

Next Generation Lutheran Schools

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What Did I Do?

While I originally intended to work on a strategic plan for Holy Ghost Lutheran School, newly elected leadership on the church side declined to participate. I shifted to admissions and marketing and had good initial success applying the principles that Jim McKenzie shared last summer.

However, this winter, we were surprised by the announcement that our local Lutheran high school would close in June. Several parties asked me to attempt to find a way to save it.

In the end, we drafted a framework for a school system built around independent learning, blended learning, and project based learning.

A for-profit arm of The Maizelynn Group will offer consulting and implementation services. Maizelynn Schools, the non-profit arm, will provide education management services to operate both Christian and public charter schools, using this model. Both arms will be set up to operate both in the US and Canada.

What Did I Learn?

- Too many Lutherans don't play well with others. (I thought I'd known, but I'd forgotten.)
- There's a lot more interest in Christian education, than there is enrollment. A surprising number of parents who attend non-denominational churches want a Christian education for their children, but were uncomfortable picking a school operated by a particular church or denomination.
- "Build it and they will come" no longer works.
- Selecting the right marketing tactics can prove not just effective, but cost-effective.

What Difference Did It Make?

I'm not sure yet.

We're trying to figure out if we can generate enough enrollment to be viable for 2016-2017. However, we do already have plans to try to open at least two campuses for 2017-2018.

In the long run, I expect that this will allow us to improve the quality of our schools, while lowering costs.