

School-Run Program Support General Information & Resources

General Considerations

- **Choosing which programs to support:**
 - **Student needs:** What do students actually need? Fit together what the church has to offer with what the greatest needs are.
 - **School needs:** While student needs are at the heart of a church–school partnership, school needs drive connection and ability to serve, and schools have the best long-term perspective on what student support programs are most effective.
 - **Volunteer availability:** This is simply realizing the realities of your people. If your church is filled with people who have young children, you may not want to promote evening-only opportunities. Or you may want to be creative and offer family-friendly service opportunities earlier in the evening.
 - **Resource availability:** Being realistic about the resources available, and committing to something appropriate, is important. Starting small and being consistent is key.
 - **Obstacles:** Will there be special training required for volunteers to be able to serve? Are there other obstacles to service? Finding out ahead of time will help with decision-making.
- **Important relationships to build:**
 - Vice principal
 - Principal
 - Custodian
 - Area directors
 - Teachers
 - Office staff
 - PTA

Mistakes to Avoid

- **Overcommitting:** *Every program at the school may soon want to tap in to the resources that you are making available, but recognize that those resources will soon be diluted and ineffective if you try to do too much.*
- **Overstepping bounds:** *If a program already exists, it's probably because someone is running it. We recommend deferring to school staff members as much as possible in decision-making and leadership, unless they request otherwise.*
- **Inflexibility:** *As you implement new strategies, the school may see new liabilities. We recommend treating those with respect and using creative thinking for problem-solving.*