Holding a Lottery: Best Practices

Questions

- What are your goals for your Lottery Day? (E.g. large turnout, attendees students vs. adults, etc.)
- Do you plan to have an electronic or manual lottery?
- How will you manage preferences?
- How do you define ‘sibling’? And how have you communicated that to applicants/staff?
- Where and when will you hold your lottery?
- Who will be your officials? (often Board member and 1 unaffiliated with school; need to get on calendars)

Best Practices

Before Lottery Day

- Be organized
- Talk to other schools about how they conducted their lotteries – lessons learned, both good and bad
- Observe other school lotteries. Note: Consider volunteering to assist
- Create a detailed event plan for the day – Activities, Timing, Resources (equipment, forms, people), Ownership, Forms, Dependencies, Plan B
- Create a script for the day
- Create a ‘Lottery and Admissions’ binder – SOP for future years
- Be ready to send out results that day (email, letter)
- Consider putting lottery details on your school answering machine message. Definitely have them on your website.
- Practice all aspects several times, including a literal run through

On Lottery Day

- Be organized
- Print copies of all documents before, during and after your Lottery
- Maintain ‘golden copies’
- Be transparent, and sensitive to all attendees
- Be prepared for the press, and a range of emotions from families

After your Lottery

- Conduct a post mortem right away. What worked well, what did not, what would you change and how?
  Keep notes and update your ‘Lottery & Admissions’ binder