

Enrollment Marketing

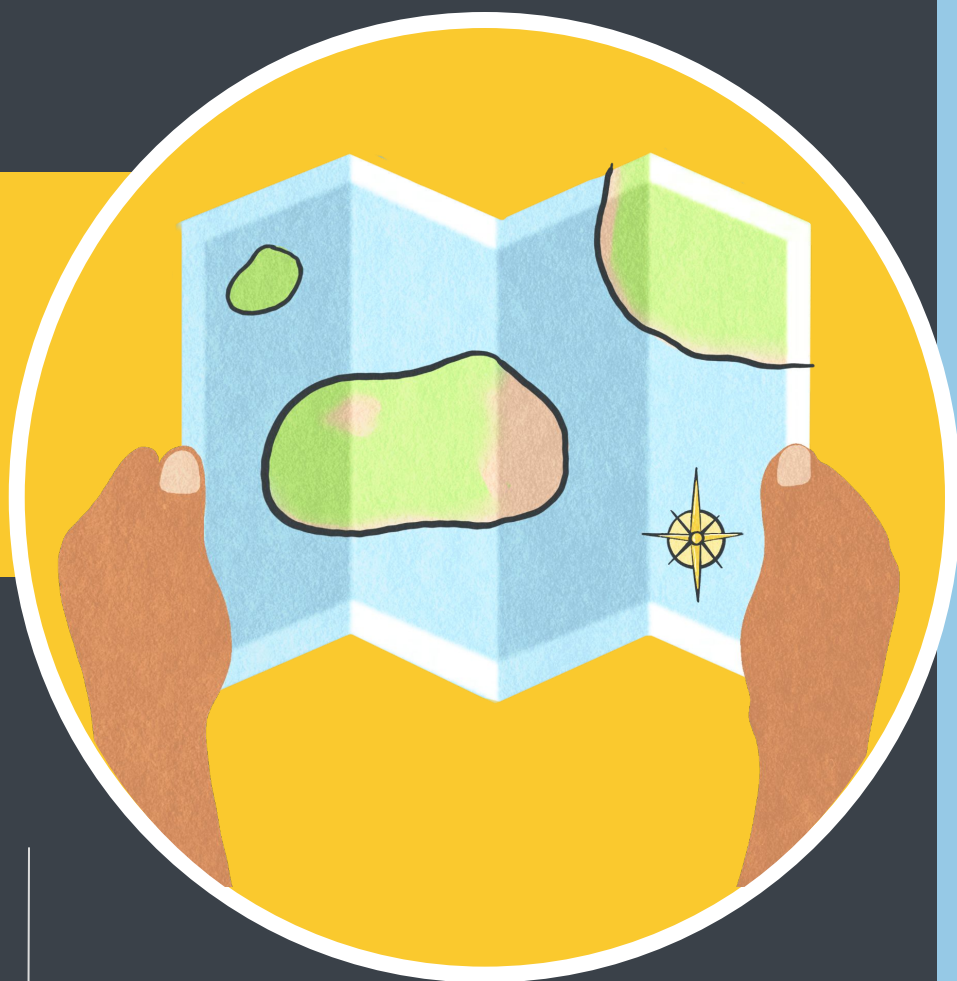
Customer Journey Mapping

5 Phases Families Travel in Selecting and Staying in Their Schools

In 2023, school districts nationwide reported losing more than one million students since the 2019-2020 school year. Fourteen states introduced or passed legislation tied to school choice in 2022. All 50 states have some sort of school choice legislation, ranging from open enrollment public schools, charter schools, or voucher programs.

Most states tie school funding to enrollment or attendance. The consequences of decreasing or unstable enrollment include program sunsetting, school closures, layoffs, and dilapidating facilities.

With an Enrollment Marketing Plan, a school district can systematically and strategically address student recruitment and retention.



About Customer Journey Mapping

Marketing has shifted from a traditional where a business primarily focuses on creating awareness about its brand to a model where businesses shepherd customers through the selection experience and into brand advocates. To understand this process and leverage for a district's marketing plan, administrators should map the journeys of their families during the enrollment process, identifying touchpoints, gaps, and process improvement areas.

