



Calvin Christian Schools

Winnipeg, Manitoba, CANADA

Hank Vande Kraats, Administrator



Project Summary

School Connectedness

Calvin Christian Schools (CCSs) has two campuses:

- Elementary (K-6) with 300+ students
- Collegiate (7-12) with 230+ students
- 40 staff and 15 Educational Assistants
- 2.8 administrators

Problem

Expanding to two campuses in 2001, and having the two campuses be 20 minutes apart, has impacted the connectedness of our schools with respect to teaching staff, students, and parents. As an elementary administrator, I wanted to investigate what could be done to keep the two campuses connected and how these interactions could be promoted and achieved.

Process

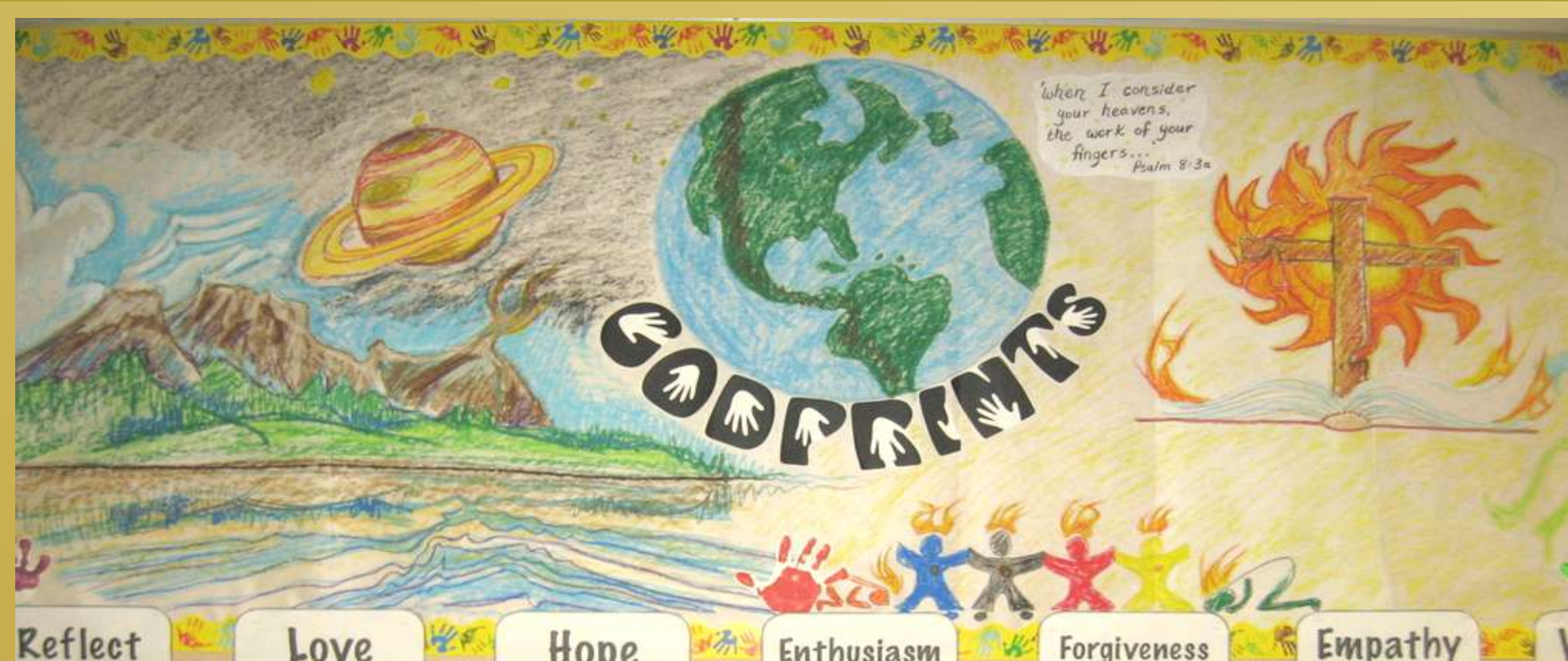
- **Step #1:** In the fall of 2007, Board developed a Strategic Plan. Recommendation to include the theme of School Connectedness.
- **Step #2:** Board members meet on Saturday mornings to develop the various themes and incorporate an Action Plan.
- **Step #3:** Invite the school community and the school staff to Round Table discussions for further discussion and to verify the importance of each theme of the plan.
- **Step #4:** Formation of a Focus Group made up of parents and teachers with the objective of developing recommendations.

Project Results

Recommendations developed by the Focus Group:

- To improve communication with the parent community.
- To review the transition process from the Elementary to the Collegiate at Grade 7.
- To embrace a common pedagogical philosophy in the Middle Years program.
- To decrease the attrition rates from Grade 5-6, from 6-7, and from 9-10.
- To increase opportunities for and awareness of inter-campus learning experiences.
- To strengthen the sense of belonging among our Collegiate parents.
- To improve our connectedness between other independent schools within our area of the city.
- To enhance the promotional materials presently used by our schools.

Recommendations were presented to the administration. Several of the suggestions have been implemented and others will be discussed and acted on in the coming year.



What I Have Learned

- There are common challenges that all faith-based schools are confronted with. The VanLunen experience has helped me to prepare to face those challenges and has provided me with the insights and the tools to implement change.
- Parents appreciate being involved in developing and implementing change, not only as a Board of Directors, but also through the process of a Focus Group. As an administrator, I should be open to our input and involve them.
- As I return to school in the fall, I will contact with the Focus Group to complete the work that was started in the spring of 2009.