

## Research and write your school's talking points

Creating a consistent message for you to communicate

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Talking points are those pieces of information that demonstrate your school's success. You will want to repeat them in your publications, public speaking, flyers, church announcements and anywhere else you can get people to listen. Research and compile them in one place so you, and anyone who helps you with promotional materials, can use them consistently.

"Our school offers an excellent education." (Ho-hum because every school can and will say this.)

"Standardized testing shows that our students grow an average of one and half years for each year they are in school. This means that the longer they are in our school, the further ahead they will be." (Much better since it is specific and verifiable.)

Since spiritual development can't be tested and quantified, use stories and examples. Example: "Three-quarters of our students choose to lead out in daily worships at school."

Here are some ideas for topics you could use.

- Average years above grade-level that your students achieve on the Iowa Assessments (IA)
- Average years of growth as tested on the IA
- Standardized testing results for your "career students" (those who've been in your school three or more years)
- Average SAT, PSAT and/or ACT test scores as compared to those scores for other local schools (public schools have to publish these are they should be available online)
- List of colleges to which your students have been accepted
- Total or average hours of community service provided by your students each year

- The percentage of your students who participate in daily exercise through your PE program and/or sports teams
- The level of participation in fine arts through your music or other programs
- The cost to educate a child at your school (total expenses divided by the number of students enrolled) as compared to the cost of tuition
- The number or percentage of students from your school who are elected to student offices in the next educational level
- The number or percentage of students who choose to spend a year volunteering during their college experience
- The percentage of your alumni who enroll in college
- The percentage of your alumni who graduate from college
- Stories of students volunteering to raise money for good causes outside of your school
- Quotes from students about feeling safe and accepted at school

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