

# How to Shift the Needle towards a more Philanthropic Culture in Your School Community

What to look for in terms of culture?

How to plan for the new generation of philanthropy?



# Why this topic?

In most schools today, tuition can help to provide a student with a robust independent school education though the business model is flawed.

What tuition can't do is build buildings and grow endowment.

*Only philanthropy can do that!*

# What does a culture of philanthropy look like?

- Recruit Board members who make philanthropy a top priority
- The team of the HOS and key Board members must be fully engaged on the common goal



In a culture of Philanthropy, development is aligned with mission

**This is Critical to Success**

*Philanthropy is closely tied to vision, mission and strategic plan*

The school's vision – “What you seek?”

The school's mission – “What you stand for?”

The school's strategic plan – “What is your strategic direction?”

# Rating the Culture of Philanthropy

## Rating the culture of philanthropy

1 = needs work; weak

2 = okay, average

3 = stellar, pleased with efforts and attitude

SCORE

1) The Head of School and the board chair actively support the Development Office.	
2) One hundred percent of the board supports the program at a meaningful level.	
3) New parents are not surprised by the first request for the Annual Fund.	
4) Faculty and staff give to the annual fund at or close to 100%.	
5) There is a high level of participation in the development program.	
6) Faculty and staff philanthropy is encouraged.	
7) Donors are well-stewarded and thanked often.	
8) Alumni come back and give back.	
9) Parent volunteers agree to solicit and agree to be trained.	
10) Campaigns or special projects generate excitement and pride.	
11) The Admission Office talks easily about the role of philanthropy.	
12) The Development Staff is well-known throughout the school, and the office and program are viewed favorably.	

TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_

# Leadership – in a culture or philanthropy.

Head of School knows his or her role in the development effort and uses every opportunity to inform internal and external audiences about the importance of philanthropy to the school.

- Does not apologize for the time spent on philanthropic endeavors
- Understands that staffing in development is based on capacity, not the “optics” of the community
- Sets annual goals in terms of development efforts
- Engages Board and development professionals in those goals



# Philanthropic Success Requires

- A well designed Strategic Plan
  - Vision is the Power and Planning is the Tool.
- Clear prioritization on the funding initiative(s) from Strategic Plan
- *A reality check* on your staffing and message
- A high-impact board of trustees
- A HOS that encourages the school to be “on the go” with new goals and constant growth

# In a culture of Philanthropy...

The development staff and the administration are proactive in explaining the school's fundraising priorities to internal and external audiences and are **unapologetic** in doing so.



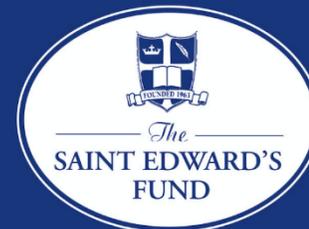
## *Annual expenses rely on* ANNUAL GIVING

As with all non-profit schools, the Annual Giving program at Saint Edward's provides an essential component to our operating budget. The Saint Edward's Fund relies on the generosity of the School community so that the Fund can support all of our student programs, library resources, professional development, fine arts programs, athletics and so much more.



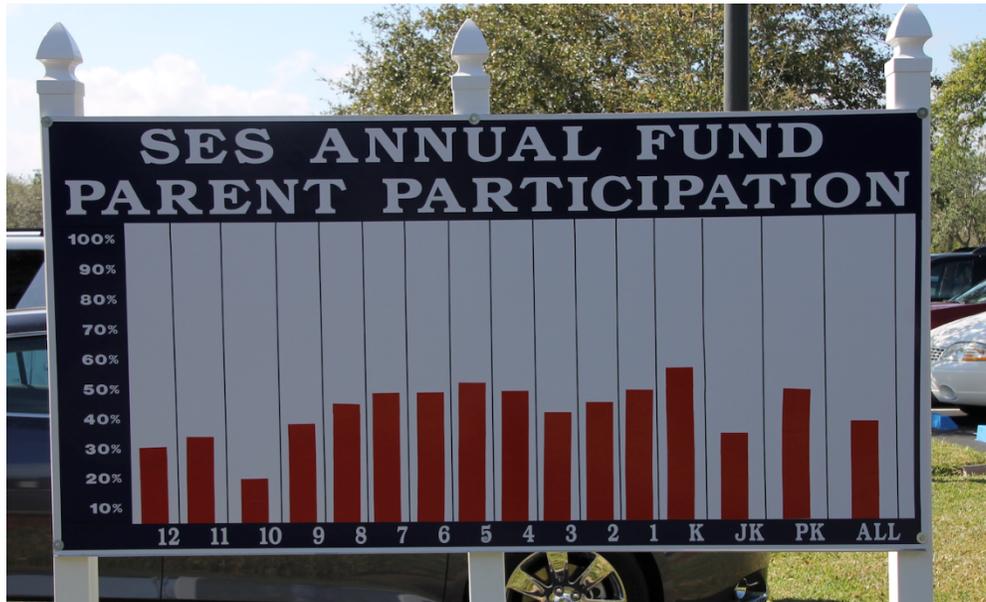
*"The Saint Edward's Fund supports all the reasons you chose Saint Edward's School for your family. The impact of the people, programs, opportunities and facilities is unmistakable. In a world that is continuously changing, our mission remains constant, promoting life-long learning by developing critical thinking, collaboration and a thorough preparation for college and the future. The Fund helps us deliver our mission every day."*

