

**Headmaster Steve Sharp's
Accreditation Progress Report
Monte Vista Christian School
April 24, 2009**

- **Set goals that make you stretch - that all started last September.**

In eight months, we have created a new mission, vision, core values, educational philosophy, ESRLs, performance appraisals, draft of a School-wide Improvement Plan, revised organizational chart, surveys, committees for ACSI and on a side note, utilized Accreditation by School Process, a completely new format for accreditation. Great job!!!!!!

- **Let limitations guide you - ACSI Accreditation**

Last accreditation, many of you felt the report to ACSI may not have accurately described how things were operating at our school and that the Accreditation process was not useful to the school. In fact, there has been significant negativity expressed about how ACSI has impacted MVCS. I decided to see where this limitation, this negative mindset, might take us and I found a unique answer to this problem of perception. It is this very discontentment from the past that gave rise to your deep desire to do things differently this time.

- **Choose to do things differently - Accreditation by School Process**

In order to do things differently, we needed to be willing to put aside the past practices that no longer serve us and the

established approaches that only hold us back. That is exactly why I chose the Accreditation by School Process. MVCS needed a new vehicle to leave the negativity of the past in the past, to keep moving forward, and to give everyone a voice in creating our future.

- **Invite different perspectives - summits, surveys and ACSI Committees**

I understood that no one sees things like you do and that is good! We all need to hear from people outside of our usual groups. Good questions help us shape more effective solutions. Hearing from one another rounds out the perspective and refines the thinking. It breaks established patterns of seeing things. It opens the door for creative ideas. We went exploring through our two Summits, through our Survey, through our multi-disciplinary Standards committees, and with our Board. We involved over 100 members of this organization in this process and together we made some wonderful discoveries.

- **Embrace creativity - Premier and Champion**

We encouraged people to dream big, to imagine a great future for our school, and out of that imagination came two new words: Premier and Champion. Very exciting and different descriptions of our school! I have enjoyed the sometimes lively debate on what these two words mean to our school, and now I would like to tell you how I define them:

Mission - Champion = Upholder, Protector, Supporter of our faith, our students, our families, and each other.

Vision - Premier = Best practices in spiritual formation, best academics, and best student life.

If we champion our students to achieve their highest potential through Christ-centered educational excellence, Monte Vista Christian School will be the premier college preparatory Christian school in Northern California, committed to preparing students to be world changers.

- **Discipline creativity - Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) tool**

At our school, most employees have very good ideas about what might be done to improve things. However, good ideas need to be disciplined and focused to move the school in productive directions. I wanted to do some experimenting, but I did not want to waste your time and school resources. The format provided by ACSI allowed us to create our School-wide Improvement Plan using the 10 Standards and an alignment with our vision. It focused us and it improved our odds of overall success.

- **Plan and improvise - Standard 10**

No plan is perfect. The Standard 10 committee was charged with the daunting task of taking all of the ACSI Standards committees' recommendations, my guidelines, the results of the surveys, the ACSI ASP indicators, the WASC criteria, the Summit findings, and the mission, vision, core values, and school philosophy to create a blueprint for action using measurable goals and objectives.

- **Develop robust solutions - the School-wide Improvement Plan**

This is the proposed plan. In order for it to be successful, it must be developed with keen attention to risk management and anticipated roadblocks. It needs to be reviewed and revised based on changing reality and good information.

Our goals need to be SMART—Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Rewarding, and Timed. This year's Accreditation Report reflects the good work you did over the past months, and your recommendations are being heard. The Continuous School Improvement Plan, prepared using input from the 100 members of the Standards committees, provides an outline for the future, and shows measurable steps to achieve it.

- **Maintain momentum and forward motion - the Red Sea is closed**

One fear has regularly risen during this process: "Nothing will change after we get through Accreditation." But things have already changed. Just like the children of Israel on their way to the Promised Land, the Red Sea has closed behind us and we are on the move. Now our job is to create our good future, and momentum is a priority. The School-wide Improvement Plan is bold and the pace is brisk and it is where we are going.

- **Be fully trustworthy - The Champion Committee**

To do all this good stuff, it takes a very effective team that creates and maintains a climate of trust. Trust hinges on openness and honesty, and on personal integrity. This doesn't mean that everyone agrees all the time--it means that there is mutual respect and collaboration. The

Champion Committee, chaired by Rick Podratz, has been created to provide a forum of multi-disciplinary collaboration and oversight of the School-wide Improvement Plan.

- **Take personal responsibility for communication - reduce secrets**

The Champion Committee and the school leadership are committed to keeping all of you informed about the achievements of and changes to the School-wide Improvement Plan and other important issues through multiple avenues including your direct supervisor, staff meetings, the newsletter, orientation, and emails. Feel free to ask questions!

- **Proceed with optimism - confidence in the Lord**

This is all about attitude and about mindset. The future leaders of our school will take hold of the vision and "Act as if it were impossible to fail." We need to be open minded to opportunity and not constrained by past failures or fears. And in all of this, we need to put our confidence in the Lord.

