

DISTRIBUTION
DAY: THE
BIG

REVEAL

A WALSWORTH YEARBOOKS NEW ADVISER RESOURCE

Walsworth yearbooks



**MICHELLE CORBETT, ADVISER,
INDIAN TRAIL HIGH SCHOOL & ACADEMY
KENOSHA, WISCONSIN**

“Require students to initial or sign when they pick up their books and require an ID or a receipt. There will be a few kids or parents who claim they bought a book, but have no receipt (I have also had parents show me a canceled check or credit card statement).”

DISTRIBUTION DAY: THE BIG REVEAL

The day you and your staff have worked so hard for is finally here. Today, you hand out the yearbooks to everyone who bought a copy. There will be laughter. There will be anxious flips from the index. There will be some “oohing and aahing!” And there will be celebrating.

But wait! First, there will be planning. Lots of planning. But the good news is that with proper planning, distribution day can be one of the most joyous days of the year for you and your staff. And even better news, this eBook has been created to make planning easier. Here, you will find advice from a publishing company with more than 80 years of experience helping schools deliver their books, as well as other advisers who have been there and done it, and are excited to share their knowledge.

Every veteran yearbook adviser can tell you stories of distribution day dos and don'ts. This eBook is intended to prepare you for the excitement of your first distribution day, the insider term for the day you hand out your books.

Achieve your Zen through planning and organization.

BEFORE BOOKS ARRIVE

One of the best places to start in your distribution day planning is determining who gets a book and preparing a list of names to check off as people pick up their books.

WHERE DO I FIND MY LIST OF PURCHASERS?

1. For Walsworth schools, log in to your Members Only page.
2. In the Sales Central box at the top right, click on the Get Sales Details link.
3. At bottom right, click Print List, select As Distribution List and then click on the Print List button.
4. You can copy and paste this webpage into a document or print it directly from the webpage. Make sure you have students sign on the line by their name. This helps cut down on claims of “I never picked up my book” and helps you keep track of how many books still need to be distributed after your distribution day.



I'D
ADVISE

MICHELLE CORBETT, ADVISER
INDIAN TRAIL HIGH SCHOOL & ACADEMY
KENOSHA, WISCONSIN

“Double-check all of your receipts prior to distribution to make sure all sales have been entered in the Walsworth database or any database that you are using.”

If you did not enter the sales of books sold at the school into Sales Central during the year, add those orders to your distribution list. Also, add any other copies that were promised to other people or organizations. For example, the school or public library, the front office, the police station, etc. Word of caution: avoid setting the precedent of giving away too many free copies.

“Highlight the names on the lists for who ordered special books to make sure they don’t get a regular book. When they sign for their book, they may ask why their name is highlighted. It’s a double-check system, in case you forgot to give them their special-order book.”

– GWEN MAUNTEL, ADVISER
ST. FRANCIS BORGIA REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
WASHINGTON, MISSOURI

“Not everyone remembers or knows that they have a specialty book. Use Walsworth to record all in house sales. Download your sales in Excel and highlight every specialty book order in a bold color. This will help the student and your staff remember to go to the special-order book line to retrieve their books.”

- LACY TURNER, ADVISER
MOUNT JULIET HIGH SCHOOL
MOUNT JULIET, TENNESSEE

Post the list of people who are to receive a book on the outside of the classroom ahead of distribution day, so that people can check it in advance and know if they can expect to receive a book. If you plan to have extra books for sale at distribution, note that on the list.

Example of notice to post with list of books purchased:
“If you do not see your name on the list above, we do not have record that you purchased a book. Please provide proof of purchase in the form of a receipt or a credit card statement. A limited number of books will be available to purchase on the day books are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.”



JESSICA ROOT, ADVISER
LEE'S SUMMIT NORTH HIGH SCHOOL
LEE'S SUMMIT, MISSOURI

"My biggest advice for any adviser preparing for a distribution day is to stay true to the system that's already in place (if you have that luxury) and then reflect on that to make changes for the following year. I've been very lucky to inherit such an amazing staff, which I know not every new adviser gets, so much of what I've learned this year has come from my students. There's no reason to reinvent the wheel the first year you inherit a staff. There are many changes I want to make next year, but I'm glad I humbled myself and let my staff teach me how yearbook works at my school my first year as adviser."

MICHELLE CORBETT, ADVISER
INDIAN TRAIL HIGH SCHOOL & ACADEMY
KENOSHA, WISCONSIN

"Advertise - A LOT! Get the word out to your students and parents with the date and time. Put it on the school announcements, make fliers and posters, use your publications' or school's social media accounts. The better advertised it is, the fewer books you'll have unclaimed."

