marketing To Advance Your School's Mission

Mike Connor, President, Connor Associates (CA) © 2007

Stratospheric tuition. Escalating costs. Shifting demography. Expanding choice. The value proposition. As these and other factors can potentially damage or deplete the pool of new and returning students, schools need to pay attention to marketing now more than ever. While many may equate marketing with external promotion, public relations, and advertising, making the most of these external initiatives begins with a cohesive and collaborative *internal marketing* effort.

Effective educational marketers recognize the power of partnerships among key internal stakeholders, including the head of school, faculty, and the admission, development and business offices. By looking for internal opportunities to collaborate, by listening carefully to those you seek to serve, and by making sure all stakeholders understand their interdependence, a school can maximize marketing and advance its mission.

Marketing Matters

Competition in the independent school world is on the rise — from home-schools, an increasing array of public magnet and charter schools, parochial schools, and from many other emerging hybrids. In 2003, the *National Association of Independent Schools* reported that in order to attract 100 new students, day school admission officers needed to identify 760 prospective students. Boarding school admission officers needed 1,940.

In 1990, admission officers averaged 10 contacts with families to secure an enrollment. Today, the number of multiple visits to the campus and follow-up necessary may be as high as 30 contact points. In this economy, parents are increasingly value-conscious and demand hard evidence to prove that your school is *worth* what it costs. Donors demand similar information to justify their investment. The message is loud and clear—to thrive in this environment you must take steps to differentiate your school from the alternatives and demonstrate value.

This effort — the hard work that goes into differentiating your school and demonstrating why it is worth what it costs — should be a part of everyone's job. Although only some people in your school may actually have the word "marketing" in their titles or job descriptions, stakeholders across the organization play critical roles in conveying a credible, positive, unified message.

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The Critical Role of Collaboration

Good marketing begins inside an organization and relies on collaboration. Learning research tells us that connections across the curriculum and collaborative efforts among students and teachers increase learning. Ironically, we do not often see this approach being applied to the way schools are managed.

Admission and development officers usually see their roles as separate. Teachers often don't understand the important part they play in enrollment, retention and in reinforcing to donors the value of their philanthropic investment in the school. Business officers, who oversee many of the customer service aspects of the school, often aren't consulted by development and admission officers.

We seem to live in different tribes and don't always focus on what unites us: the achievement of the mission. When each office considers its impact on advancing the mission rather than working to its own separate objective, everyone wins.

As a former teacher, dorm parent, director of studies, admission director, communications director, development director and director of advancement, I've seen schools from many perspectives. If I've learned anything, it is that success in one's own job depends on others being successful in theirs. *The success of our mission depends on recognizing that we're all interdependent.*

Everyone in the school should be responsible for advancing the mission. Essentially, everyone markets, everyone recruits, everyone fundraises and everyone at the school is a teacher. Why? Because all whom we seek to serve — from prospective families to our alums to our wider communities — experience us as a whole. Great marketing, like effective learning, occurs when there is a structure and an expectation for collaboration and cross-fertilization.

Why is this orientation important? Given the market forces facing independent education, we need a united front. Tuition exceeds that of many private colleges, and with rising tuitions come rising expectations. The cost of doing the business of education is increasing, and there is growing realization that tuition and philanthropy together will not meet these costs. The face of the student population will shift with demographic changes. Increasing competition will come from alternative education systems, some that use technology to individuate and personalize the curriculum at a much lower cost. Governmental intrusion may increase.

As consumers become more savvy and expect great customer service from all businesses, increasingly they will look for evidence of educational effectiveness. They will choose schools that are receptive, approachable, and responsive to their individual needs. *Quality and value are expected.* A not-returning parent commented in a recent school image audit: "At these prices, you expect something *extraordinary.*"

Busting the "Silos": Three Steps to Building Strong Internal Collaboration

So how can we break down the silos that often result from our vertical organizational charts and get everyone working together across the organization to advance the mission? Taking these three steps can get you on track: 1) Assess your school's internal marketing opportunities; 2) Listen: conduct the marketing research necessary to ensure your mission's viability; and 3) Explore ways for key stakeholders to contribute to the successes of the others, and therefore to the sustainability of the mission.