Enrollment Marketing

Student Enrollment Customer Journey

There are five phases a customer must go through in selecting and remaining enrolled in a school: Awareness, Research, Selection, Attending, and Advocating. Schools and districts can engage with families in different ways with different information as they move through the phases.

In setting up an enrollment marketing plan, a school or district will consider the journey their families take, identify the touchpoints, and evaluate the necessary actions both the customer and the internal staff must take to convert prospective students into actual students.

Awareness

The experience a family has when they first learn about a school as an option. A new family moving into a neighborhood could learn about the schools in the home buying process. Other venues for Awareness include advertising, word of mouth, social media, and online school review sites.

Knowledge

Once a family is aware of school option, they will begin researching and evaluating. This typically looks like visiting websites, downloading materials, actively engaging in friend or neighborhood groups, and visiting with school or district staff. School selection probably involves multiple persons in a family, which means their research processes and touchpoints will most likely vary.

Selection

When it comes to selecting a school, families need to make a specific commitment(s), including completing an application or registration form, paying tuition fees, or enrolling in specific courses or programs. In some situations, schools or districts manage their own selection process in evaluating students for eligibility. Schools should consider the easability of this phase to create a positive customer experience.

Attendance

After a student enrolls in a school, the next phase is actually attending and participating in the school. Research shows student onboarding can be a critical step for the learner as well as the family members. First impressions matter a great deal in overall satisfaction and retention.

Advocacy

Ultimately, every school wants to serve a community of advocates. This looks like families who actively and openly support their school by supporting it in their peer groups and in public spaces. A school advocate is a family who votes for school elections and tells their friends to vote "yes" as well. They will post positive reviews on school websites and encourage neighbors to enroll their children in the school.



How to Use This Workbook

Understanding your customer experience is an essential part of enrollment marketing. Go through the phases outlined on this page in the following pages. You can complete this exercise with the current state of your customer's journey, based on the actions and strategies you currently have in place. Once you have completed pages 3-7, consider specific customers to your school and complete the mapping exercise on page 8. Finally, conduct a SWOT analysis to identify strategies and action steps.



Awareness

The points when your prospective student’s family becomes aware of your school(s) as an option.

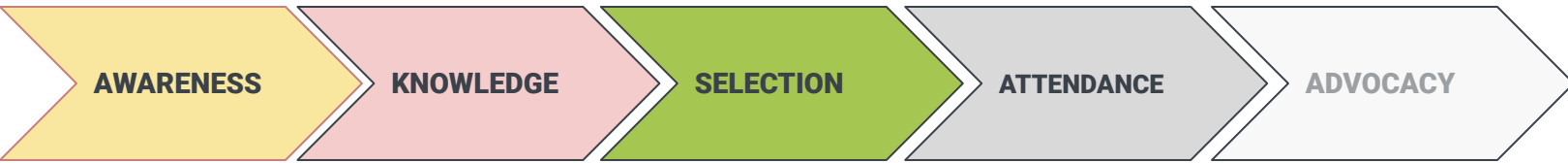
<p>Actions What does the family do in this phase?</p>	
<p>Touchpoints What part(s) of your school or district do your families interact with?</p>	
<p>Questions What questions do your families have?</p>	
<p>Feelings How do your families feel during this phase?</p>	
<p>Existing Strategies What existing strategies or systems does your district have in place for this phase of work?</p>	
<p>Ownership What individual, department, or team is currently responsible for this phase in your district?</p>	
<p>Opportunities What are some ways you could improve customer experience in this phase?</p>	



Knowledge

When family members search for answers and information concerning your school that will lead to a decision.

<p>Actions What does the family do in this phase?</p>	
<p>Touchpoints What part(s) of your school or district do your families interact with?</p>	
<p>Questions What questions do your families have?</p>	
<p>Feelings How do your families feel during this phase?</p>	
<p>Existing Strategies What existing strategies or systems does your district have in place for this phase of work?</p>	
<p>Ownership What individual, department, or team is currently responsible for this phase in your district?</p>	
<p>Opportunities What are some ways you could improve customer experience in this phase?</p>	



Selection

The process for enrollment and registration into your school.

