

PRIORITY PARENT



FANS IN THE STANDS



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction: Uniting the body of Christ around the local school	3
Understanding the essential networks	4-5
Building a Priority Parent Network around the school	6
Priority Parent Network: Your Job	7-8
Pray	9
Pray strategies	10
Participate	11
Promote	12
Provision	13-14
www.firstpriority.club	15

2015 The information found in this and other guides provided by First Priority of America are the property of First Priority of America, Inc. and require a covenant relationship with FPOA to use the content, name, and logo(s). For more information about starting a First Priority movement in your community, contact FPOA at one of the locations below:



First Priority of America

P.O. Box 473 Brentwood, TN 37027

888-808-FPOA (3762)

www.firstpriority.club

admin@fpoa.org

UNITING THE BODY OF CHRIST AROUND THE LOCAL SCHOOL

WHAT IS FIRST PRIORITY?

We do not need to tell anyone that our nation is in a crisis. We have been deceived by the great deceiver who took something that was meant for good and twisted it to mean something else. Our founding fathers wrote in the Constitution about separation between Church and State to protect people from the government establishing a church. Our culture has used it to remove God from our public debate and have taken all references to God and the Ten Commandments out of our schools. Now, our culture has no moral foundation so we have a culture that is defined by Hollywood and the Supreme Court. We have babies having babies. We have kids killing each other. The list goes on and on. The hopelessness of students is shocking. These are eye-opening statistics that need to get the Church's attention:

Every day in America:

- 5 children are killed by abuse or neglect
- 5 children or teens commit suicide
- 186 children are arrested for violent offenses
- 4,133 are arrested in total
- 386 are arrested for drug offenses
- 3,312 high school students drop out
- 18,493 public school students are suspended

(Numbers are from the Children's Defense Fund website: www.childrensdefense.org. Children are ages 5 - 17.)

While the hopelessness of students is shocking, it is not surprising. The solution is spiritual! Lost people act lost



because they are lost! You cannot take a pig out of the mud unless the mud is taken out of the pig. It is the nature that has to be changed. Our schools and our communities do not need more programs to deal with the symptoms; we need to deal with the heart. The heart is changed through a relationship with Jesus. Our country, our communities, and our schools need to hear the good news of Jesus. He can change the heart. We keep trying to change people and clean them up, but that is the job of the Holy Spirit of God. Our job is to share the good news with them.

For "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace."

Romans 10:13-15

First Priority wants to see the Hope of Christ in every student. We do that by uniting the local body of Christ with a plan of action to influence the school with the gospel. First Priority gives Christian students a specific, manageable, and focused opportunity to put their faith and love to work where they live every day: at school. Students from different youth groups unite on the campus and form a FP club under the guidelines of Equal Access.

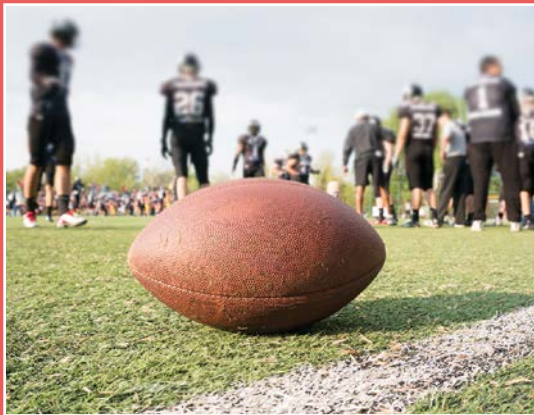
For more information on Equal Access visit:
www.firstamendmentcenter.org/religious-clubs.

THE GAME ANALOGY

UNDERSTANDING THE ESSENTIAL NETWORKS

First Priority works if the local community takes the time to organize each component of the strategy. To explain this, we will compare life as a Christian in the U.S. to a football player playing his game. What if the coach asked the football player to come study the team playbook twice a week, but only planned to play him in one half of a game throughout the entire season? Maybe. That is if something else didn't get scheduled the same day. Would he ever show up to practice? Yet, that is what most local churches expect out of students in their youth ministry: to come twice a week to learn how to live for Christ; and once a year go and share Christ together on a mission trip... unless something else prevents you from going. First Priority is the game plan for the students in your community to come together at school and live the game of faith every day.

UNDERSTANDING THE ESSENTIAL NETWORKS



STUDENTS: PLAYERS ON THE FIELD

The students are on the greatest mission field in America: a school. Engaged in the middle of the "game," students are the players we are here to train, pray for, and support, just as we do for foreign missionaries. The Hope Manual gives the student missionaries the action steps and direction they need to reach out to their peers at school. Each month, it helps them focus on a group and share the message of Jesus Christ with unbelieving students.