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Work with administration, especially if this is your first yearbook distribution. This is not the time for surprises. Let the front office know when the books are scheduled to arrive and discuss where the books will be stored and the best place to conduct your distribution.

Once you and the front office determine the best place to conduct your distribution, talk to the faculty associated with that location. Will it be in the gym? Talk to the coaches to ensure the space will be available. Will it be in the cafeteria? Talk to the cafeteria staff to develop the best plan.

"Kids won't just pick up their books. They'll stand around and look through them. Have space available for them to hang out."

– GWEN MAUNTEL, ADVISER
ST. FRANCIS BORGIA REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
WASHINGTON, MISSOURI

PROMOTE IN ADVANCE

Enter in the school calendar so all of the faculty is aware of when books will be distributed.

Put on the front marquee sign.

Let parents know:

- Send an email
- Send home a flier
- Add to school website calendar
- Let them know:
 - o Date
 - o Time
 - o Brief description of how distribution will work
 - o Bring receipt
 - o Bring ID
 - o If books will be available to purchase at distribution day and if so, how much they will cost. **AT DISTRIBUTION, NEVER EVER CHARGE LESS THAN YOUR LAST PRICE FOR THE BOOK.**



**MICHELLE CORBETT, ADVISER
INDIAN TRAIL HIGH SCHOOL & ACADEMY
KENOSHA, WISCONSIN**

“Bring lots of pens and pencils for students to sign books!”

**LACY TURNER, ADVISER
MOUNT JULIET HIGH SCHOOL
MOUNT JULIET, TENNESSEE**

“Assign specific roles to students. Practice the flow of people and distribution. Always establish floaters who can step up when and wherever needed.”

**LACY TURNER, ADVISER
MOUNT JULIET HIGH SCHOOL
MOUNT JULIET, TENNESSEE**

“We have two lines for distribution day. In the first line, students give their names to a staff member. They verify the purchase, the students sign and they are given a small piece of colored paper with the staff member’s signature. One color is for regular books and another is for specialty books. They take their colored paper to the distribution lines and line up in the one designated for either regular or specialty. They trade their paper for their book, and we recycle the used tickets.”

HOW MANY PEOPLE DO YOU NEED TO WORK YOUR DISTRIBUTION?

- Working at book distribution tables
- Handing out pens
- Managing lines/Directing traffic
- Collecting garbage – Important job! You want to be gracious guests in the space you are using and leave it in better shape than you found it.
- Photographing – Share photos of the event on social media. Build excitement for next year!
- Bookkeeping – It’s a good idea to avoid students handling money. If possible, see if the school bookkeeper or a faculty member, comfortable with handling money, can be there to sell extra copies of your book.
- Floating – Help when needed, an important role!

“Have trustworthy yearbook staff members or faculty from that grade level handing out the books, so they know the kids who are picking them up.”

**– GWEN MAUNTEL, ADVISER
ST. FRANCIS BORGIA REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
WASHINGTON, MISSOURI**

“Have photographers capture the event, if only so your staff members can see peoples’ reactions because they’ll be busy handing out the books.”

**– GWEN MAUNTEL, ADVISER
ST. FRANCIS BORGIA REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
WASHINGTON, MISSOURI**

Have lists of sold books divided by class level and alphabetized. Have a signature line like when you go to vote. The students should sign their names when they pick up the books. (Actually, the person handing over the book should initial there, too!) We rarely let a “friend” pick up someone else’s book.

REMEMBER: KEEP THIS DAY SIMPLE.

There will be a lot going on. Just focus on getting the books in the hands of purchasers and celebrating, in the moment, the result of all those months of work.



**GWEN MAUNTEL, ADVISER,
ST. FRANCIS BORGIA REGIONAL HIGH
SCHOOL, WASHINGTON, MISSOURI**

"In the same room/gym, have four different areas for distribution: sophomores, juniors, seniors and graduates. Have the areas well-marked with signs hanging overhead. Each area should have its own supply of books (well-guarded, of course). Students with siblings who are graduates can pick up those books."

DURING YOUR DISTRIBUTION EVENT

**THE BIG DAY. THE BOOKS HAVE ARRIVED!
NOW WHAT?**

CHECK IT OUT!

As the adviser, open one box and review the book privately. Look for areas to praise your students and look for any errors. Don't beat yourself up over errors. Always remember: it's a student publication.

"Take time to celebrate with your staff and brag on them before you start passing books out."

