



Trinity Lutheran School

Wausau, WI

DJ Schult, Administrator



Project Summary

Topic:
Financial sustainability

- Goals:**
1. Develop a plan for raising annual contributions.
 2. Develop a plan to increase retention of middle school students.
 3. Strengthen the church-school relationship.

Trinity Lutheran School needed a plan to address increased costs of education and the loss of \$120,000 in Thrivent third-source funding. By filling seats, creating a plan for development, and working together with the church, budgeting could become a proactive effort that strengthens our school rather than a year-to-year exercise in reactive budget cutting.

Trinity Lutheran School is a 4K-8 Missouri Synod Lutheran school serving 185 students in Wausau, Wisconsin. Trinity Lutheran Church supports the school; over 1,000 members join in weekly worship. The church and school have faithfully served the community for over 100 years.

Project Results

- Created a vision for the total ministry and the school to filter our ministry decisions, staff development, and financial planning.
- Planned an annual auction with software, marketing, off-site event planning, and gift solicitation teams.
- Organized a team that diagnosed action for better middle school retention.
- Prepared an alumni mailing for gifts to support curriculum updates.
- Distributed a special request for gifts to the Education Grant Fund for need-based scholarships.
- Created a financial development plan for a development/admissions director.
- Ongoing dialogue with church/school leadership has created awareness and support for a development/admissions director.

What We Learned

1. Communicating trending data with ministry impact “plows the field” for planting vision.
2. Engaging others has created ownership, support, and success.
3. Communicating the need, benefit, and value of a development/admissions position has required a remarkable amount of conversation.
4. Financial sustainability is secondary to clear vision. Money follows vision.
5. Transparency in vision planning creates trust and support.

