

The Van Lunen Project – Moving Forward

Mike Van Slingerland – Principal/C.O.O.

Milton Christian School – Milton, Ontario, Canada

Consultant – Henry Contant

The leadership of Milton Christian School and the Milton Christian Education Association, dream of a dynamic new facility which will inspire our students and the community-at-large. In the long term, MCS strives to become a leading school of choice within the community. Parents of MCS students are unanimous in their love and support of the school. Despite the cramped space, limited playground, lack of a library, a full gym and adequate storage space... parents are thrilled with the education their children receive through the dedicated staff of MCS. Teachers willingly “pack up” their classrooms each week to accommodate the weekend church community. Stackable desks are used for some classes, along with portable smart boards and a rolling cart for laptops. The creative use of the available space is a constant challenge, but the energy and commitment to their work and their students is evident in the positive, flexible attitudes of staff and administration alike.

The driving question behind this Van Lunen Project is as such:

How does the leadership, parents, students, members and community as a whole, begin to think more strategically about the future of Milton Christian School?

The project for MCS will encompass and accomplish several important goals.

1. The Leadership of Milton Christian School must develop, articulate and cultivate the vision of the future.

The leadership of the school association must spend 80% of its time thinking about a school that does not yet exist. What will Milton Christian School look like in 5 – 10 – 50 years? If the leadership of the school is not thinking strategically about the future; then who is. The role of a school's leadership is to protect and direct the mission and vision of the school.

2. The Leadership must be transformed and energized to direct and protect the mission and vision of the school.

A flourishing Christian school is like a mighty sailing ship. There are proper places for the leadership of the school and other places for the operational staff and faculty. The leadership should position themselves within the ‘Crows Nest’ of such a vessel, keeping an eye out for the pitfalls and risks along the journey, but also directing the path of the schools future.

3. The association needs to provide “real school” facilities, including office space, classrooms, playgrounds, a gym and library.

The leadership of Milton Christian School needed to identify suitable land for the future permanent erection of appropriate facilities to meet the needs of a dynamically growing population. Attempting to do this in the city of Milton, with its supersonic development speed; seemed impossible

4. The forward thinking administration of MCS will be given the space to continue meeting the needs of the families it serves.

One of the dynamic, successful and identified elements of Milton Christian School is the partnerships it has developed within its community. There is a tremendous need for community space within the city of Milton. MCS currently generate a large portion of its planned and budgeted revenue through facility rental. Innovative and creative revenue generation methods must continue into the future of a new school.

5. The MCEA will secure suitable land.

A beautiful, 2.5 acre piece of land was identified in the heart of Milton. The land is surrounded by wonderful amenities such as playgrounds, basketball courts, soccer fields, baseball diamonds and public parking. The MCEA from December 2015 and February 2016, collected \$1.5 million, and acquired 7419 Tremaine Road, in Milton, Ontario. The purchase successfully closed on March 15th, 2016.