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National Catholic Educational Association

EXPANDED VERSION

# NCEA Day of Giving Fundraising Essentials

Gear up for a successful Day of Giving campaign with these proven strategies designed to help you connect, inspire, and achieve impactful results!

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## □ 1. Set a Goal and Create an Action Plan

The foundation of a successful Day of Giving campaign starts with a clear, measurable goal. It's important to define both a financial target and the impact it will have on your school. Are you raising money for a new program, classroom equipment, scholarships, or operational expenses? Set specific, tangible goals that demonstrate to your donors exactly where their contributions will go.

Once the goal is established, break it down into smaller, manageable milestones. For instance, if your goal is to raise \$10,000, set intermediate goals—such as raising \$2,500 within the first 6 hours or reaching a certain number of donors by midday. This helps you maintain momentum and celebrate progress throughout the event.

With your goal in mind, create an action plan that maps out how you'll achieve it. Assign responsibilities to team members, plan key tasks, and set deadlines to keep everyone on track.

Make sure to outline:

- **Your communication strategy:** How will you engage donors in the lead-up to and during the Day of Giving?
- **Outreach channels:** Identify where your audience is most active—email, social media, direct mail—and tailor your approach to each.
- **Measuring success:** Determine how you'll track progress in real-time and ensure you're hitting your milestones.

## □ 2. Reflect on Last Year's Wins

Taking the time to reflect on last year's Day of Giving results can offer invaluable insights for this year's campaign. Analyzing the successes and challenges will allow you to refine your strategy and amplify your impact.

Start by reviewing which aspects of the previous campaign yielded the most success:

- **Which giving strategies worked best?** Did matching gifts, challenge funds, or time-sensitive campaigns lead to a spike in donations? If so, incorporate these proven strategies again, and consider building on them.
- **Which communication channels were most effective?** Take a deep dive into your outreach efforts—whether it was social media, email marketing, or personal phone calls. Which platforms and methods generated the most engagement and donations? Use this data to prioritize your efforts and ensure you're reaching your audience where they're most likely to respond.
- **What did your donor base look like?** Look at your donor demographics. Did you see an increase in first-time donors or a significant contribution from loyal supporters? Identifying key donor segments will allow you to tailor this year's messaging to resonate with both new and repeat givers.

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Also, reflect on challenges you faced and areas for improvement:

- **Did any channels underperform?** If certain outreach methods didn't resonate, consider why. Were they used at the wrong time, or was the messaging not compelling enough? Make adjustments for this year.
- **What logistical or planning hurdles did you encounter?** Whether it was coordinating volunteers, meeting deadlines, or handling tech issues, learn from these challenges and build solutions into your plan for this year.

### 3. Center Your Campaign on Your Website

Your school's website is the hub of your Day of Giving campaign, and it's often the first place your supporters will go to learn more or donate. Ensuring it is clear, easy to navigate, and aligned with your campaign messaging is essential for a smooth donor experience.

- **Update your homepage:** Highlight your Day of Giving goals prominently on your homepage with bold visuals, compelling copy, and a clear call to action. Create a sense of excitement and urgency so visitors understand why it's important to give today.
- **Make donating easy:** With BetterWorld, you can embed a custom donation form directly onto your website, ensuring that donors can easily contribute without being redirected to an external site. Your donation form should be prominently displayed and simple to use, reducing friction and making the process as seamless as possible.
- **Ensure mobile responsiveness:** As many of your donors will access your site from mobile devices, make sure your school's website is optimized for mobile viewing. A mobile-friendly site that loads quickly and displays clearly across all devices will help you capture donations on the go.

### 4. Start Donor Outreach Early

Engaging your community before Day of Giving is key to building excitement and ensuring your supporters are ready to take action when the day arrives. Start your outreach well in advance by crafting a thoughtful series of communications that share your mission, campaign goals, and how their support makes a difference.

- **Create a multi-touch-point strategy:** Don't rely on a single email blast. Plan a series of emails, social media posts, and personal outreach efforts to keep your community engaged over time. Use different formats—videos, testimonials, and infographics—to maintain interest and show the many ways their gifts will have an impact.
- **Tailor your messaging:** Segment your audience and create personalized outreach that speaks directly to different groups of donors, such as major donors, first-time givers, alumni, and parents. Customize your ask for each segment, explaining why their specific contribution is critical to the campaign's success.
- **Share stories:** Use storytelling to connect with your audience on an emotional level. Share the personal stories of students, families, or community members who have directly benefited from your organization's work, highlighting how their support makes a tangible difference.

## □ 5. Inspire Immediate Action

To drive urgency and inspire immediate action, your Day of Giving campaign needs to include elements that prompt donors to give quickly and feel like their contribution matters. Here are a few tactics to encourage timely giving:

- **Clear deadlines:** While Day of Giving's title implies a 24-hour donation window, it is best to make this abundantly clear to your donors. Sharing "Online giving via card and ACH can be accessed from 12:00 a.m.-11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, January 29, 2025" or "Physical checks may be dropped off at the school between the hours of 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. on January 29 only." People are more likely to donate when there's a sense of urgency.
- **Matching gift opportunities:** Leverage the power of matching gifts to double or even triple the impact of individual donations. Highlight when matching funds are available to create a sense of urgency and excitement, encouraging donors to give before the clock runs out.
- **Donation levels and impact:** Break down donation levels and explain what each amount can accomplish. For example, "\$50 buys a week's worth of supplies for a classroom," or "\$100 provides a scholarship for a student in need." Sharing the impact of each gift can motivate donors to give at specific levels.

## □ Promote Recurring Giving

While one-time donations are important, encouraging recurring giving can provide your organization with a steady stream of support throughout the year. Including a recurring gift option on your donation form can help turn your Day of Giving donors into long-term supporters.

- **Explain the impact of sustained support:** Highlight how monthly contributions, even at small amounts, add up over time and provide reliable funding for your organization's programs. Include examples of how recurring gifts can sustain ongoing projects or provide long-term benefits.
- **Make it easy:** With BetterWorld's donation forms, you can easily add a recurring giving option. Keep the process simple and offer different frequency options (one time, monthly, and annually) to fit the needs of your donors.
- **Recognize recurring donors:** Publicly acknowledge your recurring donors by offering them special recognition or benefits, such as exclusive updates or event invitations. Showing appreciation can strengthen their commitment to continue giving.

# Get ready to make the most of Day of Giving by creating memorable moments, sparking connection, and inspiring generosity!

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