



Desert Christian Schools

Lancaster, CA

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Project Summary

- The California Department of Finance estimates that Los Angeles County will experience a decline of 221,088 K-12 students from 2007 to 2017.
- Four public schools have been closed.
- Two Christian schools, which were both open for 50 years, have closed.
- The plan to remain strong during this period involves precise budgeting, community partnerships, effective marketing, and significantly increased fundraising for financial aid.
- Desert Christian Schools was established in 1977 and has an enrollment of 1,556 PK-12th grade students on three campuses.



Project Results

Marketing Results:

- Developed a Marketing Plan including a marketing calendar and a marketing budget of \$56,500.
- Established a Director of Admissions position to oversee all marketing, outreach, and enrollment efforts.

Budget Results:

- Based on the forecast of a 7.4% enrollment decline, we have reduced the budget for 2010-2011 by 10.25%.

Community Partnership Results:

- Leased a facility from a church in Palmdale, California to open our fourth campus in fall of 2010.
- Leased our facilities to a church and a non-profit organization generating \$75,000 annual income.
- Received a \$50,000 grant from the US Air Force Rocket Lab to upgrade our chemistry lab.

Fund Development Results:

- Raised \$94,000 for the Annual Fund (financial aid) and an additional \$200,000 undesignated funds.



What We Have Learned

- We applied the words of Proverbs 22:3, "A prudent man sees danger and takes refuge, but the simple keep going and suffer for it."
- We established a goal of raising \$50,000 to provide financial aid to struggling families. We had never raised funds for this purpose and it seemed daunting. We were elated to raise \$94,000 for this need plus \$200,000 in additional undesignated gifts.
- We made difficult budget decisions.
- Precise enrollment forecasting and expense control are essential to the long-term viability of the school.