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1. Assess internal marketing and collaboration.

Begin by getting a clear picture of where you are in terms of collaboration — both the opportunity to collaborate and the environment that nurtures it.

- A. Is there congruence among major administrators and faculty leaders about the school's identity, mission and direction?
- B. Do the school's head, teachers, and the admission, fundraising, and business offices work in concert to maximize external marketing? Is there a concerted effort to bring all of the institution's human resources to bear on enrollment and fundraising goals and improving the curriculum?
- C. We know that our prospective "customers" need to understand who we are, where we are going and what we value. Do we give that same information to our internal audiences? Particularly faculty? Staff? Parental leadership? Alumni leadership? Students?

Cohesive internal marketing and a coherent internal image are equally if not more important than external promotion. The foundation this provides ensures and sustains the success of external marketing initiatives. The credibility of a viewbook, Web site, public relations campaign or any other external promotional tool depends on whether *what it describes is what is actually experienced*. Word of mouth, a school's most powerful promotional tool, originates internally and moves outward. An internal environment of collaboration, coordination and collegiality is critical to enrollment, retention, public relations and philanthropic goals.

2. Listen to stakeholders and conduct external marketing research.

Get a clear and objective sense of your school's identity and value from the perspective of those you seek to serve. An internal marketing assessment reveals who *you* think you are and whom *you* think you serve; an external image audit reveals who *they* think you are and whom *they* think you serve. How similar or different are the two perspectives?

Ensuring congruence of mission and image internally and externally is the goal of an image audit. Particularly if conducted by a third party, an image audit aids recruitment, retention and philanthropic efforts by giving an objective and confidential perspective of your school from the viewpoint of constituents, referrers, donors and the external community.

The messages and themes generated by an image audit provide data to recalibrate programs and may include testimonials for letters, viewbooks, magazines or newsletters, Web site, email, open houses and other events. The data form the foundation for a communication and marketing plan, admission and development office organization, new Web site content, and feedback on programs and services. Quantitative surveys are fine but limited. Qualitative research does a better job of revealing factors that drive decisions to enroll and donate.

There are literally dozens of constituent groups and segments within those groups that you should systematically monitor; whose pulse you take will depend on your goals. Among the most fundamental are those in your admission process, current parents, young alums, first-time donors, major donors and the larger community of referrers and potential referrers. Because the population of a school moves upward and out of the institution, periodic and systematic research is advised. Perceptions of quality are subjective and constantly shifting. Stay ahead of the curve.

3. Maximize everyone's role in marketing the school through collaborative relationships and mutual support.

When your internal team is aligned with the mission and vision, and when you have external evidence of the viability of your mission and how you deliver it, ensure that everyone in the school is moving the mission forward. Some practical team-building tips for school administrators and teachers follow:

Head of School

Interdepartmental and interdivisional cooperation and communication are mandatory if marketing efforts are to pay off. The single biggest influence on this is the head of school. His or her personality, approach to leadership, values and attitudes about relationships, sense of professionalism, collaboration, and style of decision-making set the tone.

