

DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS

Shaker Middle School
Shaker Heights, Ohio

Students can be intrinsically and/or extrinsically motivated to work hard and achieve success in school. While the ultimate goal of most educators is to help instill in our students an intrinsic love for learning, we have also recognized the value of extrinsic motivation.

One of the goals of our Partnership Schools initiative was to increase the involvement of the business community with the school. At the same time, we wanted the students to understand the importance of sharing their accomplishments with businesses in Shaker Heights. "Dollars for Scholars" was created as a vehicle to meet both of these goals.

Shaker Heights is the home base for Office Max, an international office supply company. They are educationally oriented in terms of product line, and therefore, were selected over other businesses not related to education. With the support and encouragement of our Action Team, I contacted the president of Office Max. Through persistence and perseverance—and numerous telephone calls—we finally spoke about our school's proposal. These were the points covered:

- Business and education should forge a strong partnership in working towards mutually shared goals. This is particularly important for locally-based companies.
- Students need encouragement. Extrinsic rewards serve a useful purpose in schools.
- Office Max would receive recognition for their support of scholarship and garner all of the publicity and possible increased sales generated by the plan.
- Students who make the honor roll with a grade point average of at least 3.0 at the end of each semester would qualify for a one-time-only 10% discount on all Office Max non-electric supplies or equipment, up to a maximum of \$50.00 for the total purchase. In addition, students who improve their grade point average 1.0 (i.e., a 1.6 to a 2.6) for the semester would also qualify for the discount.

About 225 students, 25% of the student body, were mailed letters stating they had made the honor roll for the semester. Along with the letter, students received a discount coupon for Office Max. We are currently exploring the possibility of expanding this to students who receive all superior effort grades for the semester, therefore recognizing effort in much the same way as we recognize achievement. It is our expectation that this community partnership will help us build a strong school-family-community partnership program.

Neil Glazer, Principal
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