

Building a Case for Support

Building a case for support helps your school in two important ways. At a macro level, it helps the process of creating a vibrant culture of philanthropy within the school community. And at a micro level, it helps your school write effective grant proposals.

The way you build a case for support for your school is similar in logic to the way you write a positioning statement for your school.

Building a case for support validates the extreme importance of creating exceptional communications. How people perceive your school and its mission defines your reality.

What is a Case for Support?

This is your opportunity to explain why it makes good sense to support your school. Discuss where your school has been, where your school is going, and how all of this relates to the school's mission. Describe how your efforts benefit the community and do it in a way that perpetuates positive thought.

What Do I Include?

It is imperative you explain why your constituents should invest time, energy, and money to your school. It is equally important to include compelling words that express how educating mind, heart, and spirit makes a difference in the world.

Why Do You Need a Case for Support?

It is essential that you position your school properly in the school community in a way that your constituents clearly understand and quickly identify value with the needs of your mission. This ensures complete understanding of the needs, priorities, and plans of your school.

Below are other reasons supporting the need of building a case for support:

- It helps make certain that everyone in your school understands where you are going and ensures everyone is conveying the same message.
- It creates a contagious enthusiasm that spreads positive thought and replicates success throughout your school
- It provides a useful, flexible tool that is a basis for all development and campaign communications.
- It provides your school the opportunity to resolve outstanding issues, overcome obstacles, and make all necessary decisions.

What Do You Include in the Case for Support?

A good case for support includes:

- Table of contents (if your document is larger than five pages)
- Executive summary (no longer than one page)
 - Clearly, concisely, and convincingly explain your proposed use of the funding and how it solves the needs of your school.
- Section (with a unique and relevant theme) addressing why it makes good sense to support your school. It includes the vision and mission of your school — what you do, how you do it, and why you do it better.

- Where you've been, where you've come, where you're going, and what you need to get there
 - Highlight your accomplishments and the difference you have made in the community
 - Discuss your existing fundraising program or campaigns (already launched) that are fulfilling the goals of your school
 - Stress that all of your funding is need-driven
- The strengths of your school — administrative, financial, programmatic, and staffing capacity available to execute projects
- Closing summary with a compelling call for support

What are the Physical Attributes of a Case for Support?

Depending upon the guidelines, your case for support should be between two and five pages in length. Appropriate formats include stapled, bound, spiraled, and web-based. You can use Microsoft Word to create professionally designed documents in-house. Your case for support can include graphics and visual illustrations but it is not necessary. Your case for support must be easy to photocopy.

Invest quality time in creating it and reap the benefits of using it for multiple purposes. It is vital that you share your case for support with everyone. Make certain everybody in your school understands where you're going and what you need to get there. Doing so creates a contagious enthusiasm that spreads positive thought and replicates success.