

Heritage Christian Academy

iBelieve... iBelong... iBecome...



A key challenge that Heritage Christian Academy (HCA) is facing is the ability to find ways to upgrade and add on to its facility. HCA owns a 40 year old former strip mall. This mall was converted in 2000 to a school with classrooms, a cafeteria from the former mall restaurant and a gym from the former trailer showroom. The former bank was converted into offices. Each of the retail spaces became classrooms.

Fast forward to 2014 and the facility is in need of major upgrades and classroom and gym additions. In 2014, a steering committee developed a five year plan to upgrade the facility and developed a site plan for adding to the facility.



The challenge to this plan was the lack of funds. HCA is located in the northeast of Calgary which, demographically is traditional a lower income neighborhood. Another challenge was the fact that although HCA has a 35 year history, there was no database for alumni or for donors.

In 2015, HCA faced additional challenges with the loss of over \$500,000 in government funding. In addition the Canada Revenue Agency issued a ruling that HCA could no longer issue tax receipts. In addition, HCA faced attention from the media and pressure from the local school board that caused HCA to begin to question the long term viability of being a faith based

alternative school. Should the Alberta government choose to stop funding alternative schools or if Heritage decides to go private, HCA faces a loss of over \$2.5 million dollars of government funding. Each of these challenges led to the decision of choosing a project of developing long term sustainability.

Heritage Christian Academy developed and hired for a new position called a Development Officer at the beginning of 2014. This position's primary focus from January to June, 2014 was to develop a database by using yearbooks and researching Facebook, Linked in and "warm" contacts to begin to develop a database of contacts. The first use of these contacts was to plan a "Legacy Brunch" for the fall of 2015. The purpose of the Legacy brunch was to invite the founders of the school along with the historical board members, historical staff and current board to hear the stories of the founders and to discover the rich history of HCA.

In the fall of 2015, HCA entered into a contract with Zach Clark to develop and train both the Development Officer and myself in the area of fund sustainability. For a period of one year, we will receive One to One Coaching.

What I Learned

The coaching consists of 5 Phases: The first phase was to develop a compelling development message. Phase 2 is developing skills and disciplines in the areas of face to face meetings and the weekly disciplines to grow giving. We moved on to Phase 3 which included looking at the systems for success. This meant communication planning and leading people to decisions.

The next two phases which will be completed during the summer and fall of 2015 include phase 4 which is developing momentum in significant giving to broaden the reach of donor communications and grow the network of donors. Finally phase 5 is reinvention and scaling development efforts. This includes the development budget, updating communication materials and planning donor specific experiences.

The key things that I learned from this coaching is

Clarity is essential - I learned the value of using a 6 X 6 plan. This is having 6 key initiatives that I focus on for 6 weeks. It kept me focused.

I needed to dedicate specific time blocks to work on developing relationships; phoning and meeting with people takes time.

It is valuable to find ways to connect each person's passion with the funding need.

What Is and Will Be Different

One of the first disciplines that I worked on is the completion of a white paper. This paper is used as a basic building block for long term financial sustainability. It pulls together the history of Heritage, the purpose for Heritage and the needs that Heritage is facing immediately. (see Appendix 1)

The second discipline was long term strategic planning. The HCA board, along with the principal, fund development committee and fund development staff completed a one day retreat for the purpose of strategic planning.

The results of this day reconfirmed the mandate, vision and mission of HCA. The retreat also developed a three year strategic plan

A. Vision, Mission and Mandate of HCA



B. Three year strategic Plan for HCA



After the HCA board approved the three year strategic plan, a fund development annual plan was developed.

The main areas of focus include:

1. Relationship development with both existing families, grandparents and alumni
2. Development of alternative sources of revenues such as after school care, summer day camps and facility usage and banner sponsorship in the gym.
3. Development of a capital campaign for the pay down of the mortgage

These long term plans focus on both revenue generation through alternative sources of revenue and donor cultivation. The belief is that this focus will allow for upgrading and development of the existing campus. At the same time, if the threat of loss of government funding is realized, then the focus on alternative sources of revenue generation will be one strategy to maintain the viability of Heritage.

The third discipline has been developing a schedule that includes relationship building. The goal is for the Development Officer and me to meet with at least 5 -10 potential donors each week.

Executing a plan to begin fund development is time consuming. Both the Fund Development Officer and the Executive Director must have essential time to focus on relationship development and revenue development. This is critical when it comes to building relationships and sharing the vision with potential donors.

I discovered that I needed to hire an additional staff member full time to handle the responsibilities of enrollment and administration. In addition, we discovered the importance of having people who have the time to volunteer and who are passionate about the mission and vision of the school.

Summary

The past 18 months has been a growing and learning experience. The training received from the consultant has been invaluable. HCA had no clear idea about how to develop a fund development department, how to develop alternative revenue sources or how to go about fund development.

