Research: The annual Fall Breakfast is one of the biggest community events of the year for the Shawnee Mission School District. It regularly draws nearly 1,200 attendees and is often used to help energize the community for a new school year. It is an event created in collaboration with the district’s education foundation and is their premiere fundraiser. In 2020, the event could not be held in person due to COVID-19 guidelines and regulations. In 2021, communications and foundation staff planned for a return to an in-person event, while making back-up plans for a hybrid event due to continued uncertainty around the pandemic. The communications team and Foundation decided to focus on stories of connection, key objectives in the district strategic plan, and Foundation initiatives in an on-stage production. In addition, the event was utilized as a platform to introduce the new Superintendent to the community. While planning for an in-person event, the team also researched best practices for hybrid events by reviewing models used by fundraising organizations and local nonprofits. Two weeks before the planned in-person event, the decision was made to move to a hybrid event.

Analysis/planning: Communication and Foundation staff consulted leaders of various district departments and schools, reviewed previous stories shared on district platforms, and consulted with the superintendent’s office and members of the community to determine the stories that should be included in the program. Both the Foundation and communication department selected stories that highlighted key elements of the district’s strategic plan including the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion, college and career readiness, personalized learning, and the development of interpersonal skills. A goal for both departments was to highlight students from all attendance feeder patterns and from elementary, middle, and high school. The program was crafted to include on-stage interviews and performances interspersed with video stories. Elementary students were not available to participate in-person due to Covid mitigation practices, and were strategically featured in the video segments. The on-stage program was viewed by a small in-person audience of administrators and select donors, live streamed, and made available for on-demand viewing. Both teams set a goal to achieve equivalent viewerhip and raise an equivalent amount of money as previous years.

Communication/Implementation: Promotion for this event was directly emailed to all staff and families multiple times, shared on the district website and social media, and through local media outlets, including a hyperlocal online newspaper. The Foundation shared invitations with their network of supporters. Viewers had the opportunity to watch live or on-demand in order to increase viewership. The communication staff remained in conversation with the Foundation, which tracked viewership and donations.

Evaluation: - The Fall Breakfast raised $206,800. This amount represents a 30% increase over funds raised for the 2020 fall breakfast and a 15% increase over funds raised in 2019.
- The on-demand video has achieved nearly 1,500 views. This surpasses the number of audience members who typically attend the event.
- Anecdotally, sponsors and community members thanked the Foundation and communication team for a successful event in support of students despite the pandemic.
- The Executive Director of the Foundation referred to the event as a “raging success”.

Shawnee Mission School District
Overland Park Kansas

2022 Golden Achievement Award Entry
Project: 2021 Fall Breakfast
Support Materials

Invitation

2021 Fall Breakfast Video

Promotional Materials

Inside Magazine, Summer 2021 Issue
Early promotion
Delivered to 100,000 residents
Included on page 13

Sept. 1, 2021 website promotion and invitation

September 17 website promotion and invitation

Shawnee Mission Post column
Examples of Social Media Promotion

Even as we continue to work through obstacles and challenges, there are so many inspirational examples of students and staff working to ensure every student can achieve unlimited possibilities. These stories take center stage at the annual breakfast event.

This virtual event will take place at 7:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 28, 2021. Use the link above to make your reservation online or call 913-993-9360.

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You don’t want to miss this Shawnee Mission Education Foundation Fall Breakfast!

- Surprise announcements
- Dr. Hubbard in conversation with SMSD students
- Amazing students and staff

We have it all for you right here: https://youtu.be/p2A2eucUFFg