- **Model Marketing.** If a head of school constantly asks, *“How can we make this better? How can we be more responsive? How can we anticipate challenges? How can we reinforce all the positive things we do?”* he or she is modeling marketing, and others will know it's a priority. Keeping these questions at the forefront of every administrative and faculty discussion helps everyone focus on keeping the mission viable and the school responsive to changing needs and shifting perceptions of quality.
- **Articulate the vision at every opportunity.** There are four statements every leader needs to be able to address repeatedly in a variety of ways until they are embedded in the culture: *“Who we are, what we stand for, why it matters, and where we're headed.”* The answers need to be simple enough for everyone to embrace, and, like the mission statement, should serve as a pivot point for all decisions. These statements reflect the heart of your identity, define your value, and give the mission momentum. All administrators and faculty should express and own these statements.
- **Define — internally and externally – the “mission appropriate” student.** This helps families self-select your school and supports the work of admission.
- **Expect cooperation** among all departments that interface with students and their families, including admission, business, academics, counseling, residential life, athletics and development. Do not overlook the importance of administrative and support staff in marketing because they are often the first contact for prospective and current families, donors and referrers. They must be kept informed.
- **Endorse and fund market and image research and expect the data to be interpreted into a strategy.** Base your programs, services, and publications on the research. Recognize that your promotional tools should not be a mirror of administrators' values; rather, they should reflect what your constituents value about your school, in their own words.

Admission Professional

To a prospective family, the admission office *is* the school. To create a strong positive impression, assist your colleagues in other offices, and help the faculty succeed:

- **Manage expectations. Be specific about what you can and can't do.** Make sure a prospective family's subjective expectations are aligned with what your program delivers — and what you expect of them. A clear and helpful discussion about expectations builds confidence in the institution.

Defining, managing and fulfilling expectations is the best way to develop a positive lifelong relationship with your school. With the input of faculty and other administrative offices, describe as specifically as possible:

1. *Profile of a successful student/family.* They are all different, but what traits do they have in common that can help ensure a successful experience at your school?
2. *Profile of a student/family who would be at risk.*
3. *Learning expectations by grade or division.*
4. *The skills, attitudes and values a graduate is expected to attain as a result of his or her experience at your school.*
5. *Parental partnership and behavior expectations.*

The more specifically you describe expectations, the more easily families will be able to determine whether your school is appropriate for them. In your literature, in the interview, in all communications—confidently define and manage expectations.

- **Build a culture of philanthropy during the admission process.** Admission directors can do much to increase the awareness of the critical importance of philanthropy, but they are often reluctant to do so because they may be concerned that mentioning the annual fund or capital campaign during the admission process will be a “deal killer.” But the damage done from perceptions of a “bait and switch” from families not so informed can be far greater.

Beginning with your promotional literature and continuing with admission events, as well as in the interview, tour, and school visit, educate each prospective family about the school's structure of finance and governance, the importance of annual fund participation and opportunities for volunteerism. Explain specifically how philanthropy supports the mission of your school and, most importantly, the *benefits it creates for each student.*

- **Treat mission-appropriate inquiries and your referrers as if they were major donors.** In terms of tuition income, philanthropy, and referrals of new students, the value of the right inquiry over a lifetime relationship with your school is enormous. Admission Directors can learn much from development professionals about the art of “moves management”—how to move someone from being a disinterested outsider to an evangelist for the school.

In enrollment management, there are at least 16 formal contact points between the admission officer and a prospective student from the time he or she inquires until they become an “attending” student. Do you have a communication plan for your appropriate inquiries? How do you move them through the funnel? Have you developed a strong retention plan with other school administrators, faculty members, and the development officer?

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Personalized communication and *value-related* information are more important to prospective families than ever. These trends have put an incredible burden on both admission offices and school administrators, who not only must educate, *but prove that the education will produce the desired outcomes to justify the investment.* Therefore, tracking alumni/ae outcomes is critical. It is in the school's long term interest to make sure that the admission office and alumni relations work hand in glove.

- **Involve the entire institution in the recruitment of students.** *The impression gleaned from the first visit is the most influential factor affecting enrollment.* The visit needs to be planned to ensure a proper match between the student host and the prospective student, as well as to ensure that a student and family's interests and concerns are addressed by the appropriate people while they are on campus. Adults on campus, current parents, alumni, students and others who follow-up with prospective families should be highly organized, trained and responsive. Events designed to link current and new students and family-to-family pairing programs need similar care and continuing evaluation.
- **Stay connected with the business office and other school administrators to ensure a smooth transition for new families into the school.** Ensure that the personal, welcoming experience you create in the admission process is reflected in the follow-up processes of the business office and in the handoff to the head and division directors. The admission process is based on nursing a relationship into commitment. The moment an individual commits and signs the contract and the handoff to the business office occurs, the tone of the conversation can quickly do a damaging "180." Sometimes the business and registrars' offices can become assertive to ensure compliance with the contract, receipt of permission forms and other registration information.