This year has been a great start to fund development and will now continue over the next number of years. The project began by asking the question, "What does HCA need to do today to ensure long term fund sustainability?" The key thing learned that starting from scratch requires that staff be strategic. HCA has developed a three year plan along with clear accountability. HCA has chosen to measure what is being completed to ensure things get done. The practical outworking of this project will ensure the future long-term viability of Heritage.

Appendix 1 White Paper

PURPOSE AND MISSION

Equipping students for life through quality Christian education that inspires commitment to Jesus Christ, and excellence in academics, moral character and service to others.

OUR CORE VALUES

Our mission statement reflects the following core values:

1. We value our Christian faith.
2. We value each student as being fearfully and wonderfully made in God's image.
3. We value our school community being part of the body of Christ.
4. We value parents as partners in the education of their children.
5. We value the call of Christ on our lives to discipleship and holy living.
6. We value staff as significant models of Christian life and learning.
7. We value our responsibility to make a positive impact on our world.
8. We value excellence in our academics, programs and activities.

The above value and belief statements serve to guide decision and policy making within Heritage Christian Education Society Calgary.

GRADUATE PROFILE



OUR STORY

Heritage Christian Academy (HCA) began with a simple conversation between a pastor and two businessmen. They had the idea of establishing a new school in Calgary to provide non-denominational Christian education with an emphasis of discipling students. Once the idea was birthed, the founding fathers and several interested families worked hard to make it happen.

We welcomed our first students in 1979 under the direction of Heritage Christian Ministries. HCA operated in multiple campuses throughout Calgary until 1997, when, under the leadership of the Heritage Christian Academy Foundation, we moved to our current location in North East Calgary.

In its 35 years, HCA has evolved to now be a thriving school of 640 students, from kindergarten to grade 12. 2006 was another defining year for our school. Our parent society (Heritage Christian Education Society Calgary) assumed ownership of our existing campus and entered into a partnership agreement with Palliser Regional Schools, a public school board, to run an alternative program. Over the last 10 years we have built a steady increase in our enrolment and fulfilled our vision to offer two classes for grade 1 through grade 12. Our kindergarten program maintains 3 classes.

It's exciting to look back upon the past 35 years and celebrate the accomplishments of our leaders and the successes of our students. Whether building strong, diverse programs that equip students for life, or achieving hard-earned victories in the classroom, in music halls and on the gymnasium courts, God's hand is always evident.

One testimony to the positive impact HCA has on its students each year is welcoming the children of our alumni into our caring and transformational community. We value the opportunity to partner with the family to raise up the next generation. We consider it a privilege to teach them to know they belong and to believe they have been created uniquely and wonderfully, so they can become all God has created them to be.

Even though we are now celebrating our 35th anniversary, we know the next chapters of our story are only just beginning. As we look to the future, our mission and our vision are unwavering. In order to continue our mission of equipping students for life through quality Christian education that inspires commitment to Jesus Christ, and excellence in academics,

moral character and service to others, We must, as a school, be equipped as an innovative centre, adept at preparing young men and women for future years, decades and centuries.

WHY IS THIS SO IMPORTANT?

As a non-denominational school, Heritage Christian Academy (HCA) provides inspiring education. With a focus on discipleship, HCA equips students to be actively engaged with their world with purpose and as critical thinkers. Rooted in a Biblical worldview, we recognize and respect the varied opinions present in a community as diverse as HCA. Our desire is to encourage our students, in partnership with families and churches, to develop deep roots in their personal commitment to Jesus Christ so that they are ready and equipped to speak, think and act on the basis of God's truth.

In addition to our denominational diversity, Heritage Christian Academy has the unique opportunity to provide Christian Education to an area in the city of Calgary that is exceptionally diverse culturally and socio-economically. While we were not founded with the intent purpose of being a multi-cultural school, we embrace the fact that our student body represents many cultures and ethnicities.

We strive to provide equal opportunity for each student and make the effort to meet diverse learning needs with additional supports in place for those with physical, mental and emotional needs that may challenge typical learning styles.

HCA recognizes the uniqueness of each student, and endeavors to identify individual gifts and talents and to provide opportunities for students to develop strengths that position them for success - whatever their future holds. We believe that young people who know their identity in Christ are positioned to be influential leaders, in their homes, communities, and world. Influencing others by their character, humility, and example.

We must be instrumental in developing servant leaders - those who serve others by leading and lead others by serving. Aside from the classroom, areas of focus for developing leadership within our student body can be found in our student mentorship program, with student participation in chapels and worship, by organizing opportunities for volunteering and service, as well as with the character developed in our missions, music and athletic programs.

The current cultural climate seems to be headed in a direction that is increasingly self-focused, with relationships that are easily connected but less authentic, and with a purveying attitude that

everything and everyone is permitted, and even encouraged, to live autocratically. HCA believes that community is the key to healthy self-awareness and is a reflection of a godly life.