**- LACY TURNER, ADVISER
MOUNT JULIET HIGH SCHOOL
MOUNT JULIET, TENNESSEE**

Many staffs stick small slips of paper inside the front cover reminding people that the book is a student publication and asking them to forgive mistakes.



The yearbook staff is pleased to present this publication to our fellow students. The publication was created by students for students and is not a professional publication. All efforts were made to improve our product and catch all mistakes. We apologize for any inaccuracies that may have occurred during this educational process.

Buffalo
Haltom High School
Haltom City, Texas



**LACY TURNER, ADVISER
MOUNT JULIET HIGH SCHOOL
MOUNT JULIET, TENNESSEE**

“Tell your kids every compliment you hear about the book. Tell them who said it too. They need to hear that others appreciate what they’ve done for the school.”

- Expect complaints. Don’t get emotional if parents call about mistakes. Parents are not familiar with all that goes into creating a yearbook and may need to be reminded that it is a product made by students who are not professionals and that, certainly, some mistakes are to be expected.
- People can be mean. It’s not you, it’s them. Show compassion and strive to reach a solution.
- Remember their perspective: they don’t know what goes into the book, they just know that their child’s name has been misspelled or their child has been left out. This is a rational response for them.
- Own up to the mistake. Don’t make excuses. Be congenial and strive for a positive outcome. Talk to your rep, who will work with you to find a solution.
- Don’t engage in social media wars. There are no winners. Have the conversation face to face if possible, or at least offline through direct messages or email.
- GOOD IDEA: Don’t look at your email or social media on the day of distribution. It’s busy enough already and not the time to handle complaints or issues. They can wait until the next day. Enjoy your day! This is what all the hard work was for. Take time to celebrate with your staff and reflect on all of the positive aspects of the book.

WHAT TO DO IF THERE IS AN ERROR IN THE BOOK

If you have a major error, contact your rep about doing a crack and peel. Crack and peels are stickers with a self-adhesive back that can be placed over the mistake. It can be made to cover one book, or enough crack and peels can be provided for every person who purchased the book. It really depends on the error and the response from the students or parents.

“Take every criticism with a grain of salt. People usually do not understand the thought, effort and dedication it takes to publish a yearbook, and tend to criticize accordingly. Listen, look for any truth you can find and ignore the rest. Do not get sucked into defending your book to everyone that has something to say. Mistakes happen in a student publication. Apologize if an error was made, but otherwise, thank them for their feedback and tell them you will take it into consideration when planning for next year.”

**- LACY TURNER, ADVISER
MOUNT JULIET HIGH SCHOOL
MOUNT JULIET, TENNESSEE**

STORAGE

Secure the books in a place that's locked. These books are valuable. This is really important. No one gets a book before distribution day. Stay strong. Think about how much money you're losing if a book goes missing.

"Once the books are delivered to school, keep it top secret and keep all books under lock and key!"

– GWEN MAUNTEL, ADVISER
ST. FRANCIS BORGIA REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
WASHINGTON, MISSOURI

If you're a Walsworth school that sold yearbook options (iTags, clear book protectors, autograph supplements, current event supplements), you will receive them in envelopes labeled with the purchasers' names. This makes distributing options a breeze. Make sure the list of books sold indicates which students purchased yearbook options so that you will know to hand them their envelopes.

If you sold namestamping, the namestamped books will be packaged separately from the non-namestamped yearbooks and will be in orange boxes.

AUTOGRAPH PARTY – THE “BIG EVENT”

Host an autograph party at your distribution. Getting your book signed is still one of the coolest and most unique things about a yearbook that students will treasure as adults. Make students feel like they will be attending the biggest event of the year at the school because they bought a yearbook.

"Realize you're delivering the 'baby' that you and your staff have put blood, sweat and tears into over the past year, SO MAKE IT A BIG DEAL!!!"

– GWEN MAUNTEL, ADVISER
ST. FRANCIS BORGIA REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
WASHINGTON, MISSOURI

One of the challenges of selling yearbooks is that the item has not been created yet, so the purchaser cannot see/touch/feel the product; but, people are familiar with the concept of purchasing a ticket for an event that has not yet happened. Promote your signing party as the “Big Event” and hand out tickets to the signing party when a yearbook is purchased.

Promoting the event at the time when books are for sale is key. This is not a punishment to people who did not purchase a yearbook, but rather an incentive for people to purchase the book in advance. Reward your purchasers with a cool event where they can get their yearbook signed!

