



**WHITTIER CHRISTIAN
HIGH SCHOOL**
EQUIPPING THE MIND & SPIRIT

PROJECT SUMMARY

For 54 years challenging academics, spiritual development, student activities and mentoring relationships have defined the Whittier Christian High School experience. Upon graduation, our students are accepted at the top colleges and universities throughout the country, where they continue to excel in Academics, Athletics and the Arts. Most importantly, we watch the Lord work in and through the lives of our 654 current high school students and over 5,000 alumni as they pursue opportunities in career and ministry. Whittier Christian High School strives to prepare students for a lifelong legacy of academic strength grounded in the Word of God. Our mission demands excellence in equipping the mind and spirit of the students we serve.



In this quest for excellence, my Van Lunen project addresses the value of building a robust professional development program for faculty and staff. Serving in my first year as Head of School at Whittier Christian High School, I firmly believe that a significant predictor of whether or not our high school will be relevant and thriving into the future lies in a successful professional development program.

When the minds of our faculty and staff develop and transform, the end result is student growth and success.

To successfully enhance the mission of our school, this program must be covered with the fingerprints of the faculty and staff as they offer input and feedback. As a result, the WCHS Board, administration, faculty, staff, students, and parents have participated in multiple meetings and surveys this past school year to create a viable plan.

Project Objectives:

- Create a compelling vision to prioritize the development of our faculty and staff
- Develop an excellent professional development program
- Nurture a school culture with ongoing feedback among all stakeholders



PROJECT RESULTS

How feedback/input was gathered:

- In the fall of 2011, I presented the vision for the WCHS Professional Development Program to the Board of Directors and gathered feedback/input.
- During November 2011 I shared the vision of the professional development program with the entire faculty and staff in two separate Friday staff meetings with open discussion. This month was also dedicated to gathering the faculty and staff's answers to the following two questions:
 1. What do you believe our needs are with professional development?
 2. What are our barriers to professional development?
- From November 2011 into the spring of 2012, the Head of School and the Administrative staff used this valuable information to further discuss the opportunities and challenges of the professional development program with academic department leaders and individual instructors or staff members.
- Two of the main outcomes of this process was the realization that the leaders of the WCHS professional community must:
 - 1- Foster a culture that highly values professional development.
 - 2- Create available "time" necessary to build a successful professional development program.
- At the conclusion of the conversations on campus, the Head of School along with the guidance of his consultant came to the conclusion that a viable plan for the 2012-13 school year would represent momentum and success for this project.
- The following areas have been selected to formally develop in building towards a robust professional development program at WCHS:
 1. The Administration along with the Academic Senate will formally analyze the annual review process for all WCHS employees and consistently utilize this process into the future.
 2. All human resource documents used in the annual review will be reviewed by the Administration and outside consultation to maximize the effectiveness of each tool.
 3. The performance evaluation will be designed in a manner that requires a goal setting process for all employees.

4. The Administration will enhance and implement a new teacher observation program where all teachers will be observed a determined number of times annually. Observation rubrics will be developed, and additional training for observers will be made available to those participating.
 5. The Administration and the Academic Senate will create specific learning objectives for all In-Service Days.
- Throughout this process, WCHS is grateful for the service of Rob Elliott and the entire Pondera Advisors staff.

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

Project successes:

1. The professional development conversation is alive on campus.
2. Both faculty and staff have engaged in offering feedback and input.
3. The review process began formally this school year for all employees with supplemental questions:
 - What was the highlight of your year here at WCHS?
 - What is a professional development goal you have for next year and how can the administration be of support?
 - What obstacles stand in your way from accomplishing your professional goals here at WCHS?
 - As you think of next year - what are you looking forward to and what are you concerned about?
 - How can we, the faculty and staff of WCHS, more effectively accomplish our school's mission?

Project challenges:

1. Professional development is not yet an overall highly held value in the WCHS culture.
2. Available time is the single greatest challenge to developing a robust professional development program according to all gathered input.
3. The implementation of an excellent professional development program is a process that requires both significant time and a steadfast commitment to developing our employees.

