

### SUMMARY

Parents want to ensure that they are making the best choices for their children. For some families, that might mean a significant investment in independent school education. With many independent school tuitions approaching or surpassing \$50,000 annually, the need for additional fundraising revenue can come as a surprise. The truth is, tuition only makes up 70%-90% of the operating budget, leaving **a gap between the price of tuition and the actual cost of educating each student**. In order to address that gap, schools often solicit Annual Fund donations from their school community. Current parents often represent the constituency with the greatest participation in the Annual Fund, so it's critical to successfully engage this group. A well thought out giving and getting involved program for new parents can help schools maximize their fundraising potential while promoting community engagement and opportunities for volunteerism.

### PURPOSE

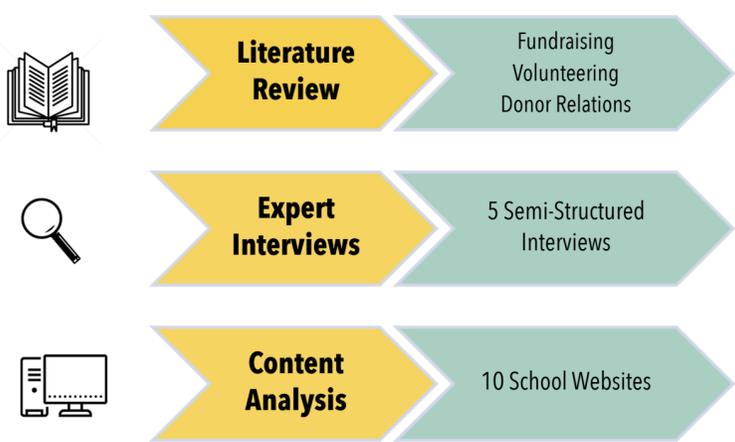
Fundraising will continue to play an important role in the future of the nonprofit sector. Successful strategies for finding, soliciting, and stewarding donors grant organizations access to the philanthropic gifts of time and money that support mission fulfilment. While independent schools aren't the best fit for every student, they do represent 25% of all schools in the US, so ensuring their continued success is critical to the educational landscape of our country.

**The purpose of this paper** is to understand how to best capture and build relationships with new parents to facilitate long-term giving and community involvement in order to ensure a sustainable future for independent schools.

### RESEARCH

1. How can you build successful relationships with new parents?
2. What are the most effective ways to educate parents about philanthropy?
3. How can volunteerism impact philanthropy at independent schools?

### METHODS

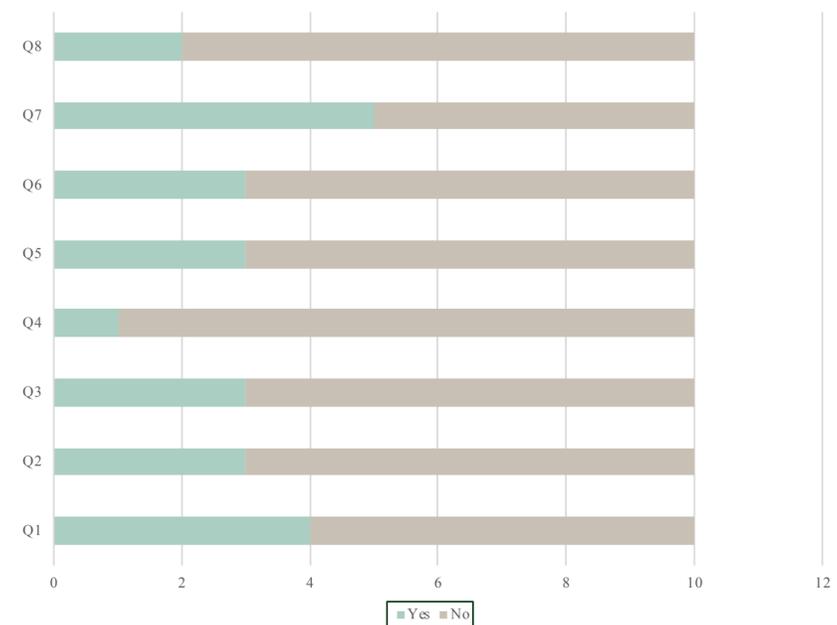


### DATA AND ANALYSIS

#### Expert Interviews

<b>ENGAGEMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help new parents build relationships with staff and other families</li> <li>• Involve new parents in the community</li> </ul>
<b>PROSPECT RESEARCH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get a sense of your parent body and their capacity to give</li> <li>• Concrete numbers help the advancement office and parent volunteers</li> </ul>
<b>SCHOOL CULTURE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embrace a close community and an enthusiastic culture of giving</li> <li>• Help new families feel proud and inspired to give</li> </ul>
<b>VOLUNTEERING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteers are more likely to understand giving</li> <li>• Volunteers are more likely to give</li> </ul>
<b>EDUCATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents are often confused by Annual Giving</li> <li>• Parents want to understand why they are being asked to donate</li> </ul>
<b>SOLICIT WITH SPECIFIC AMOUNTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific amounts make some interviewees hesitate</li> <li>• Some interviewees prefer offering a range amount while others agree that a whole number is more impactful</li> </ul>
<b>EVENTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opinions vary on the types of events that are beneficial for new parents</li> <li>• Opinions vary on which types of events should include fundraising and which should only be good will events</li> </ul>
<b>MEETINGS WITH EVERY FAMILY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some experts feel that having the Head of School meet with every single new family might not always be the best use of his/her time or resources.</li> </ul>

#### Content Analysis



### RESULTS



### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### EVALUATE YOUR SCHOOL'S CAPACITY FOR A PROGRAM

Start small and build up. You want your program to grow, not shrink

#### RESEARCH AND SEGMENT YOUR DONORS

Prospect research can help you better know your community, come up with appropriate ask amounts, and help determine how to use time efficiently

#### FOCUS ON ENGAGEMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS

Encourage and promote school community. Getting to know and understand your parents will help when its time to make the ask

#### PROVIDE COMPELLING AND INFORMATIVE MATERIALS

Help parents understand why its important to donate and make it easy for them to find answers to their questions

#### INVEST IN A VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Volunteers build long lasting relationships, better understand fundraising needs, and are great solicitors

#### SOLICIT STRATEGICALLY

Provide a specific gift amount and be thoughtful about who is doing the asking

### REFERENCES

Colson, H. (2015). *Philanthropy at Independent Schools*. National Association of Independent School.

Sargeant, A., & Shang, J. (2017). *Fundraising Principles and Practice*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Ahern, T., & Joyaux, S. (2007). *Keep your donors: the guide to better communications and stronger relationships*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.