

LA SALLE HIGH SCHOOL

SENIOR PARENT GIFT PROGRAM

THE CONCEPT

The Senior Parent Gift program has been utilized for several years in many independent schools across the nation. It is organized around a special appeal to the parents of the graduating class as a way that these parents can do something special for the school that has done so much for them and their sons and daughters.

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

The Senior Parent Gift Program is organized like a mini-campaign. A chair or co-chairs serve as the leaders supported by the Institutional Advancement Office. A committee of senior parents is recruited. The leaders and members of the committee should be senior parents who are strong supporters of the School and who have leadership gift potential. As they are recruited, the traditional “top down/inside out” solicitation process is followed. Each succeeding chair or co-chairs of the Senior Gift Committee should be members of the Campaign Steering Committee during their year of service.

Ideally this committee is recruited in the spring of their daughter/s or son/s junior year and the solicitation is completed by May of their child’s graduation year. This is important because it allows time to make announcements and recognize volunteers as part of graduation weekend, although it is possible to get a program launched with shorter lead-time given strong leadership and a strong case for support. In a “short launch” situation it is best to get a half dozen lead gifts quickly, then have those donors serve as the committee and have them “challenge” the rest of the senior parents to help them launch this program.

PURPOSE AND GOAL

It is important to have the volunteer leadership select a project that they can support with great enthusiasm; it is equally important that the project be something that makes sense for La Salle at the time. This is usually accomplished best in the process of recruiting the chair or co-chairs at which time La Salle can give some “direction” and the volunteer leaders buy into it.

Projects that work best are things having to do with the plant because parents like the idea of leaving something tangible to the school; however, there has also been very good success with named funds (The Class of XXXX Fund) for financial aid and faculty support.

Setting a goal each year should follow the same process as with any campaign. Senior parents should be evaluated as to gift potential in the context of a campaign gift, not annual giving. This should be a “give until you feel good” approach. Three-year pledges should be standard, although many will pay off their commitment during senior year.

INTEGRATING WITH A CAMPAIGN

The Senior Parent Gift Program is a wonderful vehicle for integrating parents into a capital campaign. Each year the senior parents are organized into a mini-campaign that is a part of the larger campaign with a project that has been identified as a campaign goal. Once the campaign ends, the Senior Gift Program continues year after year. The parents of the younger classes continue to be solicited for annual giving.

For a three-year campaign, three senior classes are included. It is also possible to include one or two other classes whose time at La Salle exceeds the life of the campaign as a way to help reach the overall campaign goal if that is a problem.

It usually is counter productive to employ a “beat last year’s class total” challenge because the pool each year is small and one or two families can skew the picture one year setting succeeding classes at a great disadvantage. The project should be chosen and the goal should be set on a class-by-class basis.

It is not unusual for this program to raise \$250,000 or even \$500,000 in a year depending, of course, on the resources of a given class. It is important, as with any campaign, to set a realistic goal that will assure success.

TIMELINE

Select Senior Gift Committee Chair/Co-Chair	Spring of Children’s Junior Year
Establish Senior Gift Committee (Request Volunteers)	Spring/Summer before Children’s Senior Year
Select Senior Gift Project	Spring/Summer before Children’s Senior Year
Introduction Letter from Chair/Co-Chairs	September-Senior Year
Senior Parent Leadership Gifts Secured	September–November
Chair/Co-Chairs Speak at Parent’s Day	October Senior Year
Peer Solicitations	October–May

For more information on the Senior Gift Program or if you would like to set up meeting with the Advancement Office, please feel free to contact Paul Otero at 305-854-2334 ext, 116 or on the net at; paul.otero@lasallehighschool.com.