CHURCH LEADERS: COACHES ON THE SIDELINE

These are the youth ministers and pastors who are training and equipping the students in the game, a.k.a. the First Priority club.

Coaches do two things:

1. They help schedule "games" (a.k.a. First Priority club in school). This includes building relationships with the school administration, finding a teacher sponsor, setting club time and location, submitting the club charter/constitution, and more.
2. They hold practices (leadership meetings) to help students be prepared for the month ahead. We often call them Captain's Team meetings and they are held monthly between Engage week of the previous month and Help week of the next.

UNDERSTANDING THE ESSENTIAL NETWORKS

Continued



EDUCATORS: THE REFEREES IN THE GAME

These are the faculty volunteers that open their room and the doors of the school for the club to hold their meetings. At the school, they are the people who help the players stay in line with the rules of the local district and state. At the monthly leadership meeting, they are the ones guiding and showing wisdom to navigate the school as only someone on the “inside” can do. They do not participate in the game even though they are right in the middle of it.



PARENTS: FANS IN THE STANDS

These are adults who are watching and cheering on the game. Up front, these parents are dedicated to praying and supporting the students as they work to minister to their school. Behind the scenes, these parents are waking their son/daughter up early for practice, rearranging schedules, encouraging when the “game” does not go well, and running the “booster club”. Putting fans in the stands is really an easy task when students are passionate about playing in the game. .

BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS: OWNERS

The business community is so important to the First Priority strategy. Like a professional team, coaches and players come and go, but the team lives on. Without business leaders involved in the FP strategy, the longevity of the ministry will diminish when students graduate or staff in our local churches move on. The business community has a vested interest in their community, and will be the ones that will be there through this entire generation. All the cities that have a successful First Priority team have a board of committed business leaders.



BUILDING A PRIORITY PARENT NETWORK AROUND THE SCHOOL



UNITING THE BODY OF CHRIST AROUND THE LOCALS TOOLS

PRIORITY PARENT NETWORK



DEVELOPING A PARENT NETWORK AROUND EACH SCHOOL

Start to build your database of parents from:

A.) The School

Students are involved in a lot of different activities through the school system. Parents get to know each other through sitting at band concerts, traveling to the away games, selling t-shirts for the boosters, well you get the idea. Parents know each other. Having a band parent contact other Christian band parents at the school will build momentum.

B.) The Churches

As pastors and youth pastors get on board with First Priority, ask them for ways to access the parent community in their churches. You could host vision casting meetings in various churches just for parents. Then recruit them to the Parent Network through using some of the prayer opportunities that are listed later in this guide.

C.) The Business Community

Business people are parents too! They work alongside of the parents of other students in the school. Some are parents and some are not. However, every parent wants the best for their student. A network like this not only supports the parents, but connects the students as well.

WHAT IS A PARENT NETWORK?

A Priority Parent Network is a group of parents that surround a school in:

1. PRAYER
2. PARTICIPATION
3. PROMOTION
4. PROVISION

BUILD A NETWORK OF PARENTS

Build a network of parents around each school committed to model for students how to live their faith by praying together and discipling their children.

HOW TO BUILD A NETWORK:

- Collect and add new parents' names to the database. Invite parents to the First Priority Hope Banquet and Basic Training.
- Enlist a Priority Parent Network (PPN) Captain for each school. A Captain is simply a parent that will take on the responsibility to communicate with the group of parents at a particular school.
- Each PPN Captain should recruit for their school network and invite those parents to the First Priority Hope banquet and the Basic Training.

Parents are committed to the mission and vision of First Priority and they know the great need for students to know and serve Jesus, even while they are at school.

PRIORITY PARENT NETWORK

YOUR JOB

Crisis / Solutions / Networks

THE PARENT'S JOB:

As a parent, your job is simple. It is to become a fan in the stands. You are a network of parents around each school committed to modeling healthy family relationships, discipling your students, while praying, participating, promoting, and providing for the First Priority club at school.

Have you ever been to a football game or any school sporting event? Some of the most passionate people there are not the players, but the fans. Fans will do all sorts of things to promote their team, even to the point of embarrassment.

The same analogy applies to parents in First Priority. Students need encouragement when it comes to making Christ known at their school. Doing anything for the first time makes most people nervous, let alone sharing their testimony or the Gospel of Jesus. Students need support to make ministry happen. A parent has one of the loudest voices in the community to provide for and promote First Priority.

