

*Don't just hand out the yearbooks. Celebrate your achievement and establish a school-wide, year-end tradition. Follow four easy steps to plan a fun signing party that finishes the story of the year with an exclamation point rather than a period.*

**celebrate!**



**P**lanning a distribution/yearbook signing celebration the entire school can appreciate is a worthwhile project. An event like this can be a win/win for everyone involved. Celebrate the success of launching a new publication and celebrate the student body with their excitement and memories. A distribution celebration helps build the tradition of the yearbook as a vital part of the school experience.

Combine business with pleasure. A distribution celebration can generate some extra revenue to pay for summer workshops or decorate the yearbook room. Consider charging a modest admission fee of \$2-\$3. Sell extra yearbooks at a premium price to encourage advance purchases next year. Also, sell autograph sections, pens and protective plastic covers. Sell refreshments such as popcorn and soft drinks.

To encourage attendance at the distribution celebration, schedule the event late in the week, like a Thursday or Friday, and promote that books not picked up at the event will be available at the beginning of the following week. Check the school calendar for a date with minimal conflicts with other year-end events.

Another great way to build excitement and guarantee a good turnout is to hire a DJ for the celebration. If funds are limited, consider inviting popular student bands to perform at the celebration. Consider creating a “battle of the bands” where bands agree to play for free in exchange for the exposure or a small cash prize for the band voted best by the students.

The entertainment and the “early” pick-up of the yearbook help justify the modest admission price.

Prior to the school-wide celebration, have a private, staff-only celebration. Order a cake with the cover on it. Unveil the yearbook for the first time to the entire staff. Give out staff awards. Present an appreciation gift to your adviser. And, don't forget to present the principal with an advanced copy.

Use the days before your yearbooks arrive to plan your distribution celebration. Don't forget to allow adequate time to move the yearbooks to your celebration location. You'll need signs, receipts, sales records, and cash to make change for on-site sales as part of your setup process.

## Planning Checklist

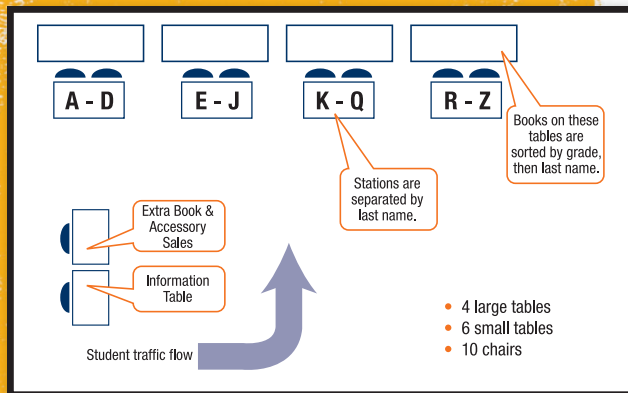
- Determine what items/supplies you'll need at your signing party.
  - Additional yearbook accessories or pens for sale
  - Snacks and refreshments
- What additional items will you include (i.e., music, games, special recognition)?
- Determine if you will charge admission to your signing party, either to cover costs for the party or to raise funds for next year's yearbook.
- If possible, start planning/organizing your party 2-3 months in advance.
  - Get adviser and administration approval throughout your planning process so you don't run into issues down the road.
  - One of the best ways to distribute yearbooks is by grade and then by alphabet.
- Pre-arrange logistics for your party:
  - Location: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Date: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Time: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Custodial/administration approval: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Distribution areas needed:
    - Paid-in-Full Yearbook Pick-up—4-6 tables with lines sorted alphabetically for example: A-D, E-J, etc.
    - Partial-Paid Yearbooks, Yearbook Accessory Sales and Buy Your Yearbook Here—1 table
    - Yearbook Information—1 table
  - Tables, chairs, projectors, etc. needed: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Cash box locations: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Setup details: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Names of staff, teacher and parent volunteers: \_\_\_\_\_
- Make sure you sell all of your extra books before, during and after your distribution signing party. Create a plan for getting them sold.
  - Some ideas include creating and posting "Last Chance to Buy" posters and messages through your school announcements.
  - Arrange for a "Buy Your Yearbook Today" table at the party and posters after the party communicating how to buy a yearbook.

## STEP 1: Plan your yearbook distribution and signing party.



*The most important step in planning your signing party is to assign an event coordinator and team of two or three people to own the process from start to finish. Once you have your signing party team in place, they can start planning.*

## STEP 2: Prepare for your yearbook distribution and signing party.



Distribution Layout

### SIGNING PARTY IDEAS

Here are some great celebration event ideas from schools around the country:

- \* Get local businesses to donate food and drinks.
- \* Sponsor a student (and faculty) talent show.
- \* Host class picnics where you hand out the yearbooks.
- \* Have school clubs set up booths at the party selling everything from face painting to pizza.
- \* Invite student bands to perform at the event or hire a DJ.
- \* Show a slideshow of photos that didn't make it into the yearbook.
- \* Ask local businesses to donate prizes and sell raffle tickets to raise money.
- \* If you can't fit your whole student body into your event location, hold two events split by grades.
- \* Order pens with your yearbook theme printed on them and sell them at your event.

## Sample Schedule

- ✓ **One Month Prior**
  - Line up student, staff, teacher and parent volunteers for the day of the party and for setup prior to the party.
  - Schedule volunteer assignments and clearly communicate the assignments to all volunteers.
  - If applicable, follow up with local businesses and vendors to confirm times, items to be delivered, costs, etc.
- ✓ **1-2 Weeks Prior**
  - Prepare lists to use for distribution.
  - Go to Yearbook Avenue and use the reports under the Sell menu to print and review your distribution lists.
  - Make corrections and update the list.
  - Send a friendly reminder to all volunteers and businesses/vendors.
- ✓ **When Yearbooks Arrive**
  - Sort yearbooks and accessories by grade and then by alphabet.
  - Label each yearbook with the student's name and the options they ordered (use an index card sticking out of the book, labels or sticky notes). Organize individual student accessories with their yearbook to make distribution easier.
  - Take care of any problems with the yearbooks prior to the delivery day. Contact your Jostens Yearbook representative or consultant to help.
- ✓ **Day Before**
  - If possible, set up your event the day before.





### STEP 3: Promote your yearbook distribution and signing party.

- ✓ Promote the party to students/staff and let them know how to buy a yearbook.
  - Use staff t-shirts to help get the word out.
  - Start promoting your event within the school.
  - Post a distribution poster in a visible location.
  - Put a distribution note in the newsletter.
  - Include reminders about the event in daily announcements.
- ✓ Be very clear when communicating WHEN and WHERE to pick up yearbooks, HOW to gain entrance to the party and HOW to buy a yearbook. The more clear your communication, the less time you'll spend answering questions.



### STEP 4: Celebrate!



### Gather your volunteers. Set up. Put your plan in motion. Have fun!

*Make it special for students and your school.  
Create excitement for next year. Enjoy the  
energy and celebrate your success.*

It's never too soon to start planning for next year. Try to get photos and feedback from the school for next year's yearbook. Include a yearbook survey or Image Share flyer inside the yearbook, asking students for feedback and photos.