



# The Master's School

The Master's School is a Christian, college-preparatory co-ed day school serving 315 students in grades preschool through 12.



West Simsbury, CT  
Jon F. Holley, Headmaster

## Transforming School Culture to Thrive in the Best and Worst of Times

As a result of difficult and frequent leadership transitions within the school, our greatest need was for a thorough culture transformation. Our project goal arose in response to that need.

**Goal:** Transform TMS culture in both spirit and practice to achieve sustainability and vitality.

### Essentials:

1. Commitment to unity and biblical conflict resolution
2. Willingness to relinquish nostalgia in pursuit of Best Practices
3. Respect for data: Collecting, measuring and projecting in terms of measurables
4. Developing a planning function in all areas
5. Developing a respect for the organizational chart and its defined roles both in terms of restraint and accountability

The project has resulted in many tangible changes in the community, not the least of which is the creation of a school manual to record and confirm our accomplishments. However, all involved—Board, Faculty, Administrators, Parents and Students—can sense the change occurring, and it has replaced our hurt with hope.

## Major Areas of Accomplishment

### Biblical Principles:

- Created and communicated Headmaster's Philosophy of Ministry
- Established unity and biblical conflict resolution as core values

### Organizational Structure:

- Revised organizational chart
- Completed Board Governance Training
- Created/revised job descriptions throughout the organization

### Aligned Mission, Message and Program:

- Refined and refocused marketing materials
- Implemented strategic capital investments

### Strategic Staffing:

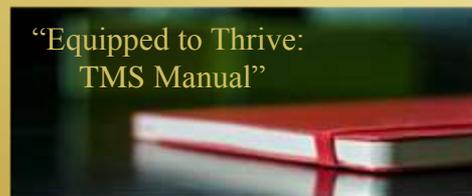
- Incorporated mission, vision and Philosophy of Ministry into evaluations and interview process
- Focused personnel resources strategically

### Divisional Plans:

- Developed 12-month Enrollment Plan
- Developing 12-month Development Plan

### Financial Stability:

- Developed 5-year Financial Plan
- Initiated strategic partnerships with local churches



## Lessons Learned

- First things first: There were many just outside the team with thoughts about what *ought to, had to or must be* done, but those in positions of responsibility had to follow their established priorities to restore the vitality of the school.
- From the Board, to Administration, Faculty and Families – when the school culture changes, not everyone will *want* to stay or *ought* to stay.
- Even though some elements of the larger project never materialized, they still effected healthy change in individuals, relationships and the overall school culture.
- It's often darkest before the dawn of some great change God is ushering in through His mercy and the team's efforts.
- ***“All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.”***

Hebrews 12:11 (NAS)

