

# Strategies for Leveraging Your National Blue Ribbon School Award

**Annette Jones, Ed.S.**

Assistant Director for School Leadership  
National Catholic Educational Association

**Victor Pellechia, Ed.D.**

Principal, Our Lady of Perpetual Help  
Ellicott City, MD

**Sherilyn R. Moses**

Principal, Dr. Ronald E. McNair Elementary School  
Germantown, MD

**Renee White**

Assistant Superintendent for Enrollment and Marketing  
Office of Catholic Schools, Diocese of Arlington, VA

# Congratulations



# Hit the Ground Running

- First year is important!
- How does this impact your identity? Logo, letterhead, etc.
- What is your marketing plan- promotional items, signage, communication?
- Impact on scheduling- special celebrations, theme for certain events, etc.
- Flexibility, Budget, Enjoy It!



# Re-Presentation/Kick-off

## Ceremony

- Is there a way to bring what is happening here in DC back to your community?
- Re-present award plaque in a way that is meaningful to your school community- invite stakeholders.
- This year should be full of memories for the entire school community.



# Gifts to Celebrate

- Expresses gratitude and promotes achievement
- Pens and Pencils
- Car magnets
- Silicon wrist bands
- T-shirts
- Pins and scarves for teachers
- Tie for principal



# Show Your Appreciation

- This was not a one-person effort!
- Appreciate faculty and staff- special breakfast (blueberry muffins, blueberry jam, etc.)
- Appreciate your students- blue shaved ice, special blue dress-up days, etc.)
- Appreciate your parents, alumni, other stakeholders



# Blue Ribbon “School”

- Pride should be evident in the school building.
- Blue ribbons to hang around school and in doorways
- Door decorating contest- involve students, parents, teachers
- Banners in building and exterior



# Transform Current Events

- Think about school identity-see it through a “Blue” lens
- Bull and Oyster Roast became “Blues” Roast with jazz music, Mardi Gras theme, and New Orleans inspired menu
- Fall Harvest Festival- Fireworks display with blue lights
- Whole school field trip to Orioles game



# National Blue Ribbon Award



# Students

- Popcorn Party
- Extra Recess
- Blue Ribbon Stickers
- Blue Ribbon Pencils



# National Blue Ribbon Award



# Faculty & Staff



- Blue Ribbon T-Shirt
- Blue Ribbon Pins for Lanyard
- Blue Candy  
(gummy bears, M&M's; pixie sticks, gumballs, sixlets)

# Walk of Fame



# Celebrate!



# Raffle

Raffled 4  
\$50.00 Gift  
Cards Donated  
by Local  
Businesses



# Community



- Blue Ribbon Logo on Letterhead and Newsletters
- New Entryway Carpet with Blue Ribbon Emblem
- Blue Ribbons around the School

