

Using Data to Measure and Achieve Advancement Goals

Data is a valuable tool in your school's advancement toolkit. It empowers your team to look back at its past performance, keep track of current progress, and set realistic and attainable goals. Smart advancement teams know that what they measure is what grows. Regular reporting keeps them on track.

Choose the Data to Measure

Data should drive all of your school's advancement efforts. Past data can help your team make reasonable and attainable fundraising goals and help you identify your next major, leadership, or transformational gift giver. Regular review of the current year's performance can help your team stay on track to achieve its advancement goals.

When preparing an advancement plan for the year, advancement teams should focus on two primary areas: income from revenue sources and the balances of their unrestricted, temporarily restricted, and permanently restricted funds.

Income from Revenue Sources

In any given year, five sources provide most of a school's revenue. Net tuition and fees from student enrollment is one major source of income. Your school's advancement team should regularly monitor revenue tuition and fees generated for your school.

EScale Tip: What we measure is what grows. Getting clear on the key drivers of your advancement program can help you bring in more money.

Parish investments are another source of income. This is the money your diocese and members of your parish or affiliated congregation contribute to your school.

Your advancement team's efforts generate revenue through fund development, fundraising net revenue, and capital campaigns. Annual and lead annual supporters contribute to these revenue streams, as do major, leadership, and transformational gift givers.

Fund Balances

The five primary sources of revenue generate income for three different types of funds. Your school's unrestricted fund provides support for your academic program, program support and staff, and occupancy expenses. Its temporarily restricted fund bankrolls special projects, such as building improvements. Your school's permanently restricted fund supports your school's endowment and scholarship programs.

By understanding your school's revenue sources and having a firm grasp of where your fund balances stand, you can create a reasonable and attainable plan for growth in the next fiscal year. Regular reporting on the progress your advancement team is making increases the chances they will achieve their goals.

Create Reports

Once your advancement team has compiled its revenue and fund data, it is time to create yearly and quarterly forecasts and a dashboard for a weekly report.

The Yearly and Quarterly Forecast

Using past data as their guide, your advancement staff should forecast the revenue they will collect over the next year. It is not realistic to expect your advancement team to generate the same amount of revenue each month. Most schools experience a drop in revenue during the summer months in Q2 and Q3, then a flood of support as the tax year ends in December. Events and your marketing calendar can also affect your school's revenue streams. Work revenue goals into your yearly plan, breaking down your goals by quarter and then by month.

Escale Tip: The end of the tax year is a popular time for supporters to give to your school. Anticipate year-end giving in your annual marketing plan.

Q2 FYE 2022												
July				August					September			
5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27
15.00% of Annual Revenue Goal												
4.00%				5.00%					6.00%			
1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	2.00%	2.00%

The Weekly Report

Once your advancement team has established your yearly and quarterly forecast and your monthly targets, they can create targets for each week of the month. They can then add these weekly goals to a data dashboard that tracks their progress toward each goal.

Review Data Regularly

Reporting is an essential component of any successful advancement program. It is not enough to collect data on your giving programs. Your team must regularly use the data to confirm they are on target for meeting their goals and to change course if needed.

Useful, actionable reports give your team a look at its performance year-to-date against its annual goal as well as the performance of several key success drivers.

Numbers v. Goals	Date	YTD Actual	YTD Goal	Annual Goal
Registered PKs				
Registered Ks				
Registered 7s				
Registered 9s				
Donors				
Annual Fund Dollars				
Restricted Dollars				
Foundation Gifts Dollars				
Event Net Revenue				
Key Success Drivers				
Social Media Followers				
Social Media Likes				
Social Media Shares				
Event Registrants				
PKs Applications				
Ks Applications				
7s Applications				
9s Applications				
Moves Management				

Numbers versus Goals

Your advancement team should review its weekly progress toward nine performance indicators. Depending on the students you serve, four of these indicators could be pre-K, Kindergarten, seventh grade, and ninth grade enrollment. These numbers are useful in understanding if your net tuition and fees revenue stream is on track to meet your goal.

Donors and dollars toward your annual, restricted, and foundation funds should also be reviewed weekly. Event net revenue is a subset of the fund development revenue stream. The fundraising success of your school's events should also be in the weekly report.

Key Drivers

Nine key drivers advance the nine performance indicators. Your school's social media presence can help drive annual and lead annual giving, so your school should establish goals for follows, likes, and shares on its social media pages. Event registrations are a key driver and predictor of

event success. Similarly, applications for your academic programs drive the number of enrolled students. Finally, your advancement team should track the progress of major, leadership, and transformational supporters as you guide them through the moves management process.

Closing Thoughts

Automated reporting, sometimes called dashboarding, from your school's data systems can make generating the reports effortless. Maintaining accurate databases ensures the data your team reviews is correct and actionable. By reviewing your school's revenue numbers weekly, your advancement team can stay on track to meet its quarterly and annual growth goals.