

A Home for Cambridge: Our First Capital Campaign

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The Cambridge School—San Diego, CA

Consultant: Zach Clark

The Cambridge School is a ten-year old school that has moved four times in its first six years and has been renting space for all ten years of its short history. By God's grace, we were finally able to purchase our current campus this past year in a most miraculous, unexpected, God-ordained manner without the opportunity to have a well-planned and executed capital campaign. Just months after the purchase of the building and with flurry of summer renovations already under way, I began my Van Lunen experience last July and decided to engage Zach Clark to be our consultant for our school's very first, properly executed capital campaign to renovate and expand the building to make it better suit our needs.

What did we do?

With the initial frenzy of raising money to purchase the building behind us, we shifted gears and worked with Zach Clark to relaunch our capital campaign with a total goal of \$4 million over the next 3 years which included the roughly \$2 million raised for the down payment, and another \$2 million to renovate the existing building footprint as well as expand the campus. This we sought to do with more intentionality and better systems that would serve us well in the long term than the crazy miracle of our down payment story.

What did we learn?

Zach is an excellent coach and teacher and he was very intentional and methodical about teaching my Director of Advancement and me the disciplines needed to do this well—not just now for this first capital campaign but for the future.

We spent a lot of our time clarifying our development message and distilling it down to some clear giving-driven steps, which took longer than anticipated in spite of having a clear mission and vision for the school.

We also learned how to create and maintain the back-end systems and disciplines needed to execute our first real capital campaign well and to set us up for future success. Zach taught us how to create and use good development tools each week and gave us strategic perspective, as well as the encouragement and accountability we needed to keep the momentum going.

What difference is it making at our school?

Everything that we've learned with Zach and through the Van Lunen Fellowship has helped us launch a more thoughtful capital campaign with excellent systems to support it. So as we near the end of our

first year out of three of our first capital campaign, we have raised roughly \$600,000 beyond the \$2 million down payment, which means we are \$2.6 million dollars into our \$4 million dollar campaign.

The money we've raised for renovations and expansion has allowed us to turn our carpeted auditorium into a gym with a stage for real multi-purpose use of this critical space. With the money we raised, we were also able to take two larger classrooms and create three smaller classrooms out of them to help us solve the problem of needing an additional classroom this year. We also put up some extra walls here and there to creatively use our existing space. We were also able to renovate the student bathrooms, which were very old and decrepit and in need of some attention.

Best of all, through all our efforts, we are thoughtfully and deliberately cultivating a culture of giving at the school and continually helping people get connected to the mission and vision of the school in a way that they can see God at work here and their role in it.