Aside from providing a venue for publicly recognized academics, we are educating our students to see themselves in the bigger picture of God's ultimate plan for mankind. Reinforcing the idea that we are being called to develop relationships filled with grace, authenticity and love for others. That by striving for excellence in all we do, we become faithful stewards of the position of influence we hold in society.

In 5 years from now and in 500 years from now we want to be a modern school with a richly developed heritage that has been used time and time again to transform lives and transform history.

WHAT WE ARE WORKING TOWARD

STEP 1: Facility - \$8,000,000 [complete] - Purchase of the current facility was completed in 2006. The purchase of this facility has allowed our school to have a "home" in a highly visible location. The school has just 8 years left on the mortgage for the facility. Since the purchase, the school has doubled its classrooms each year, leading us to Step 2, which was the addition of 6 portable classrooms.

STEP 2: Purchase of Relocatables \$750,000 (complete) - The relocatables are home to the grade 9 to 12 students and are a necessary and effective addition to the facility.

STEP 3: Playground development – In early 1999 a playground committee was formed and thus marked the beginning of our current playground! On a warm day in June 2000 students were finally able to enjoy the new structure after countless hours of planning, seeking funds through grants, walkathons and donations, and then the many volunteer hours given to installation!

Fast forward to October 2014, 15 years later, we now have approximately 340 kindergarten and elementary students vying for the slide, pole and webbing each day during their approximate 45 minutes of scheduled recesses, not to mention before and after school.

Aside from the need for a bigger playground to accommodate for our current 340 elementary students, safety standards will have increased in modern equipment.

STEP 4: Advancement – Planned Giving – Faith-based schools are faced with a challenging future – government and societal oppression towards Christianity and Christian education knock at our door more and more frequently. HCA strongly believes in the biblical proverb – Where there is no vision, the people will perish. And that is why we look to our future with great hope.

Our mission to equip our students for life, so they can enter into their world to make a difference is a vision of life. We want to be able to impact students' lives for generations to come with an excellent experience at HCA.

Student's lives are impacted and changed today through gifts to our annual fund by contributing to Financial Assistance/Bursaries; Excellence in Teaching Funds; Heritage Fund (unrestricted funds); Heritage Enhancement Fund (facilities and maintenance).

The perpetuity of our legacy and heritage of developing excellence and transformation in the lives of students must be protected. This will happen through continual enrichment and growth of our endowment fund. An endowment is also a wonderful legacy opportunity for families and friends to honour a loved one in perpetuity.

Heritage Christian Academy must continue to be a safe place where students are nurtured, developed, transformed and equipped to carry out their purpose in the years, decades and centuries to come.

STEP 5: Gymnasium/fine arts - \$4,000,000 - Our facility was purchased in 2006. HCA currently has 640 students, kindergarten – grade 12. Alberta Education has requirements for specific amounts of time students are to engage in physical activity. With only one gymnasium, we face critical limitations on what we can provide.

As well, HCA is home to competitive, champion sports teams that require the time and space to continue to develop their skills and talents. Our students also host many tournaments throughout a school year, and we desire to be able to grow our hospitality and outreach, but are extremely limited by our lack of space and availability.

In addition, Calgary has seen extensive growth and will continue to over many years to come. This has caused a city-wide shortage in rental availabilities to sports teams and other organizations. Because of our easily accessible location, when our current gym is not being used for student/school events, it is continually rented to outside organizations. There is great potential for generating revenue through an additional facility. Our students would have full access to meet all their needs, and then it would be available to meet the needs of outside organizations.

Our award-winning music program is another showcase of the excellent talents and abilities of our teachers and students. Our current space used by this program is inadequate to meet the needs for our students to even more fully develop their musical capabilities. Rehearsals and practices currently take place in any open and available space throughout the school. They can be found in the hallways and cafeteria, singing and playing their instruments, which can be a distraction to other classes.

By developing a combined facility with the gymnasium, this would allow for properly equipped, soundproofed rooms for practice and student development. Again, because of the lack of rental space in Calgary, the additional rooms would be in high demand from outside musical groups for recitals and practice space.

Without a doubt, the addition of a multi-purpose facility to host a second gymnasium and additional musical space would serve our students, our school, and our community well. The needs of our students could fully be met; outreach to the broader community would be given by meeting the high needs of our city. This would greatly benefit HCA by generating a self-sustaining provision of revenue.

STEP 6: Library, common area space and new classrooms- \$4,000,000 – Our current library has served our students for nearly two decades. It is a small space that houses thousands of books, and, as well, is the current computer learning space for our elementary students.

To be successful in the 21st century, learners will need literacy and advanced capability in many new skill areas, such as innovation, collaboration and creativity that help to gather, process and implement information and data.

By creating a new innovative and interactive space we will be able to offer even a broader range of reading resources to our elementary students, while expanding the technological and collaborative resources to our secondary students that foster leadership growth and development.

With the completion of this project, the current library space will be renovated and used to expand our growing need for office space. As well, we'll be able to create an inviting and comfortable staff room large enough to accommodate all our staff at one time.