If the business office and other divisional school offices work together with admission to ensure a smooth transition into the school, they will enhance your newest constituents' trust. It is equally important, especially in a K-12 school, to make sure there is compelling evidence to keep families moving upward through the school from one division to the next. Keep each other informed.

Remember that re-enrollment begins *before* Opening Day.

Development Professional

Among the chief roles of the development office is to educate the adults in the school's extended community. Each fundraising event and communication is an opportunity to educate everyone about the school's value – *what you do and why it matters.*

- **Cultivate and deploy all of your school's human resources for fundraising.** Everyone is a potential nurturer of donors and a communicator of the school's mission and vision. The most successful fundraisers know this and tap into all the school's stakeholders.
- **Work with your CFO to get ownership of the long-term financial health of the school.** Many development officers measure their success by reaching the financial and participation goals of the annual fund. But it is more strategic to consider at least a five-year plan for operations, the physical plant, the endowment, and capital needs. What net assets will be created over the next five years?
- **Help donors understand their role in increasing the school's net worth and advancing its mission.** A school's assets include its reputation, curriculum, human resources, as well as its financial assets. If donors insist on restrictions, help move them to the least restrictive gift. Allow the board to do its job of determining how philanthropy can be invested for higher yields that will

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stretch the value of each donation.

- **Confer with administrators and teachers as you organize the fundraising process.** Discuss, recommend and facilitate appropriate cultivation and stewardship activities.
- **Encourage all administrators to meet at least annually to discuss shared messages and key themes** for the coming year's events and publications and to set the head of school's schedule for outreach and cultivation.
- **Arrange joint travel plans with the admission office for receptions and alumni events.** Prospective families want to see the outcomes of your school's programs, so encourage cross-fertilization of potential, current and past families and alumni at your events.
- **Routinely meet with the admission office, business office, and academic leaders to discuss marketing.** Help set the school's research agenda, encouraging donor support for research that will keep your institution on the cutting edge. Based on the research, participate in establishing the school's key marketing messages, which often become the messages you use in development.
- **Identify and encourage positive alumni/ae and past parents to assist admission.** Make it easy for families in the admission and reenrollment process to communicate with alums and past parents. Their testimony about how the school or a particular teacher made a difference in their lives – their first-hand evidence of the benefits and value of the educational experience your school provided – can be the most compelling and credible rationale for enrollment and donor decisions.
- **Develop relationships with key faculty** members to ensure they understand how your role in the school can positively impact their effectiveness as teachers. Make sure the faculty — especially the faculty — understand the goals and rationale for fundraising.

Faculty

Academic quality, the top reason families say they choose a school, is judged by evidence of inspiring teachers and inspired teaching. Good independent school marketing recognizes the critical role that teachers play in admission and development. Teachers need to know how they can be influential with prospective families and donors.

Why is their involvement in marketing critical? Without faculty support, most external promotional initiatives will fail. Teachers have credibility. Most expect heads, development directors and admission directors to speak positively about the school. But when a teacher talks about how good the school is, *it makes a difference.*

Tips for administrators to encourage faculty support:

- **Educate faculty to the fact that you can be true to your mission while also listening and responding to those you seek to serve – your market.** Explain that you agree that marketing objectives must support the mission and also be in line with the school's values.

Because marketing is essentially about connecting, building, and deepening relationships and shared values, help your faculty understand your goals and convince them of the role they play in securing the school's reputation.

