

School Video Tips & Topic Ideas

Need some ideas to create effective school videos? Here are a few topics to get you started. If you have great ideas you'd like to share with us, send them to us at Info@Schoolwebmasters.com with the subject line "great school video examples," and we'll add yours to this resource list.

Welcome Videos

A welcome video is very useful in creating a great first impression about what your school has to offer. Videos also help prospective students and their parents visualize themselves or their children succeeding and fitting in at your school. The key to a successful school marketing video is to make your topic about your customer's needs (not your school wants). When you do that, you'll also accomplish your school goals.

Invite families into the classroom with you

Introduce prospective families to your staff, and let them get to know who you really are. Provide them with a window into school life at your school through video. Here are a few ideas for effective welcome or recruitment videos:



- Let students and parents answer the question "What do I love about <school name>?" with a variety of clips from a wide array of student perspectives, and record their responses. The following is a great example: http://www.oda.edu/cf_media/index.cfm?obj=9175
- Create a series of clips to showcase annual events at your schools (plays, dances, athletics, band and choir performances, awards ceremonies, board meetings, etc.). Be sure to show lots of diversity so your video will appeal to a wide variety of students and their parents.
- Film a narrated tour from the front office to the classroom, walking by friendly students and staff, showing classroom students engaged and learning. Narration can be a description of what makes your school stand out (make it real by including actual comments along your route from students and teachers, even if just a simple hello or friendly wave from a passerby).
- Show a day in the life of a kindergartener so those prospective new parents can see what life at your school will be like for their child—alleviating their fear and replacing it with enthusiasm.
- Shoot a campus tour of the grounds, classrooms, labs, athletics facilities. For a creative view, find out if you have a parent with a camera drone who might volunteer to film your school from the air.
- Show your humor and fun by creating a fun "back to school" video. Check out these examples (or just do a search on Google or YouTube for school welcome videos): [Union Grove Union High School](#), [Hillside School](#), [Back to School Inspiration](#), [Stukeley Meadows Elementary](#), [North Allegheny Schools](#).
- Student interviews are always great. Try asking elementary students about their favorite teacher (example: [Kidvice](#)) or funny things like: "How old do you think your teacher is?" or "What is the one

thing your teacher ALWAYS says?" Ask high school students what advice they have for incoming middle school students or what their plans are after graduation, etc.

Share success stories to highlight your school's expertise

- We all love a good story and are natural storytellers. Ask each key staff member to write a brief "story" about a success they are proud of (as it pertains to helping students achieve) or why they love to teach (or work) at your school (consider other staff members too, not just teachers). Most staff members take pride in their work and will enjoy a bit of time in the spotlight when you highlight their classroom or contributions. Example from: [St. Bethlehem Elementary](#)
- Create a video for testimonials from students, parents, alumni, and staff. Show a question and then a series of clips with answers from different individuals. It's easy to do, quick to produce, and very effective. Possible questions might be:
 - Students: "What is your favorite thing about our school?"
 - Faculty: "Why did you choose to teach at <school name>."
 - Parents: "What do you like best about our school?"
 - New parents: "Why did you select <school name> for your child?"
 - Graduating students: "How has our school prepared you for a career or college?"
 - Alumni: "How did attending <school name> best prepare you for life (college, career, etc.)?" or "Tell us about a teacher who influenced you and your life (and how)?" ([Great example of teacher impact.](#))
- Ask students to describe their school in one word (or a phrase). Edit these together in a series for an effective and compelling vignette.
- Interview your school's teachers; ask them questions like:
 - "Who or what inspired you to become a teacher?"
 - "What is your favorite thing about teaching?"
 - "Can you share a memorable time when you saw a student experience the joy of learning?"
 - You could create a page on your school's website where these interviews were available for parents to get to know the teachers in their child's school, or you could highlight a different teacher every month.
- Staff spotlight. Highlight a stand-out staff member (one who's dedicated, goes the extra mile, makes a positive connection, etc.). Create a spotlight video. Check out these award-winning examples from [Clarksville-Montgomery County Schools](#) or [Gwinnett County Public Schools](#) (plus lots of other examples on this school page as well), [Tacoma Schools](#), [Community ISD](#), or [Nixa Public Schools](#).

