


# *Strategies for Building A Strong School Culture*

Dr. Sam Seefeld, *Principal*

Trinity Lutheran School of Freistadt



Wisconsin Council  
of Religious &   
Independent Schools  
*Committed to a Higher Standard*

# OBJECTIVE:

*BUILD, LIVE, MAINTAIN, and  
CELEBRATE a STRONG School Culture!*



# Agenda:

## Welcome / Introduction:

1. Data
  2. Why Culture Matters
- 

1. **BUILD IT** (or one will be built for you). An *interactive* process.
2. **LIVE IT** (or the build never mattered). Examples of living your culture.
3. **MAINTAIN IT** (keep it going, evaluate how it's doing)
4. **CELEBRATE IT** (how to promote what you're doing)

Q & A





# Data

# Data:

- Since 2005 over **530 LCMS schools have closed.**<sup>1</sup>
- Since 2013 the LCMS has **lost over 37,000 students.**
- In 2018 there were 560 requests for first-year teachers, **30% were filled.**
- LCMS projects to **lose 40% of school administrators** (retirement) **this year.**
- More than **66% of adults report being “not-engaged” at work.**<sup>2</sup>

1. *LCMS Statistical Report (2018)*

2. *Gallop (2014)*



# Data (Trinity):

- 2011-2012 - 150
- 2012-2013 - 143
- 2013-2014 - 146
- 2014-2015 - 149
- 2015-2016 - 148
- 2016-2017 - 137
- 2017-2018 - 135
- 2018-2019 - **121**



“What does  
this mean!?”



# Culture Matters



*"Culture eats strategy for breakfast."*

Peter Drucker



*“You must shape a culture before the  
culture shapes you.”*

Jon Gordon



How and Why Positive Leaders  
*Transform Teams and Organizations*  
and *Change the World*

THE  
**POWER**  
OF  
**POSITIVE**  
**LEADERSHIP**

JON GORDON  
*Bestselling Author of The Energy Bus*

Proven Principles and Practices  
*That Make*  
*Great Teams Great*

THE  
**POWER**  
OF A  
**POSITIVE**  
**TEAM**

JON GORDON  
*Bestselling Author of The Energy Bus and*  
*The Power of Positive Leadership*

WALL STREET JOURNAL BESTSELLER

10 Rules  
to Fuel Your Life, Work, and Team  
with Positive Energy

THE  
**ENERGY**  
**BUS**



JON GORDON  
Foreword by Ken Blanchard  
*Cowriter of The One Minute Manager and Leading as a High Leader*

*“People who work in unhealthy organizations eventually come to see work as drudgery. They view success as being unlikely, or even worse, out of their control.”*

Patrick Lencioni, *The Advantage*



*“I’ve come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It’s my personal approach that creates the climate. It’s my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child’s life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or dehumanized.”*

Haim Ginott





**TRINITY**  
LUTHERAN FREISTADT





# 1. BUILD IT

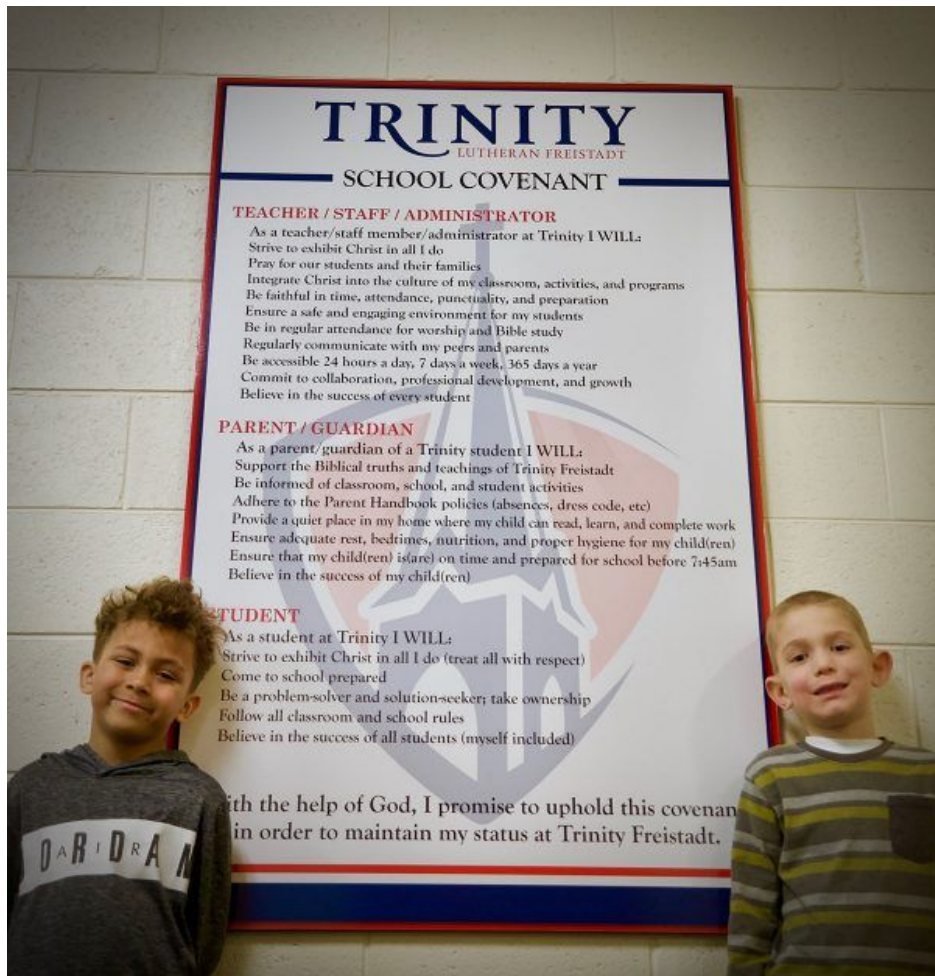
*(with buy-in)*

# Activity:

1. The **look, sound, and feel** in your building
  - a. On your handout, complete step 1. GO.
  - b. Count off by 3s; Group Up; Share Answers on Charts
  - c. We'll rotate in a few minutes.
2. Building the **PROMISE** together:
  - a. On the new chart, write down how these areas correspond to the responsibilities of **STAFF, PARENTS, and STUDENTS**