Have lots of pens on hand. They don’t need to be fancy or expensive, but they need to be plentiful. Be careful with gel pens! They take a while to dry and smear easily. Go to local businesses and ask for pens. Hotels and banks are good resources since they often have pens with their logos on them.

Who gets to come? Everyone who bought a book! Don’t just limit the autograph party to seniors. Build the culture of buying a yearbook to include all students in the school, not just seniors. Students want that time with the book and their friends.

Still want to do something special for the seniors? Consider hosting a senior breakfast the morning of distribution day. Doesn’t have to be elaborate. This gives seniors the chance to get their classmates’ signatures.

Create posters to advertise the party. Check out the Big Event posters, fliers, tickets and backstage passes that Walsworth can create for you at walsworthyearbooks.com/bigevent.



PREPARING FOR THE PARTY

- Decorations — Suggestions: balloons, tablecloths that match the color of your book
- Music – Create a fun event with upbeat music. Have your staff contribute songs to make all staff members feel included.

“Have a ‘hype song’ to play before you distribute; or if you’re able, make a playlist to play in the distribution room that is full of your staff’s favorite jams.”

**- LACY TURNER, ADVISER
MOUNT JULIET HIGH SCHOOL
MOUNT JULIET, TENNESSEE**

- Slide show of unused photos – People will enjoy seeing the photos that didn’t make it into the yearbook as well.
- Food – Always nice to have, but be sure to choose something that is not messy or will stick to the pages of the books.
- Drinks
- Donations for prizes
- Social media promotion
- Take notes – Record who moved, who wants to be on staff next year, issues (but don’t dwell on them), etc.

T-SHIRTS FOR STAFF

If your staff has t-shirts, be sure to wear them on the day of distribution. This will be the day that non-staff students are going to realize what your staff has been working on for months. Celebrate that feeling of recognition!

When you order your t-shirts, consider buying an extra one in size small to hang up in your yearbook classroom. It’s fun for staffs to see the shirts year after year and builds a sense of community.

FOOD

Think about what you’re going to serve as food at your autograph party to make sure it isn’t messy.

Cupcakes = bad

Cookies = good

“Bring snacks for students on staff.”

**- LACY TURNER, ADVISER
MOUNT JULIET HIGH SCHOOL
MOUNT JULIET, TENNESSEE**



**GWEN MAUNTEL, ADVISER,
ST. FRANCIS BORGIA REGIONAL HIGH
SCHOOL, WASHINGTON, MISSOURI**

“Have a 10- or 15-minute practice session for handing out books. All of your carefully made plans are for naught if you don’t share the plan with your helpers.”

Ask businesses and school organizations for donations for your signing party. Offering prizes is another way to get people to purchase! The student council is a good place to check. They would like to support a student-created product. Thank your donors in advance.

Review job duties with the staff to ensure that all tasks are covered and everybody knows what they are doing.

USE YOUR EVENT TO SET YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS NEXT YEAR

Sell next year’s book. Leapfrog off of the excitement of receiving this year’s book. Consider putting a slip of paper in each book that is a coupon for next year’s book.

Sell senior ads. What better time to get ahead of next year than when people are fawning over the ads this year?

Recruit staff members. Students are seeing the fun that yearbook can be. Take down their names and contact them about being part of the team next year!

More on selling books at distribution and after

You may be in the position of having of extra books and you may be tempted to sell them at a discount. **DON’T.** You must always charge at least the same amount as the last price you were charging (if you do tiered pricing throughout the year) for the extra copies. Why? Because if you sell them for less, you are training your students and parents that if they wait to purchase, they will get the best deal of the year. That would be a detrimental lesson to teach your purchasers. In fact, sometimes the best thing that can happen is for you to completely run out of books. The pain it causes for those waiting to purchase a book teaches a valuable lesson to be sure to purchase the yearbook next year as soon as it goes on sale.

OTHER DISTRIBUTION OPTIONS

DISTRIBUTING BOOKS ROOM TO ROOM

Some schools choose to take their yearbooks to the students by delivering them classroom by classroom. Very important: Let the teachers know in advance that you’re delivering books, what time, how long it should take and the process.



