

Building Your Community

From interested families to launch-ready Schoolhouse

You found your families. They're excited. Your church is ready. Now comes the fun part—actually building your Schoolhouse community!

This is where your vision starts becoming reality. Here's how to go from "Great idea" to "We're really doing this!" in just a few focused steps.

Step 4: Create Your Schoolhouse Identity

Your Schoolhouse needs a name and personality that reflects your community's heart.

Choose your name: This is completely up to you and your church. Some ideas:

- **[Church Name] Schoolhouse** (Grace Community Schoolhouse)
- **[Location] Schoolhouse** (Riverside Schoolhouse)
- **[Vision] Schoolhouse** (Foundation Builders Schoolhouse)
- **Custom approach** (Living Springs Schoolhouse, Heritage Academy)

Decide your educational focus: What type of Schoolhouse serves your families best?

- **Mixed-age community:** All grades learning together
- **Elementary focus (K–6):** Building strong foundations
- **Classical approach:** Latin, logic, and literature
- **Charlotte Mason style:** Living books and nature study
- **Custom blend:** Whatever fits your families' needs

Why this matters: Your name and approach help families know they've found their place. It also makes your church leadership feel ownership of this ministry.



Come Home. School Together.

Step 5: Design Your Schedule

Think of this as creating the rhythm that will define your community.

Start with the basics:

- **Meeting days:** Two days a week (Tuesday/Thursday is popular) or one day a week (Fridays and Tuesdays are both popular)
- **Time frame:** Half days (8:00 a.m.–12 noon) or full days (9:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.) or any variation your families desire
- **Assembly time:** 15–30 minutes to start each day together

Sample schedule (adjust timing to fit your chosen hours and grade levels):

Assembly: Opening prayer, introductions, community time

First class period: 45–60 minutes

Break/transition: 15 minutes

Second class period: 45–60 minutes

Lunch and fellowship: 30–45 minutes

Third class period: 45–60 minutes

(optional) Cleanup and dismissal: 15 minutes

... etc.

Keep it simple: Start with 2–3 class periods. You can always add more as your community grows.

Remember: Parents stay on-site during Schoolhouse days—some with their specific children, others teaching classes, helping in the lunch room, setting up art activities, or assisting wherever needed.

Step 6: Get Families Enrolled and Ready

Now it's time to make it official and get everyone prepared for launch.

Help families sign up:

- Guide them to SchoolhouseTeachers.com to sign up for membership.
- Provide your Director discount code so they pay \$189 instead of \$389.
- Help them navigate the platform if they need assistance (refer to the *Before You Launch: Exploring SchoolhouseTeachers.com* guide).

Match teachers with classes:

- Share a list of SchoolhouseTeachers.com courses and ask families to choose which one they'd enjoy teaching.
- Pair experienced homeschool parents with newer homeschool parents.
- Plan for classes that serve the age groups you have.

Plan your Print Party: Schedule a community gathering 1–2 weeks before launch, where Schoolhouse families, parent-teachers, and the Director:

- Print and bind course materials together.
- Decorate binders and organize supplies.
- Learn how to access courses and answer keys on SchoolhouseTeachers.com with the Director.
- Share a meal and build excitement.
- Get familiar with the church facility (locate classrooms, playground, bathrooms, etc.).
- Tip: Most courses include a PDF cover image that can be used for binder covers. To access it, click the course image on the landing page, then right click to save the file. Open the jpg on your computer and use your print feature to print it to your printer or to PDF in the portrait orientation, using the option to fill the entire page.

Set up communication:

- Create a simple email list or private Facebook group.
- Share contact information among families.
- Establish how you'll handle schedule changes or announcements.

Step 7: Prepare for Launch Day

Your first day sets the tone for everything that follows.

Focus on relationships first:

- Keep first classes short and introductory.
- Plan extra time for families to connect.
- Have name tags ready for everyone.
- Prepare a simple welcome for new families.

Plan for the unexpected:

- Have backup activities if technology doesn't work.
- Prepare quiet activities for younger siblings.
- Keep first-day schedules flexible.
- Remember: building community matters more than perfect execution.

Set realistic expectations:

- Not everything will go perfectly, and that's okay.
- Families are looking for connection, not perfection.
- Your role is facilitating, not controlling every detail.
- Community will grow naturally as families get to know each other.

You're Ready to Launch!

After these three steps, you'll have:

- ✓ A named Schoolhouse with clear identity and focus
- ✓ A workable schedule that serves participating families
- ✓ Enrolled families who know what to expect
- ✓ A plan for launch day that prioritizes community

The beautiful truth: Once you launch, your Schoolhouse will take on a life of its own. Families will form friendships, children will discover new interests, and parents will find the support they need for their homeschool journey.

Trust the process: Every successful Schoolhouse started exactly where you are now. Some details will need adjusting as you go, and that's perfectly normal. Focus on serving your families well, and the rest will develop naturally.

You're about to give families in your community something they've been searching for—authentic Christian fellowship built around excellent education. What a privilege to be part of their story!

Next Up: "Your Launch Day Success"—practical tips for making your first weeks smooth and building lasting community.

Need support along the way? Email Directors@SchoolhouseTeachers.com—you're part of a network of Directors who understand precisely what you're experiencing.