



Chatham Christian Schools

Chatham, Ontario, Canada

Marvin Bierling, Head Administrator

Project Summary

Chatham Christian Schools formed in 1957. We currently have a population of about 280 students in JK-12. There have been four administrators in the past five years.

It was my desire to work on a project that would move C.C.S. in the direction of being more faithful to its mission while responding to the demands of today's parents and students. My project involves the development of a program of study and co-curricular programs that sees students' work as having a positive impact on them and their community, challenges their faith development, develops their desire to impact culture for Christ, and has students excited about their daily learning.



Project Results

Mission Statement: To provide Christ-centred learning in all areas of schooling for Christ-like service in all areas of life.

- After listening to the board, parents, and students, there was a clear yearning for a place of learning that was doing things differently than other schools; where students would be excited about the learning that is going on.
- Results:
 - Head Administrator and Board Chair presented the good, bad, and ugly results of exit interviews with the staff.
 - Students in grades 4-8 spent seven afternoons during the past school year serving in their community.
 - Dan Beerens spent a day with the staff, and pushed us all to consider what our mission is, and how and why education must change.
 - Hired three new teachers and a new Vice Principal who share the vision.
 - Much more professional development is planned.



What We Have Learned

- Reasons to Celebrate:
 - Our school and our students are making a difference in Chatham.
 - Students and parents are expressing excitement about some of the changes.
 - More of the staff members are beginning to see a need for change and professional development.
- Challenges:
 - Change is challenging; I am still learning when to push, when to encourage, and when to be patient.
 - I would like more staff-initiated professional development that would contribute to positive change.
 - We need to create a stronger culture where experimenting and learning by the staff is the new normal.