# The School Covenant





# TRINITY

LUTHERAN FREISTADT

## SCHOOL COVENANT

### TEACHER / STAFF / ADMINISTRATOR

As a teacher/staff member/administrator at Trinity I WILL:  
Strive to exhibit Christ in all I do  
Pray for our students and their families  
Integrate Christ into the culture of my classroom, activities, and programs  
Be faithful in time, attendance, punctuality, and preparation  
Ensure a safe and engaging environment for my students  
Be in regular attendance for worship and Bible study  
Regularly communicate with my peers and parents  
Be accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year  
Commit to collaboration, professional development, and growth  
Believe in the success of every student

### PARENT / GUARDIAN

As a parent/guardian of a Trinity student I WILL:  
Support the Biblical truths and teachings of Trinity Freistadt  
Be informed of classroom, school, and student activities  
Adhere to the Parent Handbook policies (absences, dress code, etc)  
Provide a quiet place in my home where my child can read, learn, and complete work  
Ensure adequate rest, bedtimes, nutrition, and proper hygiene for my child(ren)  
Ensure that my child(ren) is(are) on time and prepared for school before 7:45am  
Believe in the success of my child(ren)

### STUDENT

As a student at Trinity I WILL:  
Strive to exhibit Christ in all I do (treat all with respect)  
Come to school prepared  
Be a problem-solver and solution-seeker; take ownership  
Follow all classroom and school rules  
Believe in the success of all students (myself included)

With the help of God, I promise to uphold this covenant  
in order to maintain my status at Trinity Freistadt.

## 2. LIVE IT

(some practical examples)

# Assemblies



# Assemblies

- Hype music (it needs to be loud)
  - Interaction with students as they walk in (games, challenges, etc.)
1. Singing - LOTS of singing (songs with actions are best)
  2. Theme of the Month (scripture verse if religious)
  3. Recitation, call and response (identity in Jesus, or character-based content)
  4. Devotion (Mondays), Games (Fridays)
  5. Shout Outs / Recognitions
  6. Closing Prayer / Doxology / Dismissal









# Greetings / Threshold



Barry White Jr.



# Change Up Your Morning Greeting







# 3. MAINTAIN IT



## 2. MAINTAIN

*How do you know  
things are working?*

# *Culture Walkthrough Tool*



# 3. CELEBRATE!



# CELEBRATE!

## 1. Digital

- a. Social Media
- b. Website Refresh





Ryan Rogers, *Graphic Terrace*

(414) 712- 4886 | [Ryan@graphicterrace.com](mailto:Ryan@graphicterrace.com)



# CELEBRATE!

## 1. **Digital**

- a. Social Media
- b. Website Refresh

## 2. **Team Building and Staff Wellness / Classroom Celebrations**

- a. Go off campus
- b. Promote each other



# CELEBRATE!



TRINITY'S SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM PRESENTS:

## TEAM NIGHT @ MINESHAFT

A night of fun and fellowship for the whole family!  
Pizza, drinks, and game tokens are included!

AUGUST 16, 2019 • 5 PM • HARTFORD, WI

[CLICK HERE TO RSVP](#)



THE TRINITY PARTY-PLANNING COMMITTEE PRESENTS...

## Trinity Night @ The Bier Stube

*Enjoy fun, fellowship, music, and great food and drink in the beer garden!  
First one is on us!*

*Gemutlichkeit!*

SEPTEMBER 28, 2019 | 5:30 PM  
VON ROTHENBURG BIER STUBE



THE TRINITY PARTY-PLANNING COMMITTEE PRESENTS:

## BACON BONANZA!



Join your fellow Trinity bacon connoisseurs for a night of "swine" dining, sampling the best each other has to offer!

**SATURDAY, 19 OCTOBER, 2019, 6PM**

Address:  
12345 W Porkloin Avenue  
Germantown, WI 53051



TRINITY PARTY-PLANNING COMMITTEE PRESENTS:



## FISH FRY & BREWERY TOUR

5PM | FRIDAY  
LAKEFRONT BREWERY  
MKE - WI

**MAR 20 2020**

## PROSIT!

# CELEBRATE!

1. **Digital**
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  - b. Website Refresh
2. **Team Building and Staff Wellness / Classroom Celebrations**
  - a. Go off campus
  - b. Promote each other
3. **Classroom Celebrations**
  - a. Traveling trophies
  - b. Classroom greeter / responsibilities
  - c. Dress down days
  - d. Public Praise



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  - d. Public Praise
4. **PROMOTE - PROMOTE - PROMOTE**



# Results

# Results:

- **42** new students registered, committed (**23% increase**)
  - Overall, 40% minority students / 60% choice
- **93%** retention rate across all grades
- **4 new** full-time staff positions
- **A culture of JOY that is unmatched**



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*Graphic Terrace*  
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Ryan@graphicterrace.com



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Sam Seefeld,  
*Trinity Freistadt*  
(414) 213-4886  
sseefeld@trinityfreistadt.com