- Michael Mersky, Head of School



# Giving Assessments

Internal: professional staff and board



External: parents and alumni

# Show Pride in Accomplishments

The School is genuinely proud of its fundraising accomplishments and expects to continue a pattern of ever-increasing fundraising success, believing that they are **worthy of gifts at the highest level.**

Use strategic plan to drive initiatives

Use needs of students and faculty as largest expenses for the school

# *Dreams* encourage giving before needs....

- Donors like bold, visionary and heroic programs that make a difference – advocate for those programs.
- Alumni don't want to hear that they owe you for an experience they had previously – they need to hear your vision and your story. *How you change lives.* Allow them to be proud of you and want to support your efforts.
- The reality that tuition doesn't cover the full cost is a tired, unexciting and overused message in annual giving. Covering the “gap” rarely creates strong philanthropic partnerships – however, explain the flawed business model.



# The Annual Fund

Don't underestimate its power



# Annual Fund is the foundation of a solid fundraising program and is the single most important development initiative at any school

It has several functions:

- Acquire new donors
- Upgrade current donors
- Identify volunteer leadership
- Identify major donor prospects
- Provide a training ground for “givers and getters”

*An opportunity to tell your school's story every year*



# Annual Fund Statistics

- ❑ Parent Participation in giving ranges from 36% to 100%
- ❑ Board of Trustee typically provides 27% of the annual fund goal
- ❑ As of 2018, retention of annual fund donors was just under 47%, often higher than the acquisition of new donors

*Annual Fund provides parents, alumni and friends with opportunities to support the school and become involved in programs.*

# Annual Fund Message

Powerful messaging on “Why give to the annual fund?”

*“The sense of momentum at X school is palpable. We are pursuing a bold vision for the future of teaching and learning. We must be bold and think big. Your gift to the Annual Fund is critical to this effort. “*

*A Head of School’s message:*

*“Annual fund dollars allow me to say “yes” to innovative and exciting programming, to send the Robotics team to a regional competition when the dollars were not in the budget. Annual fund gifts make this happen.”*

## Campaigns – good reasons to consider one

- Fund strategic priorities
- Capture an opportunity
- Rally the community
- Raise sights for the future – (e.g. - campus master plan)



## Campaigns – bad reasons to consider one

- Panic over resources and financial stability
- Desperation
- Deferred maintenance
- No real story!



# Campaign Case for Support

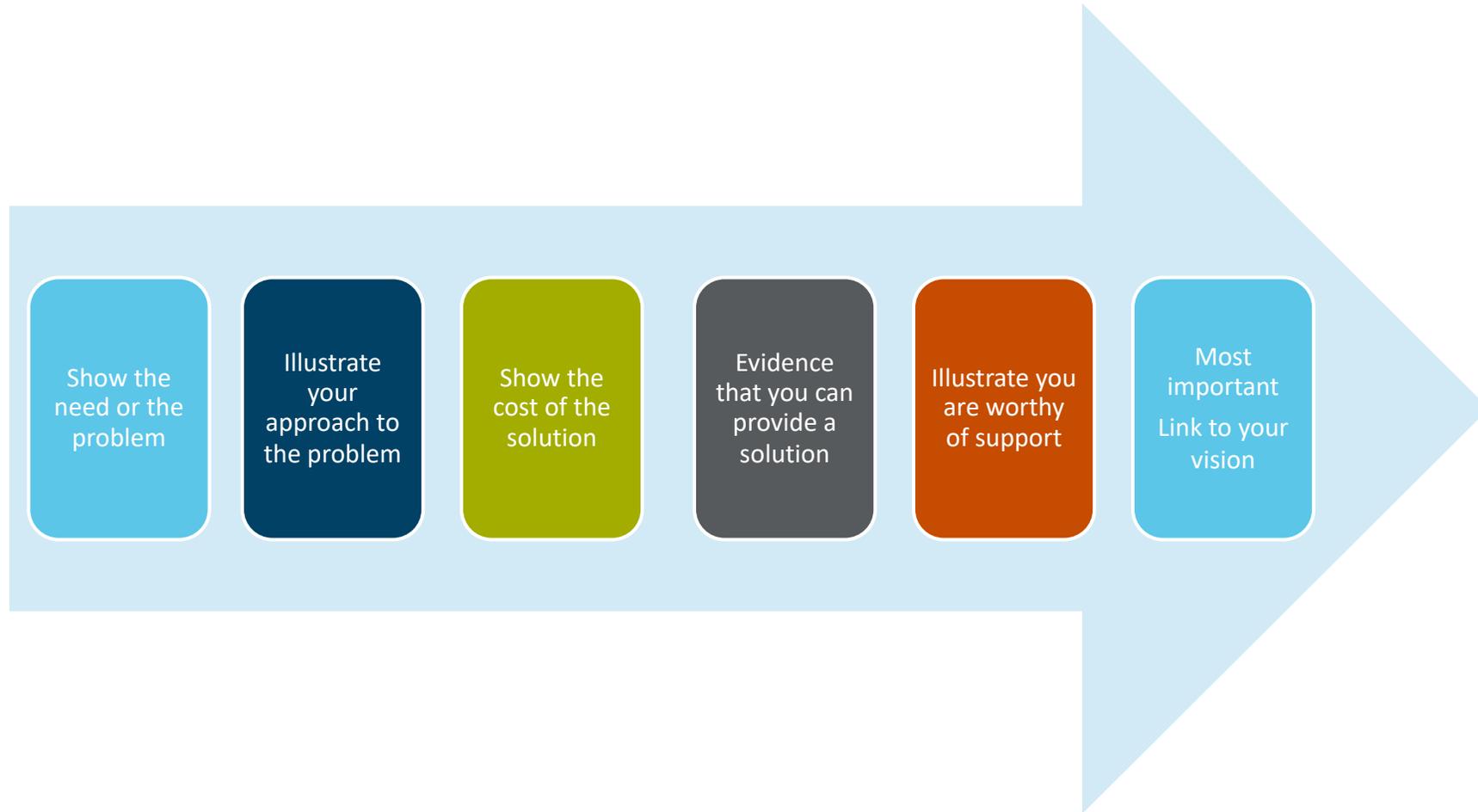
Case deeply tied to mission, vision, strategic plan