- **Demonstrate passionate commitment to success - let's be Premier**

Your job at MVCS is so much more than a job--it is a ministry. The one outstanding characteristic I have observed over the last eight months is how deeply most of you feel about MVCS. Your hearts are involved, and that is a good thing. We have wonderful staff and faculty, great kids, and an amazing opportunity to do amazing things for God. In our service to Him and others, we need to look

beyond the boundaries of our immediate responsibilities and do anything it takes to succeed and to help each other. If that happens, I am confident that one year from now, MVCS will be well on its way to Premier.

- **Accreditation Team Visit**

The Accreditation Team that will be visiting next week is here to help confirm your areas of strength and support you as you address the areas where you've said you can improve. When this process is finished, you'll be able to see a wonderful vision for the future of Monte Vista Christian School turning into reality. Thank you for all your incredible work on behalf of our students and their families. You are making a difference!

- **Mission Statement**

Monte Vista Christian School champions students to achieve their highest potential through Christ-centered, educational excellence.

- **Vision Statement**

Monte Vista Christian School is dedicated to being the premier, college preparatory Christian school in Northern California, committed to preparing students to be world changers.

- **Motto**

“Champions for Christ”

- **Bible Verse**

Hebrews 12:2: Keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. (New Living Translation)

- **Core Values**

We are passionately committed to:

Faith - modeling, teaching and being shaped by a faith that is consistent with a Christian worldview.

Integrity - demonstrating exemplary lifestyles reflective of Christian ethics with accountability to Christ, each other, our students, and our community.

Excellence - teaching a Biblical, accredited curriculum and providing outstanding, innovative educational programs that prepare our students for success in life.

Community - creating an environment of generosity and compassion that is responsive to the needs of those we serve.

Partnership - sustaining a partnership with families to enhance our students' character, learning, and development.

Global Outreach - presenting the message of Jesus Christ to all the world, while living as trustworthy and accountable stewards of God's creation.

- **Philosophy**

The philosophy of Monte Vista Christian School is built on the revelation of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of the world, for *no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ* (1 Corinthians 3:11 NIV). We believe that a Christ-centered program is the most trustworthy guide toward educational excellence. In our service of developing students, we keep our focus on Jesus Christ, who having lived a life of perfect faith and brought it to full completion, now is the champion who initiates and perfects our faith (Hebrews 12:2 NLT). To these principles we are passionately committed, and from this passion flows innovative and Biblically-based curricular and co-curricular programs which are at the highest levels of accreditation and academic standards and are directed at preparing our students for success at Monte Vista and throughout their lives.

Our philosophy is lived out in a community of believers, where we welcome students from all religious faiths and even those who do not hold to any particular set of religious beliefs. Within this diverse setting, we openly model and express a faith consistent with a Christian worldview, while acknowledging that our own lives are works in progress, and that we are constantly being shaped by our faith. However, within our acknowledgment of imperfection, we understand that as followers of Christ we are called to live exemplary lives reflective of the ethical and moral standards of Christ's teachings. In light of this high calling, we accept that we are accountable to Christ, each other, our students, and our community to live as servants of Jesus Christ in the spirit of generosity and compassion while being responsive to the needs of those we serve.

To the families who entrust their children to us each year, we take very seriously our role of serving as workers

together with you. We hold this sacred trust as stewards in a partnership, and passionately commit ourselves to our strategic role as a premier educational institution in developing your children morally, emotionally, intellectually, and physically to their highest potential.

Our hope is that when students graduate from Monte Vista Christian School, in addition to having the highest level of educational experience, they will also have discovered a passion to spread the message of Jesus Christ to all the world. And through the examples they have encountered, that they will be world changers living as trustworthy and accountable stewards within God's creation.

- **Statement of Faith**

We believe the Bible to be the inspired, only infallible, authoritative, inerrant, all sufficient Word of God (II Timothy 3:15, II Peter 1:21).

We believe there is one God, eternally existent in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Genesis 1:1, Matthew 28:19, John 10:30).

We believe in the deity of Christ (John 10:33), His virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23, Luke 1:35), His sinless life (Hebrews 4:15, Hebrews 7:26), His miracles (John 2:11), His vicarious and atoning death (I Corinthians 15:3, Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 2:9), His resurrection (John 11:25, I Corinthians 15:4), His ascension to the right hand of the Father (Mark 16:19) and His personal return in power and glory (Acts 1:11, Revelation 19:11).

We believe in the absolute necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit for salvation because of the exceeding sinfulness of human nature and that men are justified on the single

ground of faith in the shed blood of Christ and that only by God's grace and through faith are we saved (John 3:16-21, John 5:24; Romans 3:23, 5:8-9; Ephesians 2:8-10; Titus 3:5).

We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that have accepted Christ unto the resurrection of eternal life and those who have not accepted Christ unto the resurrection of eternal judgment. (John 5:28, 29).

We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 8:9, I Corinthians 12:12-13, Galatians 3:26-28).

We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life (Romans 8:18-14, I Corinthians 3:16, 6:19-20; Ephesians 4:30, 5:18)