

Lexington Christian Academy Mission Statement Review

Timothy Russell
Head of School
Lexington Christian Academy

Since its founding in 1946 Lexington Christian Academy has, by God's grace, maintained a clearly evangelical confessional and pedagogical position in the New England preparatory school milieu.

My selection as the Head of School provided a natural opportunity to examine, affirm or/and modify our mission statement – a process that ought to take place periodically in the course of any institution striving to maintain a culture of review and excellence.

With the approval of the LCA Board of Trustees I submitted this review as my desired Van Lunen Project.

The ancillary value of such a process would be to naturally unfold my management “style’ – i.e. collegial, interactive and consensus building. We did this through the *6 Thinking Hats* strategy of Edward de Bono. Crafting logic, creativity, gut-feeling and history all together, 6 Hats allows a deliberate process of role playing to discern.

WHITE HAT:	<i>neutral and objective</i>
RED HAT:	<i>the emotional view</i>
BLACK HAT:	<i>careful and cautious</i>
YELLOW HAT:	<i>sunny and positive</i>
GREEN HAT:	<i>associated with fertile growth</i>
BLUE HAT:	<i>cool, the color of the sky, above everything else – the organizing hat</i>

An Historical Sketch of LCA's Mission Statement

From the 1977-78 Accreditation Self Study, and quoting from the By-Laws:

If the original statement of purposes and objectives has been revised, when was this done?

(a) Purpose

The By-Laws of Lexington Christian Academy, formerly known as Christian High School, Boston Christian High School, were **initially revised on September 30, 1953**. Article II, Section 2, states the purpose of the school as follows:

“The purpose of this association shall be the establishment and maintenance of elementary and secondary Christian schools for education in the arts and sciences and other secular subjects and for instruction in the tenets of evangelical Christianity.”

Further revisions to the By-Laws were made:

- On March 20, 1959.
- On December 12, 1963.
- In April of 1975, the Senior Advisory Council rewrote the purpose of Lexington Christian Academy for clarity of interpretation.
- In May 1976.

The Current Statement of Purpose and the Core Values from the Vision 2000 Document were completed in 1992:

“Lexington Christian Academy is an independent college preparatory school that exists to educate young men and women in the arts and sciences in the context of a complete commitment to the historic Christian faith.”

CORE VALUES

Organizational

Partnership... We view the education of children as a partnership between parents and the Academy.

Truth... We acknowledge absolute truth, as revealed in God's word, and its relevance to our lives.

Glorify God... We seek to glorify God in all activities and relationships and in the use of the resources that God has given us.

Operational

Respect... Each person is created in God's image and therefore will be treated with respect.

Excellence... Continuous improvement and the pursuit of excellence will underlie all that we do.

Honesty... Our relationships and academic performance will be based on honesty and fairness.

These Core Values were revised by the sitting Board of Trustees in 2009, as follows;

Organizational:

Glorifying God ... We seek to glorify God in all activities and relationships and in the use of the resources that God has given us.

Partnership ... We view the education of children as a partnership between parents and the Academy.

Truth ... We acknowledge absolute truth, as revealed in God's Word and through His creation, and its relevance to our lives.

Operational:

Respect... Each person is created in God's image and therefore will be treated with respect.

Excellence ... Continuous improvement and the pursuit of excellence will underlie all that we do.

Honesty ... Our relationships and academic performance will be based on honesty and fairness.

Review of the current mission statement

In **2013-2014**, on the recommendation of Tim Russell, Head of School, and following several meetings with the collective LCA faculty and staff sharing thoughts on the clarity of LCA's present mission statement, **a Mission Review Committee was appointed**. Chaired by faculty members Jake Hoffman '64, and Irene Campbell, the remaining members of the committee were faculty members Linda Beals, David Pothier, Rob Scaro, and Bryan Thomason, Admission Director, Cindy Torjesen, and Head of School Tim Russell.

The recommendation of the Committee was to make just one change to the Mission Statement:

To replace the words,

"... a complete commitment to the historic Christian faith."

with the words,

"... a complete commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

Rationale

The shift of much of American evangelicalism in the recent decades to an ahistorical and non-academic bent makes the embrace of historic Christian doctrine more difficult to ascertain. While we unreservedly embrace at LCA the full content of "faith once delivered to the saints" and thank God for His providential care for the Church, "the pillar and ground of the truth", this is often not understood in a linear historical fashion as we have viewed it in the past 2,000 years.

This ahistorical lack of appreciation has tended to privatize the faith of much of the 20th and 21st century Christian Church. However, a robust embrace of our mission as an academic community

of faith, being founded on the person and work of God's only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, is yet easily apprehended by our publics. In short, the proposed change says clearly and without any perceived theological jargon that LCA is committed to educating through the eyepiece of the word of God, for the glory of God.

Additionally, it was noted that this recommended change makes a robust and unapologetic confession of the centrality of the vivifying nature of the Word of God – written and incarnate - as the basis for Christian education.

It is the administration's desire that such a confessional and missional "anchor" may, by the grace of the Almighty God, serve to reaffirm LCA in its founding purposes and aid in retarding "mission drift."

After much discussion over five different full faculty/staff meetings and as many committee meetings, the change to "the Gospel of Jesus Christ" was recommended with assent from the entire body, reaffirmed by the committee and sent on to the Board of Trustees through, and with the endorsement of Tim Russell, Head of School.

Conclusion

The proposed change to the Mission Statement was endorsed by the full Board after presentation and discussion at the June 2014 meeting of the Board of Trustees of Lexington Christian Academy.