

SUMMIT CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

CLARKS SUMMIT, PA

TIM CONNOR, ADMINISTRATOR

PROJECT SUMMARY

The project began as an attempt at strategic planning for a church owned Christian school. As discussions began, much larger questions surfaced regarding the governance stability under the direction of the supporting church. Quickly, the goal became the survival of the only K4—12th grade school in Northeastern Pennsylvania through the establishment of a governance structure that would enable the school to grow.

Summit Christian Academy is a K4 through 12th grade school serving 120 students in Clarks Summit, PA.



PROJECT RESULTS

The project began with a focus on **strategic planning** for the SCA school board. In the early stages of planning, the **governance structure**, particularly the authority of the school board, was questioned. A liaison (the school board chair) was established to facilitate **communication** between the school (board) and church leadership (pastoral staff and deacon board). Ultimately, the leadership placed a **proposal** for independence before the church body which received a vote of affirmation. This vote released Summit Christian Academy and all of its assets from the church to continue as an **independent** Christian school.

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

The school was under the threat of closure if it continued under the ownership of the church. We successfully transferred ownership of the school and its properties to a new independent corporation.

Perhaps the greatest hurdle in this process was the management of multiple meetings involving several large groups (deacon board, school board, pastoral staff, church members) resulting in a unified decision. Many concessions were made throughout the bargaining process. Although we faced many hurdles, God's will was made clear with an affirmative vote by the members of SBBC to release the school and its assets to the new organization.

The governance structure of any school is vital to its success. Delegated authority must be made extremely clear and channels of accountability must be well established. Christian schools are encouraged to review their governance policies regularly before potential conflicts arise.