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- **See the world through their “lens.”** Spend time with faculty at school events. Ask what motivates them. Let them know you want to tell the world about what they do and why it matters. Ask how you can best communicate their goals for their students and what they want students to gain from having known them. What's the most important life-long lesson a student will learn from that teacher?
- **Encourage appropriate teachers to offer their perspective** on educational, ethical, and character issues. Offer these as interviews or as opinion-editorial pieces to the media, including radio or cable television. This establishes credibility, and reprints can be used to distinguish you from other schools. Taking a stand on issues advances the public debate about education as it reinforces your core values. A school's recognized leadership in education validates enrollment, re-enrollment, and donor support.
- **Share marketing research and image audit projects** with faculty prior to conducting the research. Then share the results, what the results mean to the school, and next steps. Help ensure faculty buy-in by including them from the beginning.

Tips for faculty to support administrators:

Admission directors are trying to fill the school with students who will benefit from the education that the faculty deliver. Development directors are trying to increase the school's financial assets — assets that will impact programs, keep tuition increases at a minimum, and attract and retain effective teachers and mission-appropriate students. Faculty, development and admission staff are natural partners.

Teachers can contribute to advancing the mission when they:

- **Provide school leaders with information and opportunities** to keep the school at the forefront of teaching and learning research.
- **Understand that retention of students is a shared responsibility.**
- **Communicate with parents beyond the formal communications.**
- **Welcome prospective families** into the classroom. Share what the class is doing and what students are learning.
- **Communicate public relations opportunities** to the appropriate people.
- **Alert the division director and the head** when they suspect a child is unhappy or possibly applying out to other schools.

Finance and Operations Personnel

For far too long, business officers in schools have been an overlooked and underappreciated marketing and management resource. Is the business manager or CFO only responsible for collecting receivables? Not anymore.

Years ago, the stereotypical business manager was an accountant who wore a green eyeshade and made journal entries. Today, he or she is evaluated on a wide range of responsibilities and securing the position often requires an MBA. In fact, the business office has an impact on customer service that can positively impact or derail the success of admission and development. Maintenance and grounds, housekeeping, food services, parking, signage, security, safety, and event management

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are customer service functions. Even behind the scenes, business managers and their staff play a major role with both prospective and current families, donors and other constituents.

Business officers, COOs, or CFOs can advance the mission when they:

- **Understand the culture of schools and your school's culture.** Schools don't move as fast as the corporate world. More consensus, more collaboration, and more consultation with others is expected.
- **Equate the budget with the quantification of the mission statement.** Demonstrate how the budget fulfills the school's mission.
- **Help everyone achieve a sense of responsibility for the long-term financial health of the school.** Be a consultant to other offices to help them become more entrepreneurial. Provide them with the big picture and a long-range point of view. Meet with your budget centers proactively and provide them with monthly reports on their expenditures and expected revenue.
- **Work with the admission office to make the school as affordable as possible.** Help admission directors and their staff communicate affordability options. Help qualify families for financial aid to ensure they can cover their contribution to the tuition.
- **Be a supportive leader, coach and problem solver.** Pay attention and ask questions — not to interfere — but because you are excited about what others in the school are doing to advance the mission. Get involved in the school community by visiting classes and attending athletic events and performances. Change the stereotypical image of the CFO as the one who says “no” to the one who works with others to find alternative ways to say “yes.” Lead by example by not allowing anyone to fall back on phrases such as, “It's not my job,” “That's not the way we do it here,” or “We've never done it that way before.” Encourage employees to stay with a constituent call until the problem has been solved rather than bouncing around the caller to other offices.
- **Make sure there is a communication plan in place to ensure that the business office is connected.** Work with the admission and development staff to help plan a master calendar that itemizes production schedules, recruitment and fundraising events, enrollment and reenrollment events and deadlines, and other important functions. Use electronic calendars and shared databases when possible.
- **Promote marketing research – institutional listening – as an *investment* in the continuing viability of the mission and the school's quality.**

Pulling it all together

To make everyone's role in advancing the mission more than a noble goal, we need to think laterally rather than hierarchically. We need to encourage discussion about our needs, expectations, and priorities. We need to listen to the pressures facing our colleagues. We need to be willing to pick up the balls others drop. We need to let our colleagues know that our objective is to help them succeed.

