

# Concordia Academy Association of Schools

Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota

Lynn Henry, Chief Administrative Officer



## Project Summary

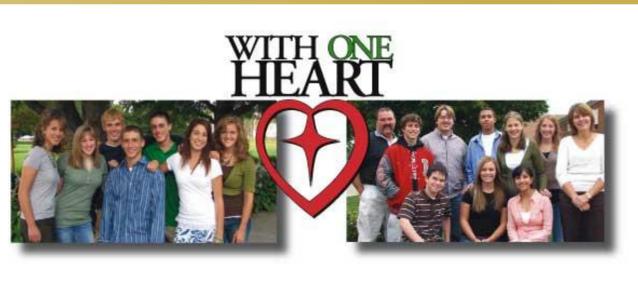
The purpose of this Van Lunen applied project was to work with the Executive Council of the Concordia Academy Association of Schools (CAAS) to develop a strategic plan for the new-structured organization. In July 2007, the Concordia Academy completed its merger with Minneapolis Lutheran High School, to form the Concordia Academy Association of Schools, a partnership of 33 Lutheran congregations in the Twin Cities.

CA had developed previous strategic plans in 1999 and 2005, but this would be the first comprehensive plan for the combined association. The plan would include a broader statement of mission, vision, and values and would reflect the ministry of a two-campus, metro-wide ministry.

The CAAS operates Concordia Academy-Roseville and Concordia Academy-Bloomington. The Roseville campus has its roots as the pre-ministerial boarding school of Concordia College in St. Paul and currently has about 440 student in grades 9-12. The Bloomington school began in Minneapolis in 1963 and has about 120 students in grades 7-12.

The Strategic Plan Committee included the CAO, both building principals, a parent volunteer and the Executive Council Chair.

*The Concordia Academy Association of Schools develops and sustains exemplary Lutheran Christian schools to equip young people for lives of faith and service.*



## Project Results

The strategic plan was entitled *Imagining God's Vision: 2008-2013*. The planning process began with an Executive Council retreat in August 2007, where the group re-examined its function as the governing body of a larger, multi-school organization. Where the council had previously focused on the ministry of one school in a single geographic area, its work was now much broader.

The final product included a new mission statement for the work of the association, a statement of vision and values, and broad goal in six areas of strategic importance:

- Christian Community
- Faith Development
- Developing a Culture of Excellence
- Financial Sustainability
- Relationships with Association Congregations
- Outreach and Community Impact

In developing the strategic plan, we followed the following steps:

- Council retreats for establishing vision and value statements
- Surveys of stakeholders using a modified SWOT analysis (faculty and staff, parents, association delegates, and alumni of both campuses). The survey was conducted electronically with Zoomerang.
- Focus groups of parents from both campuses that responded to initial survey data
- Sharing drafts of the plan with both faculties for their feedback.

At each stage of the process, the Strategic Planning Committee reviewed the process, the data and the rough drafts.

The plan is now posted on the school's website and has been highlighted in the newsletters of both schools and in the association's quarterly publication.



## What We Have Learned

*Imagining God's Vision* is a plan that provides direction for the work of the schools for the next several, both at the association level and at the building level. A broad representation of stakeholders - board members, staff, parents, delegates - frequently refer to the plan as the roadmap for CA's future.

Along the way, we have encountered these challenges:

- While the council works hard to remain faithful to the board governance model, it was tempting for them to fall into an operational mode when discussing the plan.
- While we felt we had done a good job in sharing the plan, we still found individuals, including staff, that "didn't know anything about it."
- Just because a target or action step is in a plan doesn't mean that everything will follow the plan. Until February 2008, we had very positive indicators for the Bloomington campus. By April, the council was considering whether we should continue operating the Bloomington campus, and we were engaged in a fund-raising campaign to save the school.

Our task for the immediate future will be to develop specific action plans and annual work plans for each target and to review the targets and progress on an ongoing basis.

