

Acing Administrative Efficiency: Assess Your Private School's Technology & Tools

Gauge if you have the best resources and tech for the evolving private school landscape.



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Introduction

With over 34,000 K-12 private schools in the U.S.¹ and more educational choices than ever before, the pressure for private schools to stand out grows more intense each year. From addressing declining enrollment to elevating the parent experience, today's independent and private school leaders are turning to technology to streamline their work and delight families, so they can focus on tasks that truly support their school's mission.

Is your school evolving to meet the needs of the private school market today? Are you making decisions based on data to positively impact the success of your school? In this guide, we discuss the efficiency of three primary administrative functions of your school:

- **Admission and Enrollment**
- **Financial Aid**
- **Tuition and Billing**

Whether your school's administration department is still using a paper system or has already adopted automated tools, this guide will help you take a hard, thorough look at your administrative processes and how they make a difference for your faculty, families and future.

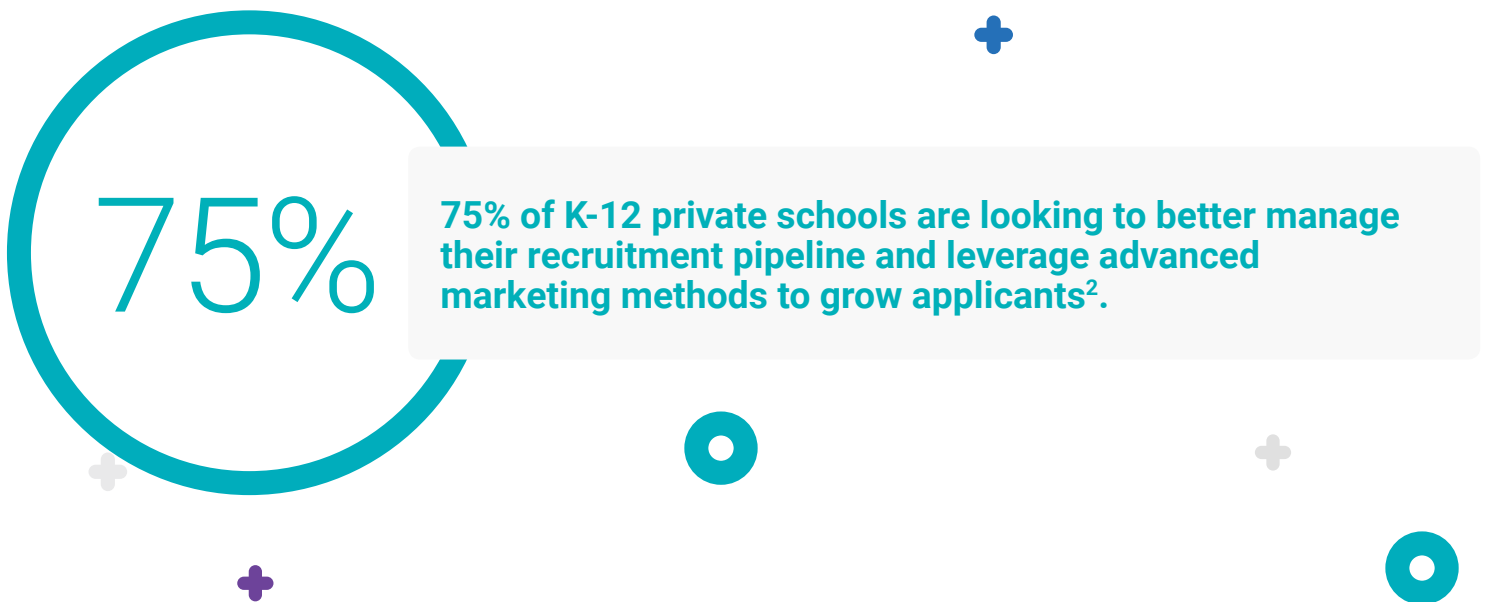


¹Statistics and trends from proprietary research. Property of Community Brands.

Admission and Enrollment

Trends over the past decade have created a new reality in which school success is undeniably fused with school marketing. This reality is especially important for your school's admission and enrollment team. For schools to compete, they need to understand themselves and the dynamics of their market, articulate their unique value propositions and manage a personalized

admission process for families. Whether you're working with families during the process, hosting admission events or touting the greatness of your school, active participation by school leadership in the recruitment process is an important and strategic choice to increase applications and send a signal to families that your school values the applicants more than application forms.



