A School Transformation into a Gifted & Talented School

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**Project Summary**

The Lutheran School of Flushing & Bayside is located in Bayside, Queens, New York, serving 180 students from Nursery to Eighth grade, from thirteen different cultural backgrounds. The Lutheran School of Flushing & Bayside is “bottom heavy” with fifty percent 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; The Lutheran School of Flushing & Bayside is seeing and feeling the impact:

- Shrinking enrollment
- Competition (lower-cost Catholic school option and highest rated public school district in New York City)
- 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:

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<tr>
<th>Church Growth</th>
<th>Business Growth</th>
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<td>Word of Mouth</td>
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<td>Welcoming</td>
<td>Reputation</td>
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<td>Music/Special Programs</td>
<td>Advertising Product/Program</td>
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<td>Quality</td>
<td>Quality</td>
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<td>Draws people in</td>
<td>Customer Service</td>
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<td>Demographics: meets community</td>
<td>Finds a niche market that consumers want</td>
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<td>and its needs</td>
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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 New York City Department of Education
- Curriculum revised to reflect higher standards and project based learning
- Large marketing campaign using web, print, and new downloadable iBook (See “1st Lutheran School iBook” on the next page)

What we have learned:

- For the first time in ten years, we have eighteen students registered for kindergarten!
- Lutheran School of Flushing & Bayside has a waiting list to enter kindergarten.
- We have 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
1st Lutheran School iBook

Summary
- Technology is infusing itself into our normal everyday culture
- Information needs to be readily available to satisfy immediate need
- Make available an interactive downloadable resource that doesn’t require data usage for continual viewing and that takes advantage of available technology

Project Steps:
1. Apple Inc.© released iAuthor software
2. Students created videos using iPads
3. Teachers defined curriculum and classroom environment
4. Graphic style, with new logo, created
5. A fantastic project that the entire school body can be involved in (faculty, parents and students)

Project Results:
A 99-cent downloadable book for iPad, iPhone and iPod Touch that is available today