

The Vision for Excellence with a Strategic Action Plan

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Van Lunen Fellow 2016/2017

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Consultants

Jim Marsh – Strategic Action Plan

Zach Clark – Advancement Coaching Contract Approved

Henry Conant – Board Professional Development Day Pending

What Did I do?

The board hired me with the vision to increase enrollment and improve financial viability at St. Joseph Christian School. My first response was to determine if the vision could be attained at SJCS. I began seeking counsel and advice on how best to improve a declining enrollment and increasing deficit due to lack of enrollment growth and viable financial aid program. My project focused on improving the rapport of SJCS among our community churches, businesses, and non-profits to create an army of word-of-mouth advertisers for Christian education. This began by rallying my board to support evidence-based marketing decisions, best practices financial approaches, and relentless focus towards excellence to the Glory of God. These changes have led to an approach to think more strategically with a strategic action plan, develop an effective advancement program, and communicate changes effectively to all stakeholders.

What did I learn?

I learned that change is extremely difficult. Although SJCS has grown by 33% in 2.5 years, the morale and optimism amongst staff, faculty, and families has been challenged. I learned that Satan hates Christian education and utilizes division, gossip, and false accusations to destroy Kingdom education. Thankfully, I also learned we serve a masterful Lord that puts counselors in our lives at the right moments. Van Lunen has been God's plan for SJCS. Through the professional development of change agents, crucial conversations, necessary endings, dynamic leadership teams, and a multitude of other diamonds of information, SJCS has experienced hope through adversity. The future is bright at SJCS. The board, faculty, and new families are focused on establishing a destination school of Christian educational excellence.

What difference is it making?

The Van Lunen information has made a major impact on SJCS. The principles gleaned to cultivate change in a growing school has been crucial. The enrollment increases are a direct result of focusing our advertising towards gaining more applicants. Furthermore, the Van Lunen program walked me through the difficult task of holding many crucial conversations and a couple of necessary endings. I also gleaned a terrific vision for better staff salaries and benefits through conversations on dynamic merit-based salary matrix philosophy. Perhaps the two most important aspects of the program were the need for establishing a strategic action plan and implementing an advancement program in a school. Jim Marsh and Zach Clark will be instrumental in the vision at St. Joseph Christian School.