HOPE STRATEGY

The old adage of "failing to plan is planning to fail" is true. If we do not have a plan to reach the school, we will

not accomplish it. If we, as the adult networks of student support, do not promote our plan to our players, we will not have an efficient team. The HOPE strategy is a four-week cycle that guides students through four distinctive club meetings. We call it a cycle because club meetings occur once a week and the cycle repeats every four weeks. The success of this plan is dependent on effective planning and execution.

Check out the Hope Manual for more information about the student's role to better help you in your role.



1

PRAYER

There are many prayer strategies to consider as you organize a group of parents to pray for your student missionaries. We will list several and explain a few that have had an incredible impact on First Priority communities.

PRAYING FOR OUR STUDENTS AS CAMPUS MISSIONARIES

We pray for missionaries all over the world; why not pray for our students? 85% of all who receive Christ as Savior do so before the age of 18. That makes our middle and high schools the largest mission fields in our country. Our Christian students in our churches are therefore the missionary force that God will use to see spiritual awakening. The greatest influence on students today is their peers. Is there a better time in history to put this into place?

Student Missionary Card



HOW IT WORKS

1. Contact the pastors, the youth pastors, or the churches in your network. Explain the idea of having their students commissioned in their church as a missionary. You must have the students in the youth group agree to have their picture taken and put on a card.
2. After each participating student missionary has their cards printed, commission them in a church service. This could be done as easily as having the students come to the front of the church

or youth service and having parents and elders pray over them as they seek to be used by God at their school.

3. Have the pastor encourage the congregation to take a student's photo missionary card, put it on their refrigerator, and pray for that student missionary.
4. Lay the printed missionary cards on tables where adults who are willing to pray can pick them up. Make sure you get contact cards on all adults praying and add them to your prayer database.

PRAYER STRATEGIES

YEARBOOK STRATEGY

What if every student in the participating schools were prayed for every day?

1. That they would have an opportunity to hear the gospel.
2. That they would have an opportunity to respond to the gospel.

There are literally thousands of adults in our churches burdened by the state of our student culture. Many adults do not have a clue what to do. This is a great tool for existing groups and individuals to use to pray for the First Priority ministry at the school and keep the heart of the ministry at the heart of the ministry.

HOW IT WORKS

1. Find a yearbook from the school(s) participating.



2. Make a copy of the section where all the students from each class are pictured.
3. Cut out a row at a time (usually 4 pictures per row); pictures only, no names.
4. You might want to paste them on a sheet with instructions.

5. Distribute rows to the network of churches and have them distribute to adults to pray. Another Idea would be to copy the sections of pictures (no names again) and paste them to a prayer wall in your church.

SCHOOL PRAYER MAGNETS

The Prayer Magnet Strategy is designed to help individuals and families remember to pray for the body of Christ. The magnet is a business card size printout stuck to a magnet so families can take it home, put it on their refrigerator, and pray every time they are hungry and digging through the fridge.

HOW IT WORKS

1. Go to www.greatschools.net to collect information (population) about the school(s) participating.
2. Write a letter to the pastors of the community asking them to sponsor a school (sample available upon request).
3. This church sponsorship is simply asking the church to distribute the prayer magnets to their people. People pick up the prayer magnet from their church and hang it on their refrigerator.

RESULTS: People hang the magnet on their fridge, start praying for the people at school, and start to wonder what is happening. So, to answer the question in their heart, they call the pastor, student minister, or a parent. This begins or deepens a relationship and eventually can get another person involved in reaching this generation for Jesus.

MONTHLY PRAYER EMAIL:

Helps people on your contact lists stay informed on the progress of First Priority and how they can pray. E-mail each church involved on the evangelistic week to make sure that the congregations are praying for salvations.

MOMS IN PRAYER:

Find moms already praying in your area.
www.momsinprayer.org

JERICO PRAYER WALK:

Meet the seven days before school starts at the same time each day. The first six days you walk around once in prayer for the school. The seventh day, the day before school starts, you walk around seven times, asking God to break down the spiritual walls in the school.

As you can see, there are many different strategies. Pick a couple and go for it. We suggest you do the school missionary strategy and then pick the ones that get as many people involved as possible.

NOTE: No ground war is won without a sufficient air campaign.

2

PARTICIPATION



While the parents' primary role is the prayer network, there are other things a parent can be legally involved in that can make the difference between 12 and 120 students attending club. Each school has a campus coach assigned by the First Priority network of churches. His or her job is to guide the students as they plan to impact the school for Christ. Work with the campus coach to find out their needs at each individual school.