# Immaculate Heart of Mary School



# St. Louis de Montfort Catholic School



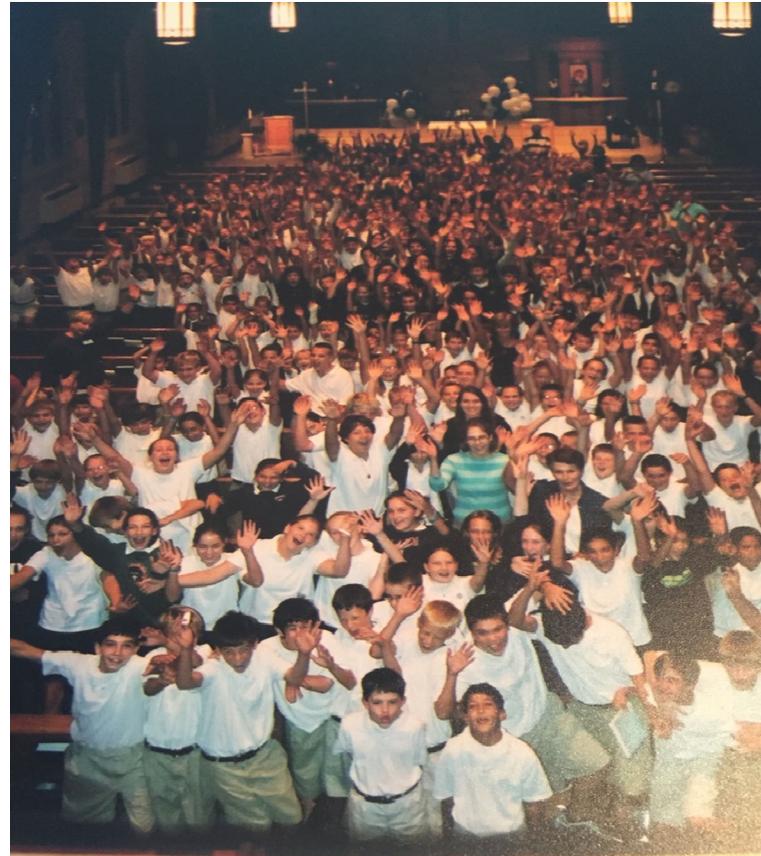
# Build Community



# Celebration: Four NBR Schools



# Celebration: School Community



# Build Community



# State Connections



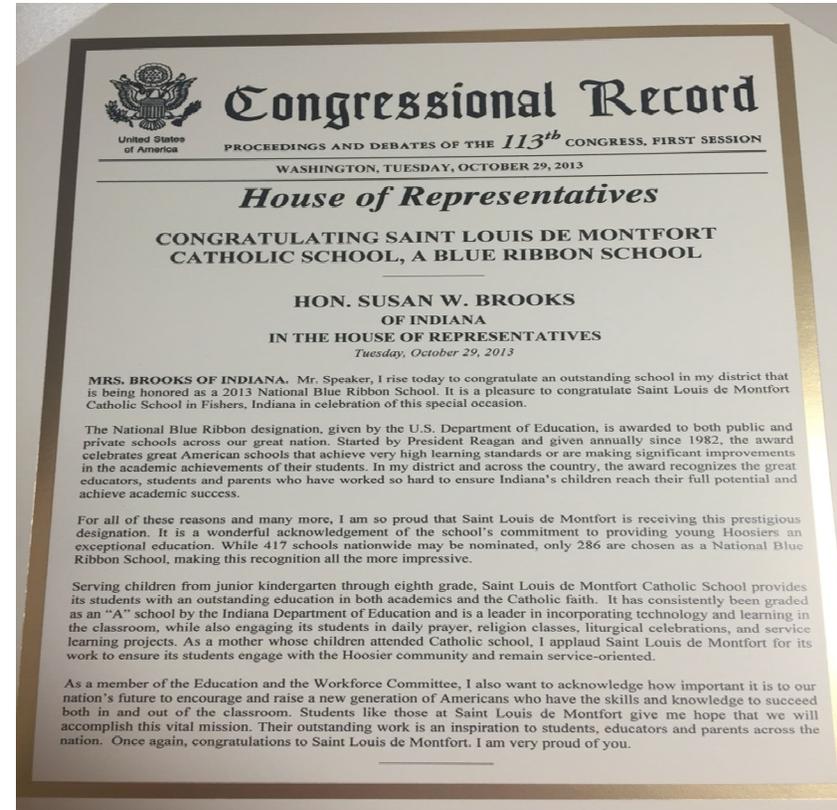
# Team Indiana



# National Connections



# National Connections



# Letter from Arne Duncan



THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION  
WASHINGTON, DC 20202

**IN RECOGNITION OF  
SAINT LOUIS DE MONTFORT CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
FISHERS, INDIANA  
2013 NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL  
September 2013**

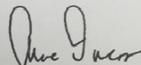
*Congratulations on earning recognition as a 2013 National Blue Ribbon School. The U.S. Department of Education is pleased to acknowledge your efforts to support every student in meeting high academic standards. Your school is an inspiring example of excellence in education.*

*President Obama and I firmly believe that making a world-class education available to every young person is critical if our nation is to meet the challenges of the future. As an exemplary school, you are integral to fulfilling this generational commitment.*

*I commend you for establishing solid educational foundations, setting high standards and expectations, and using data to tailor instruction to students' needs and strengths. Your school is a model for the nation. Thank you for your contributions to helping all students realize their potential and their dreams.*

*I and my colleagues at the U.S. Department of Education look forward to celebrating your accomplishments at the 2013 National Blue Ribbon School awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. Recognition events will be held November 18-19, 2013, at the Omni Shoreham Hotel, 2500 Calvert Street, N.W. Two representatives from your school are invited to attend.*