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To understand how you are managing your admission process, enrollment pipeline and targeted marketing, ask yourself these questions:

- Is your school's website optimized and easy to navigate?
- Are you targeting families in your area to grow inquiries?
- Are you executing campaigns to feed inquiries with a regular stream of communication?
- Are you updating interested families on event dates and application deadlines?
- Are you analyzing your data to know how many inquiries convert to applications?
- Do you know many applicants are typically accepted?
- Do you know how many accepted applicants typically enroll?

Did you answer 'yes' to each of these questions? If you did, then you're well on your way to ensuring an efficient admission and enrollment process.

If you answered 'no' to any of these questions, you may be missing the tools and technology available today to ensure your private school is adopting strategies to stand out in a crowded school market. Today's software platforms available can help you find the right students to fill your open seats, configure your applications, read applications online, collaborate with your admission team, and compare your school to others in your area with analytics and reporting dashboards.



Financial Aid

Financial aid programs can build a diverse school community and help you compete with the ever-increasing number of educational options families can consider for their kids. It can also attract families who otherwise may otherwise think private school is out of reach. But if managing all your various budgets and incentives is a difficult and time-consuming process, with information spread out across various systems and spreadsheets, you may be missing the efficiency mark.

Private schools that rely on a 3rd party to facilitate their financial aid programs get the benefit of an impartial financial aid methodology, data-sensitivity, key data needed to identify families who most need financial assistance and more. This allows you to make informed award decisions, make sure the right families receive aid and meet the financial demands of your applicants.

Ask yourself these questions regarding your financial aid process:

- Do you know what your financial aid budget is?
- Do you know how financial aid awarding impacts your school's financial sustainability?
- Do you have a holistic view of all your award management?
- Have you moved your financial aid process off paper?
- Do you regularly ask questions about a family's application or hold parents accountable for providing all required documents?
- Do you rely on a 3rd party to facilitate your financial aid programs?
 - a. If yes, do they follow a methodology for calculating awards?
 - b. If yes, do they provide friendly follow ups for families during the process?
- Do you know your school's affordability range? (i.e., income profile for needed for a full pay family vs. full needs family?)

If you answered 'no' to these questions, you may not be taking full advantage of the software offered in the market today. The right award management tools enable you to use your tuition incentives more strategically by giving you insight and transparency with your award decisions, tracking awards and budget allocations, and establishing a clear, standardized financial aid application process for all families.

Tuition and Billing

Collecting private school tuition is a challenging responsibility, especially when you're not using a flexible, automated system for your families' payments. Your time is in short supply and chasing late tuition and fee payments from families should not be your main focus.

To expand the payment opportunities for your families and simplify payment tracking and management for you, you'll need a flexible tuition and billing tool to help you manage finances and project cash flow. This can help improve communication with families, offer contract and payment flexibility, enhance fiscal forecasting, and streamline the processing of tuition and fees.

Ask yourself these questions regarding your Tuition and Billing process:

- Are you sending invoices through the mail?
- Do you receive paper checks for payments?
- Do you offer only one way to pay tuition?
- Is your process still on paper?
- Do you wish your software could send emails and texts direct to a parent portal?
- Are you manually entering data such as merit scholarships, financial aid awards and tuition remission?
- Do you offer flexible contracts for families to pay how they want to or can afford?



Did you answer 'yes' to these questions? If so, you may be missing an opportunity for more positive engagement with your families, while productivity goes up with better office efficiencies. A tuition and billing system can help meet your specific needs, including increasing on-time tuition payments, automating parent communications, as well as streamlining financial tracking and reporting.

Efficiency Checklist for Your K-12 Private School

You've just read a lot of information, so now let's simplify it a little. Print this handy checklist and share it with colleagues and other stakeholders. It will help you see where to focus your technology investment.

Admission and Enrollment

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How Does Your School Stack Up?

How does your school measure up to this checklist? Does your administrative process pass with flying colors? Choosing best-in-class enrollment management tools, integrated through the right platform, allows schools to tie together insights and workflows across admission, enrollment, financial aid, and tuition management. These programs and departments are key to ensuring a school's long-term ability to thrive and grow.

If your school's technology isn't earning the grade you want, consider pursuing technology upgrades now. There is no time like the present. Contact us today to learn how the Community Brands K-12 Select Suite can help your school ace their administrative efficiency.



About Community Brands

Community Brands K-12 is a family of dedicated, education-focused software and service companies working closely with more than 4,500 schools to help them thrive in today's diverse education environment. Our K-12 Select Suite offers you the most powerful and flexible software solutions uniquely designed to help you find the right students, ease families through the admission and enrollment process, coordinate financial aid, manage tuition and process payments. We are passionate about education technology, and believe by working together, we can deliver the best solutions for our schools.

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