Collaboration requires institutional as well as personal self-confidence. We have to intentionally look for ways to make connections with our colleagues that will support and reinforce their efforts toward our common goal—the advancement of the mission.

Your school's "brand" doesn't live in a logo. It doesn't live in your viewbook or on your website. They help communicate your brand, but they are limited tools. Your school's brand, identity, and value live in the minds of those you seek to serve. Great word of mouth and pride of association, the best promotional tools ever, originate inside the school and move outward. They are influenced by the quality of relationships created by teachers, building and grounds personnel, division directors, administrators, trustees, parents, alums, and everyone in your extended community.

Ultimately, it's all about relationships. Families enroll and reenroll, alums donate, and foundations support us largely to the extent that we've formed strong personal bonds with them. A campaign or marketing program that conveys a desirable image to the public is fine, but it is nothing compared to how people *experience* your school. It's what's *inside* that counts.

Assess your potential for internal collaboration. Conduct marketing research to ensure alignment between what you intend and what your constituents experience, as well as to ensure the continuing viability of your mission. Using objective data, reinforce and recalibrate as needed to achieve or maintain your competitive, leading edge.

Most important, break down those internal silos and fiefdoms. Make the connections. Ensure that everyone in the school understands his or her important role in advancing the mission. Our constituents – past, present, and future – expect nothing less.

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Phone 925.330.8876

www.connor-associates.com

mike@connor-associates.com

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About the Author

Mike Connor is co-author of the National Association of Independent Schools' (NAIS) book, **Marketing Independent Schools in the 21st Century**.

Mike is a dynamic presenter, workshop leader, and consultant in the arenas of **21st Century Education**, group facilitator for **Strategy making** (core values, core purpose, envisioned futures), **marketing research and planning, communicating value, community relations, internal and integrated marketing, admission and retention, public partnerships, and media relations**.

With an M.A. in *Political Behaviour* from the University of Essex, England, Connor has spent 22 years in public and private K-12 schools and colleges, getting a 360° perspective from a variety of positions. He is an experienced history, world cultures, and study skills **teacher, counselor, academic dean, admission director, development director, director of communications, director of advancement, and education marketing and advancement consultant**.

His sessions and workshops have been featured at conferences for the National Association of Independent Schools (**NAIS**), The Association of Boarding Schools (**TABS**), **WhippleHill Communications'** User's Conference, and at conferences and meetings of **Associations of Independent Schools**, including those in South Africa, the Pacific Northwest, Central States, California, New England, Pennsylvania, Delaware Valley, Ohio, Virginia, Florida, Colorado, Southwest, and St. Louis Associations.

In addition, he has presented at conferences of the Secondary School Admission Test Board (**SSATB**), the Educational Records Bureau (**ERB**), the Advancement Program Council (**APC**), the Independent School Business Officers Association (**ISBOA**) and the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (**CASE**). He was designated a *CASE Stellar Speaker*.

Connor worked with the **Independent School Advocacy Initiative** and its 37 state and regional associations and partners. He is also a former **Chair** of **NAIS' Admission and Marketing Committee**, and is a current reviewer for its **Leading Edge** Program, which recognizes exemplary programs in independent schools. He is a former faculty member of the NAIS/Virginia Association of Independent Schools' summer **Admission Workshop** and its national **Marketing Institute**.

His articles on strategic planning, integrated marketing and international programs have appeared in **CASE Currents, Inside Private School Management, and Independent School** magazine.

His work with international programs has appeared in the **Washington Times**, the **Los Angeles Times**, and **Education Week**.

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