Parents legally need to play a behind the scenes role. Equal Access says students lead, faculty open their room and sit quietly, and campus coaches guide from

the sidelines. Too many other adults in the room creates opportunity for getting the club in trouble and sometimes shut down. Play your role and be sure to pray. If you desire to be involved during the club, start a group of parents praying off site during that time.

SOME GENERAL WAYS TO PARTICIPATE

1. Participate in the club planning by opening your home and providing snacks for the leadership each month.
2. Help at ministry events that First Priority may bring in from time to time. School assemblies, 5th quarters, and tailgating provide opportunities for you

as a parent to jump in and participate in helping the students share Christ with their peers.

3. Provide food for outreach weeks. Depending on the time of your club meeting, biscuits, pizza or food on hand is always a good idea. Second, having food in the room, especially if your club meets over lunch, gives more time for the speaker to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.
4. Provide transportation, especially if your club meets before school, to students who cannot get a ride to school that early.

3

PROMOTE



When First Priority is operating in a healthy way, each school in the participating areas should be on the same week of the club cycle. The last meeting of each cycle is a meeting dedicated to the presentation of the gospel. Why we refer to it as a week is simply because for one school, their meeting day may be Tuesday, while another would be Thursday, etc. The job of the Parent network is to make sure that all churches are informed about the gospel being presented on the campus. People cannot pray for what they do not know about.

WAYS TO PROMOTE

1. Announcements in the church service.
2. Announcements in church bulletin.
3. Communicate to any prayer chains in your church.
4. Network communication: Paper newsletter, email, text, Facebook, etc.
5. Local church promotion (FP Sunday, FP speakers, bulletin inserts, FP video in church, etc.).
6. First Priority month: scheduling a First Priority speaker for a Sunday morning service.
7. Church commissioning service for students.

It is so important for parents to take the lead in getting the church to pray for and commission students as they seek God to reach their schools. So many times our students are made to feel like they should just sit down be quiet, to wait until they get older before they are considered important in the church. Can you imagine if our churches actually got excited about sending our students to school as missionaries? America would not be the same for long!

