Southern Cross Program
Case Study

School Processes

Bayside Christian College
Visions, Values and Communication

School Description

Bayside Christian College is a coeducational Prep to Year 12 school in Langwarrin South with 570 students. The school is committed to providing a nurturing environment that allows students to develop to their full potential in Christ. The College partners with parents by providing an education that embraces Christian values. Curriculum is based on a Christian worldview. Bayside Christian College recognises that learning is most effective when the needs of the whole child are taken into consideration. It therefore provides programs that develop students academically, socially, physically and spiritually. The College has a strong emphasis on character development through community projects, mission trips and leadership programs. The caring, friendly atmosphere at Bayside Christian College is based on building a healthy community.

Project

Established in 1982, Bayside Christian College has found in recent years that there is some confusion about the school's mission statement, vision and values. Different versions would appear in different documents, such as the school's website and its prospectus. 'It became evident we needed to reassess the mission statement, vision and values,' said Bayside Christian College’s Principal Lorraine Hook. 'We needed to align them with the strategic plan and communicate everything clearly to the school community.'

Process

In July 2012, Bayside Christian College’s executive leadership team attended the four-day Southern Cross training program. The team comprised of Ms Hook, the Head of Academic Administration, the Head of Teaching and Learning (also the head of English), and the school’s Business Manager. The Deputy Principal attended for one day of the training.

‘Early in the training, we realised we needed to identify the parameters of our project,’ said Ms Hook. ‘That took us a good day and a half. The Southern Cross facilitator was really helpful. We learnt to keep the parameters fairly simple during the training and then go beyond that afterwards.’

Following the training, the leadership team did a gap analysis of the school’s documentation, detailing the different versions of its mission statement, vision and values. The team was then able to clearly identify a mission statement and edit its lengthy vision statement down to what it calls its three core pillars. Each of those pillars has its own values.
Results

Early in 2013, the leadership team conveyed its new statements to staff, parents and the Board. ‘The response has been very favourable. People are very excited. Parents and Board Members have been saying, “Now we understand these important school statements. Now we know what the school is all about”.’

Ms Hook said staff have also embraced the changes, appreciating the groundwork that has been laid down.

With whole-school agreement of the school’s major statements, Bayside Christian College is now ensuring school policies align with the statements, and that there is consistency across all school documentation.

‘Learning from the Southern Cross model of process management has been very satisfying, and it’s a process that can be used for any type of change management.’

Ms Hook said schools considering the Southern Cross training should ‘make sure the project is a high priority, and then make the most of the training. It’s a well worthwhile program.’

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