**AARON DAHL, ADVISER
FILLMORE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL
GENEVA, NEBRASKA**

“Fillmore Central has a fall distribution. Each year, we strive to have the final sent in by the end of our school year, around May 30, so we can have a delivery the first week of school, mid- August. At Fillmore Central we have a 20-minute period at the end of the school day for study hall/make up work, class meetings, etc. That provides a perfect time for handing out yearbooks to students. Some of the things my class and I

do to prepare for distribution day are:

- With each receipt of a yearbook purchase, add those to a Google Sheet so there is a second document with purchaser names, check numbers, number of books purchased, etc.
- When sales are complete and distribution day is nearing, double check receipts with the Google Sheet created to verify correctness.
- Print off homeroom class lists to split the yearbooks up.
- When distribution day arrives, my class spends time splitting all the books up as well as some of these other things:
 - Verify all the students that purchased namestamps on their books are correctly spelled and on the book as promised.
 - Split the yearbooks up based on our homeroom lists printed before.
 - The class then spends the time putting a receipt in each book with the student's name. That way, when we are handing them out, we know exactly who each book goes to and we provide the students with a receipt they can either keep or give to their parents for verification of payment.”

Find rolling chairs or dollies to carry the books — those boxes are heavy! Second period is a good option. Print a sign sheet for each classroom. It's important to get signatures when books have been delivered to a purchaser so you can settle disputes later. Avoid “I never got my book” arguments.

Don't deliver the books to the rooms in advance, even though it may be tempting to do it out of convenience. Why not? It robs your staff of the gratification of seeing their product, which they spent months creating, being received and admired. Handing the books out personally gives staff members a sense of real accomplishment and honor.

WHAT IF I'M A SUMMER/FALL-DELIVERY BOOK?

Books that arrive in the summer or fall the following school year pose special challenges in effectively distributing the book; but, with those challenges come opportunities as well. Plan and set up according to the previous information.

BUILD A CONNECTION WITH YOUR ALUMNI

If possible, schedule your yearbook pick-up day before graduating seniors leave for college. Schedule a yearbook signing party so that students who graduated get one last chance to spend time and share memories with their former classmates. It's also a great opportunity to welcome students to the alumni department and is a final farewell for the class president and student council members. Co-op your event with the student council and alumni club for those very reasons. This is as much an event for them as it for your yearbook staff. Embrace the win-win opportunity!

After books have been distributed and everyone on your list has been accounted for, you may consider giving the extra books to the alumni office. People know if they need a yearbook from a previous year, they can contact the alumni department, taking one less task off of your plate.

Don't have an alumni department at your school? Never fear! Keep the extra books in your yearbook classroom or a secure closet somewhere in the school.

AFTER

TASKS AFTER THE PARTY

- Store the books in a secure location, preferably locked



**GWEN MAUNTEL, ADVISER
ST. FRANCIS BORGIA REGIONAL HIGH
SCHOOL, WASHINGTON, MISSOURI**

“Realize that you may only hand out half to two-thirds of the books sold on distribution day.

After distribution day, take time to check the distribution lists and stock of books. Have your staff put a name marker in all remaining books and deliver them in the next weeks to those students in homeroom. For graduates, work with your office staff or advancement staff to get the word out about yearbooks being in so graduates can pick them up. Be prepared to mail some remainders. If you ask for a ‘media’ rate, it’s about half the normal cost. Walsworth can provide mailing boxes.”

- Take care of the money collected
- Pick up all of the items left and organize for next year’s event
- Take out the trash
- Send handwritten thank you notes to everyone who contributed:
 - o Principals
 - o Front office
 - o Bookkeeper
 - o Cafeteria employees
 - o Coaches
 - o Janitors
 - o Donors
 - o Parents
 - o Your staff members

Most importantly... CELEBRATE! This was the end to a long year and several months of work. Take time to appreciate the teamwork and recognize your staff members for a job well done. You deserve it. This is the day to remember why you do this crazy-wonderful job called yearbook.

SEVEN WAYS TO SAVOR YOUR YEARBOOK:

- **Hold it in your hands.** Appreciate its weight. Savor the feeling as you run your thumb across the outside edge of the pages.
- **Really look at the cover.** Your class or club created that design, and it is beautiful. Appreciate the smoothness or any texture where you opted for emboss or deboss.
- **Open the book.** Does the spine still make a cracking sound? Breathe in that new book smell. Imagine how the smell will change over the years.
- Start at the beginning of the book. Or in the middle. Or at the end.
- **Read it at your own pace.** Appreciate every detail.
- **Revel in the special knowledge you hold.** Only you and your staff know the reason each photo was chosen. You are the only ones who know all the edits that were made to the copy before settling on the final result.
- **Really read it.** You were probably on a tight schedule during the writing and editing process. Now you can fully appreciate the stories being told. Don’t linger on any changes you could make. You hold the finished product in your hands, and it is wonderful.
- **Don’t let any mistakes take away from your joy.** This book was created by humans, it is about humans, and humans are imperfect creatures.

FROM SARAH SCOTT



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