

Re“vision”ing at Calvary Lutheran High School

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Project Description:

Calvary Lutheran High School has a need for leadership in multiple avenues that the Van Lunen experience helped to identify. However, in order to move forward, the stakeholders of our school community must be on the same page. My project focused on clarifying vision and mission at Calvary.

LCEF worked with us through a process to establish missional clarity in the Fall of 2017. The school community was surveyed and the results were shared with a focus group in October. The focus group make-up was intentionally chosen from select audiences to be equally representative of each constituent group: students, teachers, board members (current and founding), pastors, parents (current and alumni) and other community leaders.

Results from the focus group were additionally distilled and using the values that emerged, I, as executive director, used this information to shape new vision and mission statements in addition to mission pillars to serve as an assessment of missional clarity or conversely, mission drift.

Lessons learned:

This process was more complex than I anticipated – primarily because of the limited scope I was given from the outset. Being in the dark, this created discomfort along the way, though I believe it also prevented debate with the consultant over philosophy and approach. Given my preference, I would have involved constituents more, but this approach distilled the essence of our school in a more stream-lined way.

Additionally, I would have communicated better on the front end and throughout the process with our school community – to establish a need for clarity and to keep them updated on the intermediate results. Sometimes in the process, it felt as if I was holding my cards close to my vest when I should have had them all laid out on the table. In the end, I believe this approach made the revelation of the new vision and mission statements a harder sell.

Benefit to the school:

Moving forward, Calvary has the opportunity to be vision and mission-focused as it continues to grow in ministry. As the board set strategic targets, we had a common frame of reference. As we establish a development program, we now have statements that clearly embody who we are on a day-to-day basis. Our values are easy to share with prospective families and prospective employees. Even our social media has a more focused approach to answering the question, “Why Calvary?” This process has been healthy for Calvary to clarify the path forward toward a brighter future.