*Congratulations again on your impressive accomplishments. It is my hope that you will become a beacon for other educators, working with them and sharing the practices that make your school so deserving of this national recognition.*

  
Arne Duncan

# Global Connections



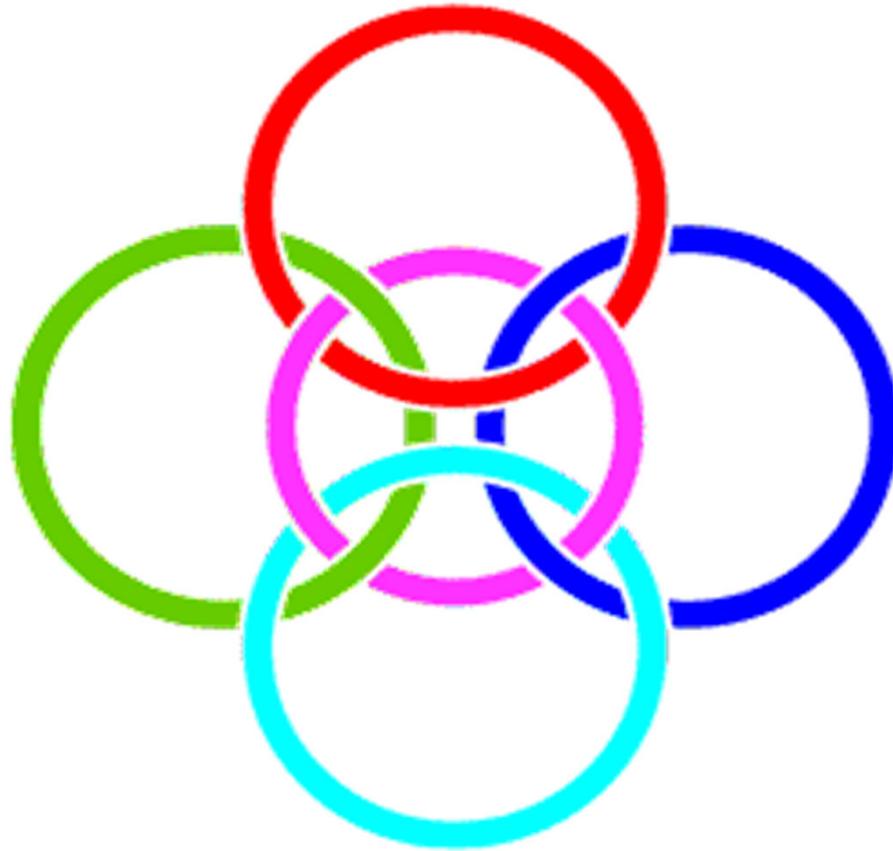
# Global Connections



# Global Connections



# Circle of Influence



SCHOOL

COMMUNITY

STATE

NATIONAL

GLOBAL

# Marketing Your School

So you're a National Blue Ribbon School – now what?



Market Your School as a National Blue Ribbon School

# Identifying Your Identity and Building Your Brand

- A strong brand and identity are the foundational elements of your school's mission.
- Branding is much more than appearances. Creating a clear, consistent message and visual identity for your school is key to your marketing success.
- Your school name, logo and marketing materials are important components that make up your Catholic school's image. Now, the distinction (and emblem) of being a National Blue Ribbon School is part of this brand.

# Your Brand Journey= Self-Examination

- How are we presenting ourselves and talking about ourselves to various audiences?
- Are we consistent in our presentation?
- Are we speaking with one voice across all messages?
- If we put all of our marketing materials together on one table, would they look similar?

# Developing Your Year-Round Marketing Plan

A basic marketing program involves identifying your target audiences, determining what they need and designing strategies to show how your school's programs and benefits meet those needs.

## FOUR STEP PROCESS

# Step 1: Gather Research and Input

- **Assess current marketing efforts** to determine what works and what needs to be improved, expanded or perhaps eliminated.
- **Analyze the situation** through a SWOT analysis
- **Conduct research and ask for input** to determine your school's position in the education marketplace.

