



Sandy Hill Strategy

In October 2017, we were presented with an opportunity that radically changed the way we do ministry. Sandy Hill Elementary School in Cambridge asked us if we would adopt the underperforming, impoverished, Title I school. We agreed, not knowing what “adoption” meant, or where the journey would lead. For the past 18 months, we’ve been a constant physical presence in the school, and, as a result, we’ve learned first hand how simply saying “yes” to God can transform a desperate community.

Here’s how we showed up for the Sandy Hill staff, students, and their families:



Coat Drive



Christmas Care Packs



Teacher Gift Cards



Staff Lunch



Spring Carnival



Backpack Drive



Prayer Meetings

*To contribute
to Sandy Hill Strategy,
please contact
Pastor Joe at 443-521-5997*

Measuring Success

“Since Pastor Joe and his organization has adopted us, we’ve seen a rise in students test scores,” says SHES principal Vaughn Evans. “We’ve also seen a reduction in disciplinary actions from previous years. Hope has returned to this community.”

Sandy Hill Strategy

In October 2017, we were presented with a unique proposal that radically changed the way we do ministry. The social worker for Sandy Hill Elementary School (SHES) approached one of our board members and asked if we would “adopt” the school. Without great thought or prayer, we agreed, not knowing what adoption meant or where the journey would take us. After meeting with the social worker, we realized the desperate need within this underserved and underprivileged community, and the only cure was radical love.

It has been a journey that has transformed the students, staff, teachers, administration, and all others involved. For the past 18 months, we have learned what it means to love unconditionally, to give beyond our wildest dreams, and to be blessed with the knowledge that the radical obedience of a few can transform and bring hope to many. For the first time in 19 years of ministry, we believe our organization has put into practice the heart of Jesus as described in Matthew 25:35: “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.” The simple act of obedience to this scripture has brought life and hope to SHES. Here are the main events in this journey:

November 2017

Partnered with The Children’s Place to purchase and distribute 200 winter coats, hats, and gloves to five local elementary schools

December 2017

Adopted 16 SHES families, which included 69 students, and provided them with Christmas gifts, trees, ornaments, food, prayer, and hope

February 2018

Provided \$50 gift cards to all SHES staff, from the janitor to the principal, along with handwritten letters thanking teachers for pouring into the next generation

April 2018

Provided a catered lunch for all SHES staff members, during which time we encouraged, prayed for, and shared with them the gospel of Jesus

May 2018

Sponsored a community outreach at SHES for families and staff as well as partnered with other local, non-profit organizations to provide information on summer activities

Summer 2018

Helped sponsor “New Beginnings”, a summer program that targets at-risk African- American children and takes them on field trips to venues, including the Supreme Court of the United States, the United States Naval Academy, and the Maryland Science Center.

Summer 2018

Sponsored middle and high school students to attend Young Life camps. Some described it as “the best week of our lives.”

August 2018

Partnered with Dorchester County Public Schools, Sandy Hill Elementary School local management board, Dorchester County Public Library, and others to procure 900 fully supplied backpacks to local Title 1 schools. We had the privilege and honor to pray for the administration and staff in every school as we delivered the backpacks.

September 2018

Started weekly Monday morning devotionals at SHES during which time we encourage, pray for, and lead teachers to Jesus. Through the process, teachers have begun to see their vocational positions as callings and not just jobs, which has been transformational when dealing with children who are lost and hurting.

October 2018

Held a kick off meeting for the Child Evangelistic Fellowship and the local church community to bring “The Good News Club” to all primary schools.

November 2018

Partnered with Children’s Place to provide winter jackets to three local Title 1 schools. This year, each jacket had a simple card enclosed stating how much God loves them.

December 2018

Catered a Christmas Luncheon for the SHES staff. We encouraged and prayed for the staff.

January 2019

Began the Child Evangelism Fellowship at Maple Elementary School, through which a number of students have received Christ between January and March.

How do we evaluate the success of the Sandy Hill Strategy? Through the journey at SHES, we have had the privilege of walking closely with the administration, the on-site social worker, and the school’s family liaison. Through these growing relationships, we have seen tremendous change within school community. According to SHES principal Vaughn Evans, student test scores have increased greater than any other elementary school within the county, and disciplinary actions are far less than in any other previous years. Social Workers and teachers are allowing their faith to guide them more frequently in their every-day actions. While the journey may be difficult, we are truly seeing the Kingdom of God at work, and we look forward to continuing and expanding the Sandy Hill Strategy to all Dorchester County elementary schools. Thank you for your prayers, support, and understanding of this non-traditional love story.