



Mission, Vision, and Core Values

Background: Fremont Christian School is a PK-8th grade school that opened in 1918. FCS has a history with challenges. Ten years ago, FCS was gearing up for closure. Enrollment was down, teachers were stuck in a rut, the board and administration were shortsighted, we were borrowing money from our endowment to make payroll, and there was no plan to change any of that. Since coming to the realization that closure was not an option, the FCS board decided to make changes that have drastically changed Fremont Christian School for the better. However, the end was not defining the means. FCS had an outdated mission statement and no strategic plan. There were attempts at strategic plans, but they ended up being fancy checklists. Great things are happening and all of our problems that were predicting our closure seemed to be resolved, but existing for the sake of existing is pointless. This reality has motivated me to create the tools needed to get to the heart of our existence, putting Christ back in the middle of all things. My VanLunen project focuses on the creation and process of writing a new mission statement, vision statement, and core values.

Who Helped: We called upon the help of Henry Contant. Henry's wisdom and experience helped the FCS board realize the importance of functioning from "the crow's nest" and to be less involved with the day-to-day operations. Henry's involvement was critical to this project and to the betterment of FCS.

How did I do the project?: Henry taught us about the use of task forces. Task forces are board appointed small groups of people who are focused on one objective. We created a mission task force with the sole purpose of representing the voice of parents and drafting up a mission and vision statement and core values.

This task force consisted of two board members, two parents, and myself. The five of us have met consistently every three weeks since the end of January. In that time, we sent out a survey to all parents and teachers to use as a starting point for the wording in the documents we were/are focusing on. The survey has been effective. We have drafted four mission statements and narrowed it down to one by vote of teachers and board members. Ultimately, everyone was involved in its creation. As I am writing this in the end of May, the task force has one more core value to decide on. We have four core values stated all with rationale and Scripture to support them. We used the survey results for this part of the project as well.

We have not yet started on a vision statement. We are not sure how best to go about doing this part. We want there to be more involved than just the five of us on the task force. However, should this be done by the school board or by as many people as possible? We feel this document is very important, as we will use it and the others as springboards for our next strategic plan. We have dates in place for our next meetings as well as a final date goal for the vision statement.

What has this project done for Fremont Christian?: This project has pushed FCS to operate with a purpose other than to just exist. We have great things going on, and now we can tell people why they are happening. They center around a mission that this school exists to "Glorify God by educating and nurturing student to impact the world for Christ." This new mission statement is more accurate and meaningful than the one we had. We have realized that some of the good things going on may need to change or go based on our mission.

The FCS board operates more efficiently and is strategic in its thinking thanks to Henry Contant and his time with the board. When you have 11 people hearing the same message, the system of accountability works very well.

The staff has seen the changes in administration and with the board. They are embracing the new mission and know what they do must reflect the new mission statement. Their involvement in the decision of the new mission statement has given them ownership and excitement about the change. It is great to see teachers using and adhering to the mission statement in their classrooms.

The task force is still working on presenting the new mission statement to the society. We plan to do so when the core values and vision statements are complete.

Overall, this experience has been a blessing in so many ways. I am grateful to the VanLunen faculty for their time and expertise as well as the other Maroon Platoon fellows for their friendship.