## Step 2: Determine Goals and Develop Your Message

- **Set goals and objectives.** Your plan should include one or two specific goals that you're trying to achieve over the next year.
- **Determine your audiences.** Determine what audiences you need to reach to accomplish your goals.
- **Craft key messages.** Determine messages that will resonate with each audience.

# Step 3: Establish Your Strategy

- **Put it all together in a plan.** For each audience, list the tactics you will use to achieve your goals and objectives.
- **Review your plan** to make sure that it's actionable with the people and resources available, that it will help you achieve your goals, and that it will enhance your school's mission.

# Step 4: Evaluate Progress

- As you carry out the plan, **track your results** and compare what actually happened against your original goals and objectives.
- **Plans are living documents that should change and adapt** with the changing needs and resources of the school.

# When Building Your Marketing Plan...

- Announce your earned distinction-  
National Blue Ribbon Award (Include  
qualification requirements and  
statistics.)
- Share what makes your school the  
best (Give examples of YOUR school's  
best practices.)

# Marketing the Good News

- Share the news with your community (Newsletter, Website, Social Media, Publications)
- Formal Press Announcement (Coordinate in conjunction with an event)

# Build an Annual Campaign

- Incorporate it into all existing school events: Assemblies, Open Houses, HSPT, Concerts/Exhibits, Pep Rallies, Graduations
- Create a blog to highlight how your school continues to exhibit its National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence.
- Offer a series of tours and demonstrations to “discover your National Blue Ribbon School”; Invite media and community.
- Create a new school video or look-book that is inspired by the distinction.
- Use it in your advancement efforts! When crafting your messaging to donors, articulate the investment of their potential gifts.

# Marketing the Best Practices

## Remember the “Why” and “How”

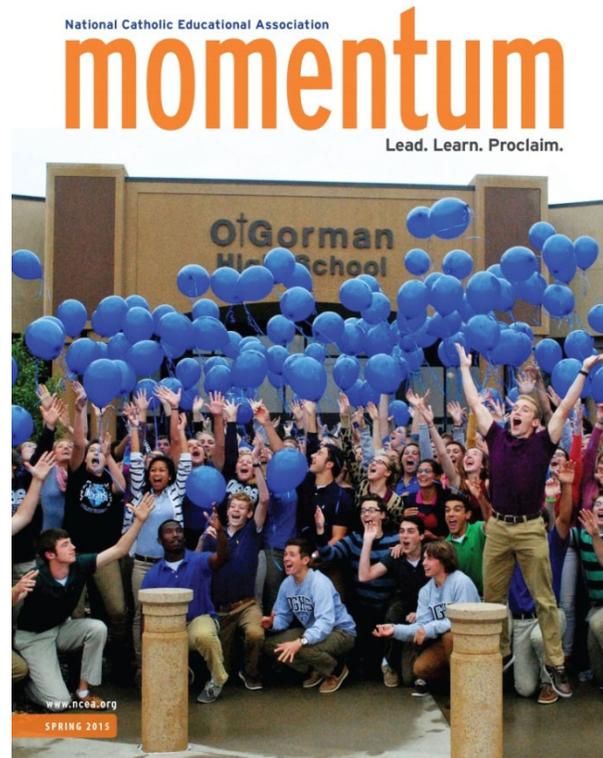
- Why did your school receive the award?
- Why is your school different than the rest?
- Why should families look to you as a choice for education?
- Why are peer schools looking to you as a leader in academics and innovation?

# Marketing the Best Practices

## Show... Don't Tell

- Identify your school's niche area and package it in a new, exciting and meaningful way. *Don't change what you're doing, change how you talk about it.*
- Create a series of presentations showcasing your best practices. *Invite families and teachers from feeder schools and peer schools as well as past, present and prospective families.*

# Don't Forget the Photo Op!



# Closing

Any questions? Please contact us!

Annette Jones, Ed.S. [ajones@ncea.org](mailto:ajones@ncea.org)

Vic Pellechia, Ed.D. [vpellechia@olphschool.org](mailto:vpellechia@olphschool.org)

Sherry Moses [Sherilyn R Moses@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Sherilyn_R_Moses@mcpsmd.org)

Renee White [r.white@arlingtondiocese.org](mailto:r.white@arlingtondiocese.org)

**THANK YOU!**