<p>Actions What does the family do in this phase?</p>	
<p>Touchpoints What part(s) of your school or district do your families interact with?</p>	
<p>Questions What questions do your families have?</p>	
<p>Feelings How do your families feel during this phase?</p>	
<p>Existing Strategies What existing strategies or systems does your district have in place for this phase of work?</p>	
<p>Ownership What individual, department, or team is currently responsible for this phase in your district?</p>	
<p>Opportunities What are some ways you could improve customer experience in this phase?</p>	



Attendance

Actively attending school in your district.

<p>Actions What does the family do in this phase?</p>	
<p>Touchpoints What part(s) of your school or district do your families interact with?</p>	
<p>Questions What questions do your families have?</p>	
<p>Feelings How do your families feel during this phase?</p>	
<p>Existing Strategies What existing strategies or systems does your district have in place for this phase of work?</p>	
<p>Ownership What individual, department, or team is currently responsible for this phase in your district?</p>	
<p>Opportunities What are some ways you could improve customer experience in this phase?</p>	



Advocacy

Actively and publicly supporting your school(s), encouraging others to enroll.

<p>Actions What does the family do in this phase?</p>	
<p>Touchpoints What part(s) of your school or district do your families interact with?</p>	
<p>Questions What questions do your families have?</p>	
<p>Feelings How do your families feel during this phase?</p>	
<p>Existing Strategies What existing strategies or systems does your district have in place for this phase of work?</p>	
<p>Ownership What individual, department, or team is currently responsible for this phase in your district?</p>	
<p>Opportunities What are some ways you could improve customer experience in this phase?</p>	

Map Your Customers

After you have considered the touchpoints your customers experience in their journey, it's time to consider specific families enrolled in your school system and place them in the Journey Map (laid out below in five columns). Ideally, you would have conducted surveys and focus groups to inform these decisions based on data for a representative sample. But the exercise can be done based on your current knowledge and relationships. Make sure you have "customers" in every area to make your strategy specific and personal.

Consider doing this activity digitally on a Jamboard or Trello board or with a whiteboard or chart paper, utilizing post it notes.

Once you have an accurate representation mapped (don't feel like you need to map all 10,000 students in your district), take time to consider what actions you can take to move customers through the journey map (see questions in the blue box).

Questions After Mapping Customers

- How can we support Advocates to improve the experience of others?
- How can we turn Attendees into Advocates?
- How can we streamline the Selection process?
- What resources or experiences can we create to inform those seeking Knowledge into Selection?
- How can we make eligible families aware of our schools and district?

Mapping Your Customers

Awareness	Knowledge	Selection	Attendance	Advocacy
<p>Look Fors: Does not know your school or district is an option for their students but is eligible for enrollment.</p>	<p>Look Fors: Knows they are eligible to enroll their student(s) into your school. Looking for information about your school to inform their decision.</p>	<p>Look Fors: Enrolled or is in the process of enrolling their student(s) into your school or district.</p>	<p>Look Fors: Enrolled in your school or district. Could choose to leave their school.</p>	<p>Look Fors: Advocate on behalf of your school or district, including providing positive testimonials to other families. Would not leave your school under the current conditions.</p>

SWOT Analysis

Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats

	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
I N T E R N A L	S	W
E X T E R N A L	O	T



**Work with a Partner
Who Knows Schools and
Business.**

Create Your Enrollment Marketing Plan with Education Elements

At Education Elements, we're a company of educators who work with educational institutions as a private company. Enrollment marketing is a business function that needs to be adapted to meet the public school system. We're uniquely qualified to work with school districts on this topic based on our national footprint and ability to work in business and schools.

Our work supports school districts through:

- Strategy and Change Management
- Facilitation and Execution
- Coaching and Capacity Building

1.1 million	Fewer students in U.S. public schools from 2019 to 2022
14 states	In 2022, 14 states passed or introduced school choice legislation to make school enrollment more competitive.

Our Approach to Co-Creating an Enrollment Marketing Plan

Plan and Align - Kickoff	Plan and Align - Community Engagement	Foundations - Strategic Direction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project teaming • Enrollment offering Inventory • Project outline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy interviews • Survey • Marketing and Communications Audit • Competitor Research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory of action and guiding principles • Value proposition • Customer journey, customer profiles • Goal setting
Design - Deliverable Creation	Launch - Activate	Implement, Reflect, and Iterate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgeting • Creative brief • Marketing toolkit • Piloting and revising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch campaign • Milestone monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dashboard monitoring • Campaign and decision making alignment