

**Van Lunen Fellow 2008
Applied Project**

ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP DESIGN

Organizational Leadership became the project focus. Goals were to create flowcharts, review job descriptions, and build collaborative leadership. Then we could move on to creating the strategic marketing and development plan.

Our results are better communication and role definition between the principal and pastor, roles and responsibilities defined for the school development director and parish communications coordinator, and a marketing responsibility and action chart. Next steps include a strategic planning process with a consultant.

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Project Focus:

For more than 15 years St. John the Baptist Catholic School had been seeing enrollment climb in as much as the school was added on to two times in those 15 years. However, with the change in diversity and financial needs in the last 5 years there became a need to focus on marketing and development for our school. We knew that time was of the essence but we did make mistakes along the way. Our goal was to increase the awareness of our school within the district boundaries. We realized that the people were not coming to us to the degree that they had in the past and those we made contact with did not realize they lived within the district busing boundaries. This was strong evidence why we needed strategic marketing.

Here is where we began to make our mistakes. We had the personnel to get the job done; however, we had not clearly defined the various roles and responsibilities prior to just moving forward. We had staff members trying to do the marketing/development but unsure who was to do which aspects of the work and from whom they were to get direction. Foreseeing this was not easy because St. John's has a parish staff position named communications coordinator who does not have direct relationship with the principal or school and on the school side a new part time position was created last summer to work on development with the school's 50th Anniversary coming up. Therefore, my project focus became Organizational Leadership Design to clearly define who is responsible to whom and for what aspects of the organization.

Steps Taken:

- Met with Pastor to name concern around roles and responsibilities of parish communications coordinator and newly hired school development director
- Conversations were held to review communication needs of both school and parish
- Marketing committee met to design the chart of responsibilities
- Organizational charts for both parish and school were created to clarify lines of communication and accountability
- Asked the communications coordinator to name tasks that she can do or does do to assist in marketing the school as part of her parish position
- Reviewed job descriptions of school development director and parish communications coordinator to include correlation to school communications and marketing. Appropriate modifications were made
- Weekly standing meetings were established between pastor and principal to keep open lines of communication
- Plans were made to hire an outside consultant to create a comprehensive strategic marketing and development plan

Project Results:

Overall better awareness of roles and responsibilities with open communication has been established. We now have organizational charts, established roles and responsibilities, and a parish and school commitment in a strategic marketing and development planning process.

Analysis:

My initial plan for the Applied Project was to be in the area of marketing and development knowing that the school's 50th Anniversary is in a couple of years. However, the best of intentions can be derailed when unforeseen circumstances arise. Over the course of the year the focus ultimately has not changed, it has just taken a necessary side trip. Through this process my pastor and I have grown in our understanding of each other's styles of leadership. We spent months meeting together and with others to come to a better understanding of our own roles and responsibilities and how we can collaborate seamlessly. This step was extremely important. I have always known that our pastor had a deep commitment to the school and had a vested interest in the marketing aspect. What I did not fully understand was how we differed in our approach. Through our work together we identified that I am a reflective planner, who chooses to give thought to action and set actions out in their own time and he is a quick thinking, responsive doer, who likes to see ideas put into action as soon as possible.

We have made a commitment to the process which then became my project of defining staff and committee roles and responsibilities in the area of marketing and development of the school. Communication is a key factor in these relationships. It is important that all parties know who is responsible and who will be held accountable for the work. One cannot assume that everyone is on the same page moving in the same direction. Therefore, having clear roles and responsibilities named and documented was seen as a benefit to the organization.