A School Transformation into a Gifted & Talented School

Project Summary
LSF&B is located in Bayside, Queens, NY serving 180 students from Nursery to Eighth grade from 13 different cultural backgrounds. LSF&B is bottom heavy with 50% of its enrollment in Nursery and Pre-Kindergarten. A majority of our families do not stay with us into kindergarten.

Issues & Challenges:
• Urban Christian education is struggling to remain viable; LSF&B is seeing and feeling the impact
• Shrinking enrollment
• Competition (lower-cost Catholic school option and highest rated public school district in NYC)
• Changing demographics
• Continuing to offer all major and minor subjects
• Parent response to interview questions: “Why should we pay when we can get the same quality education for free?”
• Urban centers shifting away from Christ-centered education

Project Results
Steps:
• A team created of faculty, parents, alumni and community members to study growth models (see chart below left)
• Demographic study of emerging population
• Community interviews

Results:
To offer a high quality education that meets community needs in a way above what others offer with a focus on technology and the arts:
• Extensive evaluation of public and private school gifted and talented programs
• Common Core implemented to match NYC DOE
• Curriculum revised to reflect higher standards and project based learning
• Large marketing campaign using web, print, and new downloadable iBook

What we have learned
• For the first time in ten years, we have eighteen students registered for Kindergarten
• LSF&B has a waiting list to enter Kindergarten
• A four-year transition plan created to become a K-8th grade Gifted & Talented school
• Staff “buy in” to model continues to be a challenge as teachers fear readjusting teaching styles, and wondering if they are appropriate for the model