



The Old Schoolhouse® Magazine • PO Box 8426, Gray, TN 37615 • 423.444.5956 • publisher@theoldschoolhouse.com



Come Home. School Together.

Your Launch Day Success

Making your first weeks smooth while building lasting community

Launch day is here! You've done the preparation work, your families are ready, and your church is excited to host this new ministry.

Now it's time to turn all that planning into reality. Here's how to make your launch successful and build momentum for a thriving long-term community.

Step 8: Execute Your Launch Day

Your first day sets the tone for everything that follows, but remember—it doesn't have to be perfect to be successful.

Arrive early to prepare:

- Get to the church 30–45 minutes before families arrive.
- Check that all rooms are unlocked and set up.
- Test any technology you'll be using.
- Set up a welcome table with name tags and basic information.
- Have simple snacks or coffee available if possible.

Focus on relationships over perfection:

- Greet each family personally as they arrive.
- Keep Assembly warm and welcoming, not rushed.
- Allow extra time between classes for families to connect.
- Take photos to commemorate this special day.
- Expect some chaos—it's normal and part of building community.

Keep classes simple and engaging:

- Start with introductory activities rather than jumping into curriculum.
- Have backup plans ready if technology doesn't cooperate.
- Let parent-teachers know it's okay to keep things shorter on day one.
- Include time for students to get to know each other.

End on a high note:

- Gather everyone together before dismissal.
- Thank families for being part of this launch.
- Share excitement about what's ahead.
- Exchange contact information if you haven't already.
- Set expectations for next week.

Step 9: Build Momentum in Your First Month

The first few weeks are crucial for establishing your Schoolhouse culture and helping families feel connected.

Prioritize supporting and promoting community in Weeks 2–3:

- **Check in with families individually:** How did their children respond? Any concerns or suggestions?
- **Support your parent-teachers:** Offer encouragement and practical help with curriculum or classroom management.
- **Adjust schedules if needed:** Small tweaks can make a big difference in flow.
- **Plan your first community event:** A simple potluck lunch or family game day is great.

Establish consistent rhythms:

- Start and end each day at the same time.
- Develop Assembly routines that families can count on.
- Create systems for communication between sessions.
- Build in regular times for parent connection and fellowship.

Address challenges quickly:

- If a family seems disconnected, reach out personally.
- If a class isn't working well, problem-solve with the parent-teacher.
- If scheduling issues arise, gather input and make adjustments.
- Remember: small problems solved early prevent bigger ones later.

Celebrate small wins:

- Share photos of students enjoying classes (with permission).
- Highlight parent-teachers who are doing great work.
- Acknowledge families who are building friendships.
- Document special moments and learning breakthroughs.

Step 10: Create Long-Term Community Success

After your first month, you'll start seeing the real community connections happen—families forming deep friendships and children thriving together. Below are some ideas to build long-term community success.

Plan special events that build bonds:

- **Monthly potlucks** where families share meals and stories
- **Field trips** that align with your curriculum topics—consider forming a field trip committee of 2–3 parents to help plan and coordinate these
- **Holiday celebrations** that bring families together outside of class time
- **End-of-semester showcases** where students can share what they've learned
- **Family service projects** that strengthen your community while serving others

Field trip ideas that work well for Schoolhouses:

- Local history museums and historical sites
- Science centers and planetariums
- Art galleries and cultural centers
- Working farms and agricultural centers
- Government buildings (city hall, courthouse, state capitol)
- Behind-the-scenes tours (newspaper, radio station, bakery)
- Nature centers and state parks
- Theater productions and concerts
- Community service opportunities (food banks, nursing homes)

Support ongoing family connections:

- Encourage families to get together outside of Schoolhouse days.
- Create opportunities for parents to share resources and advice.
- Plan moms' nights out or dads' breakfast gatherings.

Communicate with your church leadership:

- Share success stories and photos with your pastor and church board.
- Invite church members to visit and see the ministry in action.
- Include Schoolhouse updates in church newsletters or announcements.
- Express gratitude for their support and partnership.

Stay connected to The Schoolhouse Network:

- Join Director support groups and online communities.
- Attend training opportunities or network gatherings.
- Share your own success stories to encourage other Directors.
- Access ongoing resources and curriculum updates.

Growing and Adapting

As your Schoolhouse finds its rhythm, expect it to grow and adapt.

When new families want to join mid-year:

- Welcome them warmly but set realistic expectations about jumping in.
- Pair them with established families who can help them get oriented.
- Consider starting new families at natural semester breaks when possible.
- Remember that growth is a good problem to have.

If you need to make changes:

- Gather input from families before making major adjustments.
- Communicate changes clearly and with plenty of advance notice.
- Stay flexible and responsive to your community's needs.
- Don't be afraid to try new approaches if current ones aren't working.

Planning for future years:

- Start thinking about next year's schedule and focus by spring.
- Ask families about their plans and commitments for the following year.
- Consider adding new class options or age groups based on interest.
- Document what worked well and what you'd like to improve.

You Did It!

Congratulations! You've successfully launched a Schoolhouse that will impact families for years to come.

What you've accomplished:

- ✓ Created a thriving educational community in your church
- ✓ Provided families with Christ-centered fellowship and learning
- ✓ Built relationships that will support children and parents for years
- ✓ Established a ministry that serves your broader community
- ✓ Developed your own skills as a leader and community builder

The impact you're making: Your Schoolhouse is more than just classes and curriculum. You've created a place where:

- Children experience learning in community with friends who share their values.
- Parents find encouragement and support for their homeschool journey.
- Families build deep, lasting friendships rooted in faith.
- Your church extends its ministry reach into the homeschool community.
- The next generation grows up knowing they're part of something bigger than themselves.

Remember this moment: Years from now, the families in your Schoolhouse will look back on this launch as a turning point in their homeschool journey. Children will remember the friends they made, parents will treasure the support they found, and your church will see the fruit of investing in this ministry.

You've given families something precious—authentic Christian community centered around excellent education. Thank you for saying yes to this calling and for serving families in your community with such faithfulness.

Continue the journey: Your Schoolhouse will continue growing and changing, and that's exactly how it should be. Trust the process, serve your families well, and enjoy watching God work through this ministry you've built together.

Questions or need ongoing support? Email Directors@SchoolhouseTeachers.com—you're part of a network of Directors who are cheering you on!