4

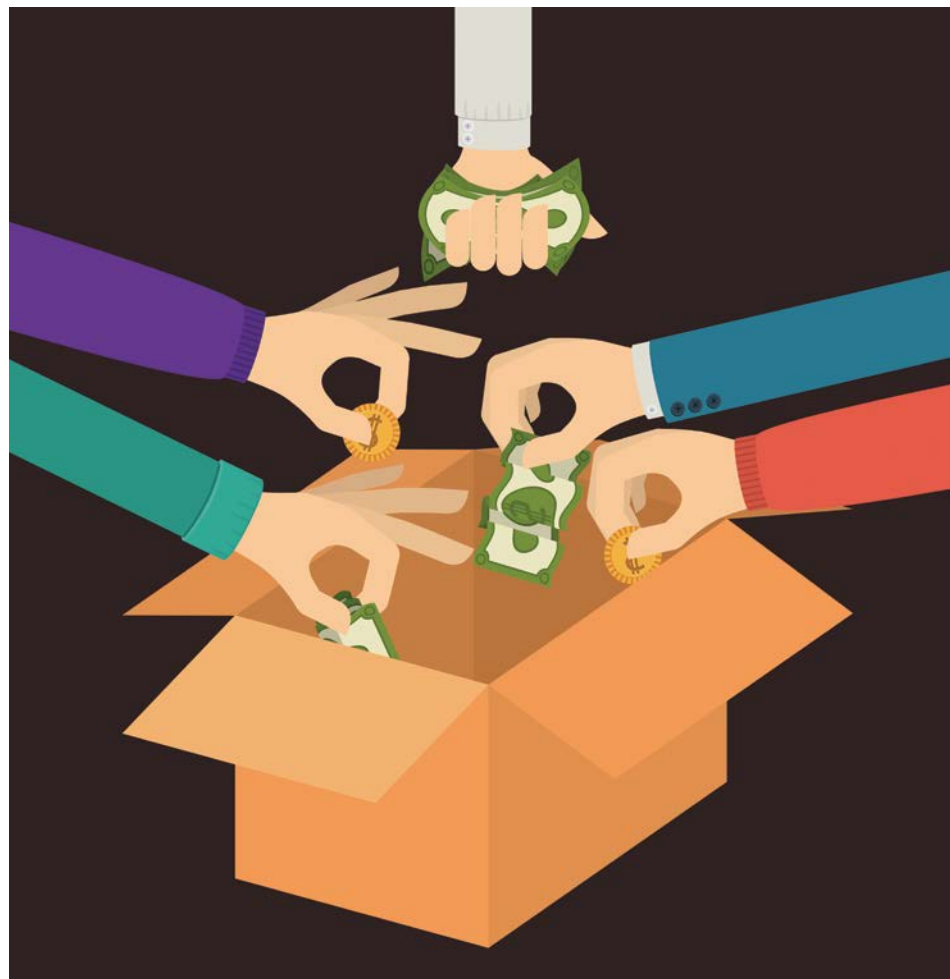
PROVISION

You have heard it said, “We get what we pay for.” First Priority is no different. Every viable ministry that is impacting people’s lives costs money. Providing financially for First Priority helps fund food for Engage weeks, school outreach activities, and area-wide outreach events (like See You At The Pole). This would also help fund a First Priority director to help more churches get involved in more areas and more schools. The more students that we help ‘call on the name of the Lord,’ the more who are saved and will spend eternity in the presence of Jesus. All local First Priority networks have leadership and a budget set annually to take care of the ministry that God has entrusted them.

WAYS TO PROVIDE

1. Parent Donors

Are you ever amazed at the number of parents that will sell coupon books, cook-ies, etc. to send their kids to go march in a parade or go to a tournament? Millions of dollars are raised every year by booster clubs and parent organizations to support the students. It takes hundreds of thousands of dollars for most high school football programs to operate. First Priority in your city and on the campus takes money to operate as well. A small



group of parents banded together to each donate \$25-\$75 a month would give the First Priority club at school a healthy and solid financial foundation for ministry.

2. Church Mission Budgets and Offerings

First Priority in its purest form is a local church strategy. Therefore, we believe that through the church mission budgets

and special offerings, churches can participate in helping fund the local First Priority. Most churches have a missions budget set aside to help missionaries and mission projects. Find out who is in charge of your church’s budget and make a request to include First Priority.

Continued on next page

4 PROVISION

Continued

3. Local Business Donors

Through the network of parents, there are hundreds of relationships with business owners. Parents need to help educate local businesses about the ministry of First Priority. We have found that business men and women have a vested interest in their city. They care about the moral and spiritual condition of our kids. They realize that the job force that is rising up in their community needs to be of a good moral character. Pastors and youth pastors come and go, but the business leaders in a city are there to stay.

4. Fundraising Events

As First Priority grows, it will have opportunities to put on several events to bring awareness and raise the necessary monies needed to continue. Parents can help with all of these events.

BOTTOM LINE

Parents, churches, business leaders, and events are all great ways to provide for First Priority. All of these strategies listed in this guide are great ideas. Can they work? Absolutely. Will they work? Absolutely. Can God reach your city? YES! Will God reach your city? The can is up to God the will is up to us. Will you do what it takes to help students fulfill the Great Commission in their school?

You as a parent are one of the greatest resources First Priority has. Somewhere in our ministry world we lost sight (not all churches) of the Great Commission. You, as a lay person, would assume

someone “in the ministry” could just go to the churches and share this idea and they would jump all over it. This is not the case. Speaking from experience, a parent has more influence than a guy who has been working in “the ministry” for 25 years with the local church. When parents stand up and speak up about the condition of our student culture, a church staff will listen.

As it has been said, “A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove....but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child.”

- Forest Witcraft





www.firstpriority.club

A central location for all the information you need.

LEARN ABOUT THE FIRST PRIORITY MOVEMENT

LEARN ABOUT YOUR ROLE

FIND CLUB RESOURCES

FIND PROMOTIONAL VIDEOS AND MATERIALS

MOBILE FRIENDLY



BELIEVE THE IMPOSSIBLE

To say the very least, it amazes God for His children to believe in the impossible. The only two times the Bible ever mentions God being amazed is when His hometown expressed little faith and then when the centurion expressed great faith. (Matt. 8:10)

Do Christians know they can AMAZE God? It is in itself amazing that the omniscient God can be amazed. What lover of God would not want to seize the opportunity to amaze Him by believing in the impossible and ingratiating himself to His heart, ensuring that for America, He did not die in vain!

We believe the Church united in a city can change America!

UNITING THE CHURCH TO INFLUENCE THE MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS FOR THE CAUSE FOR CHRIST!



FIRST PRIORITY

First Priority of America

P.O. Box 473 Brentwood, TN 37027

888-808-FPOA (3762)

 facebook.com/fpofamerica

 twitter.com/fpofamerica

 instagram.com/fpofamerica

 www.firstpriority.club