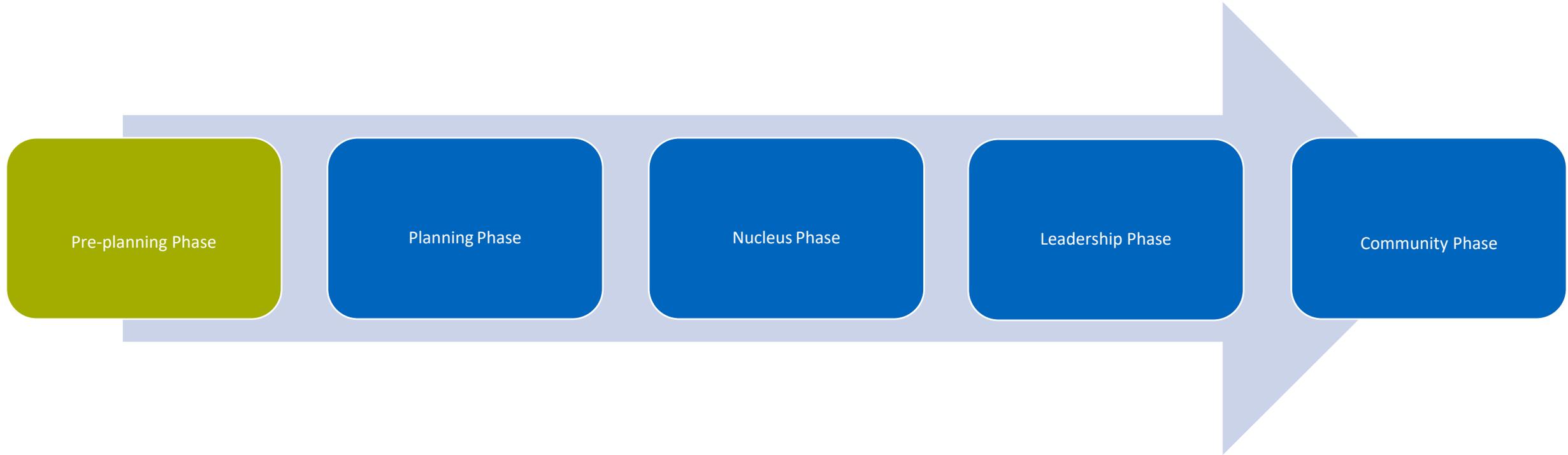
- Vision: What do we seek?
- Mission: What do we stand for?
- Strategic Plan: What is your strategic direction?

Look to the future. See inspiring opportunities.

*Illustrate what parts of the VISION can only be funded through philanthropy.*

# Elements of the Prospectus/Case





Feasibility study is critical to any campaign well prior to launch

# Trends in Philanthropy

- Top-heavy campaigns – more so than ever!
- Donors continue to narrow their focus
- “Big ideas” drive transformational philanthropy
- Sustainability strategies and business plans essential
- Quality of leadership matters to donors – *people give to people*
- Impact and urgency critical: Get the case right!



# Message to your Board of Trustees

- You are a vital extension of the school's reach near and far
- You want to be here
- Others look to you and take their cues from you
- Embody today's Saint Edward's School – and tomorrow's
- Celebrate and Advocate