

This could be the most important thing you do all year long

We want to state this right up front. We truly believe that the job you do recruiting your staff for next year can be the deciding factor in how well your year will go. It can be the difference between a year that makes you happy and brings you a successful yearbook and one that leaves you totally stressed out.

With that in mind, here's what you should be doing now to get the ball rolling for 2008-2009.

Find an editor first

February is the best time to name your 2009 yearbook editor. Hopefully, that person is already on your yearbook staff. Ideally he or she has been groomed for this job and already knows he or she will be editing the book next year.

But what if you don't have that person in place? What if your staff is made up entirely of seniors? Or all the current underclassmen are not editorial material? Then you have some work to do. First, if your entire staff is seniors, perhaps it's time to rethink that entire idea.



Do you know who your next editor will be? You should be looking for that person and the rest of your 2009 staff now.

Your yearbook staff should reflect the entire student body that you are producing a yearbook for. Since you are asking underclassmen to buy your yearbook, you need to have underclassmen on your yearbook staff. Make this the year you recruit some.

Plus, this means you won't have to completely train a new staff each year but can use returning staffers to mentor the incoming group.

While we are on the subject of reflecting your school in your staff, make sure that you try your best to

have the students you recruit for your 2009 staff reflect your student body in other ways as well. Do you have a large minority population at your school? If so, do you have the same percentage of minority yearbook staffers? You should. Doing this will make it a whole bunch easier to cover every group in your school and to show those groups that they will be in the book and that the book is worth buying.

So make February your month to pick an editor. See the article on page 3 for some tips on picking that editor. This will be the most important person you recruit

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In addition to recruiting it's time to start thinking about summer!

Once you have your 2009 yearbook staff picked out, you'll need to get them trained. There is no better way to get them trained and organized than at a Jostens yearbook workshop. Watch this space next month when we'll let you know the best one for you to attend.

Start recruiting for 2009 today. Get your editor, your Yearbook Business Manager and the rest of your staff. It's the smart thing to do.



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RECRUITING YOUR 2009 YEARBOOK STAFF
this spring.

Once you have found your editor, it's time to start recruiting the rest of your yearbook staff. Here are some concrete ideas on where to find them and how to recruit them once you have your editor chosen.

Ask your current staff

Get your 2008 yearbook staff to recommend people they think would be a good fit for yearbook in 2009. Have a discussion during a staff meeting about the kind of students who should be in yearbook. Ask them to look beyond just getting their close friends involved and to put the yearbook first in their thoughts when they recommend someone.

Look in your own classrooms

If you are a yearbook adviser, chances are good you also teach other subjects. We have met very few yearbook advisers over the years who only teach yearbook. Therefore, your other classes are great places to find new recruits.

Finding the best yearbook staff now is the key to a great year in 2009. Starting that process now can you lead to find the kind of staff that will make yearbook fun! It did for this group.

Look at your most dependable students.

Ask your counselors to be on alert

Don't overlook new and transfer students. Many times, students with yearbook or writing experience will have family circumstances that force them to move during the school year. Believe me, the football coach would be notified immediately if an All-State quarterback transferred to your school. Make sure to let the counselors know you would like the same consideration.

Ask an English teacher

One of the best ways to find great kids is to ask for recommendations from English teachers. Most of your yearbook staff will need to know



how to write. You can teach them how to draw layouts and how to take pictures, but you don't have the time to teach them how to write. So, ask English teachers who would be the best students to approach to join the staff.

We want you to notice at this point that we have not recommended that you put notices in your school announcements or on your school TV station to invite everyone to join the yearbook staff. The best staffs are totally recruited. You find the students you want, and you go after them.

So once you have identified the students you want to approach, here's some possible ways to go about convincing them that yearbook is the right choice for them.

Do lunch

For starters, why not "Do lunch"? This is what an executive would do with prospective employees he wanted to hire to work with his firm.

Order some pizza and have the old staff and your new editor act as hosts to a selected group of students. Talk about yearbook, what the jobs are, how much fun it is and why they should join the staff.

If lunch isn't a good time, do breakfast. Instead of pizza—get donuts! No matter what the time, bring them in and sell them on the idea that yearbook is a fun and exciting place to be. And if it isn't a fun and exciting place to be, you have work to do.

Get your application ready!

Make up an application form to have ready for prospective staffers to fill out. It can really help weed out possible problems. Since you know most of the folks you are inviting are qualified academically, concentrate on making sure that they are not too busy with other activities. Ask a lot of questions in that area. A student who is too busy will have to make a decision between yearbook and other things. What happens to you if they choose football or cheerleading over yearbook the day before a deadline? It could be the worst deadline ever. If you ask us, we have a great form you can use at your school.

Most important recruits

We have already talked about how important it is to find the right editor. Please see page 3 for some special notes about finding your editor. As you are recruiting, keep in mind two other positions that you should be looking for people with very special talents. The first is your Yearbook Business Manager (YBM). Your YBM should be the second person you recruit. He or she will be the "financial editor" of your yearbook and that makes him or her of the highest importance.

Third, find yourself an underclass associate or assistant editor whom you are going to groom to become the editor in 2010. That's the best way to do it all.

LOOKING FOR JUST THE RIGHT PERSON

Choosing your new editor is probably the biggest decision you have to make each year as an adviser. Choosing the wrong person can mean a year of you being the editor. You have enough to do in your life, and that is not what you were hired to do anyway. So here are three important things to consider when you are choosing your next editor.

Responsibility comes first

1

Look for the most responsible person you can find. It is more important that the person you choose as editor have character and people skills than that he or she knows anything about yearbook or journalism. You can always teach him or her about yearbook or, better yet, send the person to a workshop to learn about journalism. On the other hand, recruiting someone as editor who is not responsible, honest, hard-working or a leader means you will have to make him or her that way. And for that, you needed to have started training him or her about 15 years ago.

2

Less involved than others

Look for someone who is involved but not involved in everything. One of the worst mistakes some advisers make is choosing "Super Students" to be their editor. You know this person! He or she is an athlete who is also an ASB officer, trying to maintain a 4.0 GPA

as well as being on the debate team and the yearbook staff. No matter how good they are, eventually they will have to make a choice as to which of their activities comes first, and what happens if it is the day before a deadline and they don't choose yearbook?

3

Not necessarily on the current yearbook staff

Don't think that the new editor

"has to be" on the current yearbook staff. Often, you may have no one on the current staff who is editorial material, but you settle for the best of the pack. You would probably be better off recruiting someone from outside the staff and training that person in journalism. But if you are going off the staff for your new editor, do it early... and expect to lose some staffers who think that position should belong to them. Many times, you can forestall problems by having individual conferences with those students before recruiting your new editor.

Summertime available?

Summer availability is a big question for your new editor. It should be mandatory for the editor and at least one or two other staffers to attend a summer workshop. Find out the dates of the one you want to attend and make it clear that attendance is required. Check out the front page of this newsletter info on ours for this summer or watch your mailbox for more info

