C.2 Advertising and Promotion

Community Outreach and Promotion

Community conversations and creative work involving diverse members of the community are the heart of the Western Institute's promotion and marketing plan. During Spring 2010 semester, community outreach began with three facilitated conversations to announce the creation of the Western Institute and to engage youth, parents, educators, neighborhood leaders, community organizations, and foundation grantees in support of the school. To date, 60 community leaders have met to discuss the same fundamental questions: How do we create a great high school? How do you want to be involved?

What we have learned so far has also intensified our commitment to the Western Institute's educational principles and goals. For example, a high school junior at one event said, "School needs to deal with fear head-on. Fear of each other. Fear of failure. Fear of the future. You have to deal with it in every class and in the culture of the school." That is exactly what we plan to do.

More than an outreach strategy, these animated conversations are laying the foundation for productive collaboration between youth and adults, and between the school and the community. Partners already committed to work with us to develop the school include the Ward 3 City Council Member, the City Planning Department outreach coordinator, PRONeighborhoods and ten neighborhood leaders, and many non-profit organizations, including foundation grantees. From planning meetings to open houses and recruitment events, engaging the community in building the school community and culture will be entirely consistent with the Western Institute's educational philosophy.

Marketing Strategy

The start up marketing goal is enrolling at least 80 incoming freshman and sophomores for the 2011-12 school year by June 2011.

Using authentic community involvement through meetings and networking events is a highly cost-effective strategy that will establish the schools identity and presence in the most powerful way—becoming a good neighbor in the community. Even during the start up months in Spring 2011, we expect that word of mouth will play a big part in our marketing efforts.

Nevertheless, the short timeline for recruiting students in order to open in August 2011 demands an exceptionally strong advertising and marketing effort from February-June 2011. The school's start up budget includes $12,000 for this initial marketing and branding campaign.

The Western Institute will make full use of available technologies and marketing strategies to establish a clearly defined identity, standing for academic excellence and youth leadership development. Marketing materials will include posters, color flyers, and fact sheets distributed widely in the community and, uniquely, video PSAs created by

teen videographers. Full use of social networking technologies is planned, including online student and parent surveys, an interactive website, and active presence on Facebook, YouTube, and other sites.

Implementation

The $12,000 budgeted for the Western Institute's initial marketing and branding efforts includes:

- $3,500 for professional logo design, poster design, template design for website pages, school stationery and business card design, and development of a student recruitment package that includes a color flyer, fact sheet, survey, and application materials.
- $3,000 for printing the above.
- $3,500 for school website creation and maintenance, plus maintaining a social networking presence during Spring 2011.
- $1,000 for community meetings, refreshments, and materials
- $500 for video PSAs
- $500 contingency

We will also actively create press releases, including video press releases, seek celebrity support, and seek opportunities for radio and television interviews to promote the school.