The primary goal for initial phone calls or email interactions

> " You are asking parents to make a huge investment of time, money and emotion. You will need to establish trust before
> they will finalize that choice."
>
> Carol Tilstra Nash

Pop quiz:
The phone is ringing. *(Or the ping of your email notification has sounded.)* **It is a prospective parent wanting information about your school. What is your #1 goal?**

A. Answer all questions politely and offer to send them a registration packet.
B. Try to get their name and contact information for future follow-up.
C. Make sure they know what tuition is so they can decide if it is affordable before taking up more of your time.
D. Set up a one-on-one appointment with the principal.
E. All of the above.

Answer: D. Set up an appointment with the principal.

Why?
- I am assuming that your goal is ministering to families, not "selling" your school.
  » To sell you need only to give your phone answerer (possibly yourself) a list of key features about your school. These are communicated and the caller decides if those features meet their expectations.
  » To minister you must learn what the parents' needs are.
- Parents are less likely to open up about their needs in a phone conversation with someone they have yet to meet. A one-on-one conference is the best environment to find out those needs.
- Once you know their concerns you can help them a) understand how your school can meet their needs, OR b) decide if another school would be a better choice.

  Note: If you are the person who most often answers the phone you will be tempted to have this meeting right then over the phone. This is not ideal for two reasons:
  » You are less likely to hear their real needs.

- » You are more likely to be having this conversation in the few minutes before your next class starts or while you are watching kids during lunch or... None of those situations are conducive to listening with your ministering soul.
- If you are fortunate enough to have a secretary or volunteer to answer your phones, setting up the appointment with you is doubly important.
  - » You, not the secretary, are the expert in education. You need to help parents find the best place for their child