Student-produced videos

If you have a high school, recruit students to create a video for you. They love to lipsync to popular songs or create their own raps, and you might be amazed at their creativity. Just guide their message to the positive and encouraging. Topic ideas:



- Student-produced public service announcements (PSAs) on topics like bullying, cyberbullying, no texting and driving, no drinking and driving, staying in school, teen depression, recycling, etc.
- Create videos about courses of study. For example, [CSpan's Student Cam](#) contest.
- School announcements or video blogs for weekly announcements
- Stop motion video to present a timely topic ([example](#))
- Behind the scenes with some of the extracurricular groups (band, talent show, tennis team, orchestra, etc.) to show the fun and camaraderie
- Grab selfies of teachers with students as a video collage.
- The funniest things students have ever said (shared by teachers)
- A principal honoring a teacher of the month (or superintendent honoring the principal of the year)
- Top 10 reasons our teachers are rock stars
- Top 10 reasons our school is #1
- Victory song or school song video sung by students and staff
- Back to school video produced by students
- Video featuring students at their summer jobs or volunteering

Social media videos

Social media videos should be much shorter. If you want to use them as a teaser for more information or a longer story, add a link to take them to your website for more information or the longer video. These only need to be 10–15 seconds long and can be shared on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, as well as your website and YouTube. Some ideas for clips edited into short vignettes:

- Ask elementary students, “What is your favorite thing about your teacher?”
- Ask high school students: “How does <school name> prepare you for your future?”
- Ask teachers, “What is the funniest thing a student has ever said to you?”
- Ask teachers, “Name a time when you knew you loved your job.”
- Ask administrators: “What’s the best thing about being a principal (counselor, superintendent, etc.) at <school name>?”
- Ask a local business owner to give a shout-out for an upcoming school event (concert, game, play, etc.).
- Show a choir singing a Christmas carol around the holidays with an invite to the annual concert.
- Ask a student to explain his/her artwork.

- Show a teacher or staff sharing a unique talent like juggling, wiggling his or her ears, moon walking, playing the harmonica, etc.

Where to use your videos

Once you've produced your videos, make sure to get the most bang for your buck by publicizing them so they receive a lot of traffic. Do you provide a school or district e-newsletter? Add your video links there with a brief description that will entice your audience to view them. Place your videos on your website. Start a YouTube channel for your school. Post videos on your school's Facebook page, and include a link to them on Twitter and Instagram. And yes, make sure you pin them to your Pinterest page.

Videos are a great way to bring parents along on the activities and daily happenings in their child's school. Film that next field trip or your successful science fair. Let the caring and successes come through. All parents want to send their children to a school where they will be nurtured and cared about as individuals and encouraged to achieve their highest potential. Your videos can show them you want the same things for your students too. Lots of short videos, used in this way can really take your school communication and marketing efforts to the next level!

Video tips worth remembering



Know your audience needs

Your audience needs and wants should come first. It isn't about you or your school but about what your parents, students, or prospective staff concerns are and how you provide solutions. Can you answer the question about how your video will help meet their needs? That should be the main message of your video.



Keep 'em short!

A good length of time for most videos is 1–2 minutes with a 3-minute max. Social media videos for Instagram or Twitter should be less than 15 seconds long. Have more content than that? Consider breaking it into another video. For example, instead of having one video that outlines the entire admissions process, have one video that highlights your school, another that talks about the application process, and yet another that explains school rules or features individual classroom offerings. The length exception are those videos of the graduation, band concert, or sports game highlights. They can be longer, as the parents who watch these types of videos are expecting longer content and are more likely watch until the end.



Be authentic

Don't be a slave to a script, but keep it real. If it is an interview or a testimonial, it will be more sincere if you edit out a few um's and ah's than if you have a carefully crafted script they are reading. Authenticity will go farther than perfection.



Get in close

When filming people, shoot a lot of close-ups. They are more effective (especially on small screens like smartphones) and are also easier to light and shoot. Don't be afraid to use that zoom.

For more tips and ideas, visit our blog post [“Creating a School Video That Won't Break the Bank.”](#)