

WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools *Teachers' Conference Spring Update 2014*

Early Childhood Ministry As we consider the privilege and opportunity to share the Gospel with little ones and their families, we focus on ways to encourage and equip congregations in their efforts. Included in those areas of focus is work through the Early Childhood District Coordinators (ECDC) to connect and support ECM directors and teachers.



Work is underway to create an addendum to the K-8 set of WELS School Accreditation (WELSSA) standards for schools with a preschool (age 3), which will be a tool for a school to become accredited for preschool-grade 8 in one process. The WELS National School Leadership Conference is including a strand of workshops for directors and teachers in early childhood ministry including an all-day pre-conference workshop. For questions, concerns, or resources to share regarding WELS ECM, contact Cindi Holman, National Coordinator for ECM.

Growing in Educational Ministry (GEM) CLS director Greg Schmill and GEM coordinator Jim Henrickson continue to focus the program on 3 areas:

- **New Teacher Induction – NTI:** CLS is currently serving 77 first and second year teachers through 36 New Teacher Center trained mentors in 5 districts (MN, SA, SEW, WW, and NW); NTI will expand to NE and SC districts in 2014-15; Prof. Jonathan Schaefer serves as Professor of Continuing Education/New Teacher Induction at Martin Luther College; NTI program oversight to be handed off to MLC in May 2014



- **School Leadership Development:** CLS continues to offer Leadership Institute Modules (LIM) throughout the synod; MLC masters in educational administration to be implemented Fall 2015; Principal Apprenticeship Mentoring strengthened and combined with NTI mentoring; WELS congregations strongly encouraged to provide sufficient School Administration and Leadership Time (SALT); CLS and various partners are working on programs which will support, strengthen, and prepare school leaders (e.g. School Leadership Candidate Training program-SLCT, Principal coaching)

- **Veteran Teacher Development:** CLS and GEM continue to develop and promote the use of Ministry Development Plans by teachers and school leaders; WELS teaching standards and continuum available to all and training in their use available from MLC; work being done on formative and summative teacher assessment processes and tools; congregations encouraged to provide \$1000 per teacher per year for continuing education

The COP Task Force on Lutheran Schools reported on their two years of work to the 2013 synod convention. The task force produced a set of Foundational Principles and Guiding Statements for WELS Schools that are useful for congregations as they consider critical issues such as defining a clear and compelling school mission/vision, encouraging ongoing spiritual and professional growth for called workers, developing appropriate funding and governance models, and enhancing and supporting school leadership. The following proposals were approved by the synod in convention:

- Calling a full-time associate director of the CLS by July 2015, subject to funding, who would lead Forward with Lutheran Schools, Second Wind, and the School Leadership Candidate Training program
- Urging WELS schools to achieve school accreditation within the next ten years or to use the appropriate tools to create a culture of continual improvement
- Strengthen leadership preparation for WELS schools (e.g. MLC programs, SLCT, additional mentoring)
- Encouraging congregations to supply funding to provide adequate administrative release time for principals
- Encourage all schools to participate in the Voluntary Supplemental Contribution (VSC) program

CLS Support Program As of January 31, 205 WELS Lutheran schools are participating in the VSC program. This includes 175 LES (55%), 18 LHS (75%), and 12 self-standing ECM (6%). The program is in its seventh year, and this year's contributions have provided \$151,478.50 for ministry support to Lutheran schools. The funds are allocated for district ministry to schools, CAPE membership, *Parents Crosslink* subscriptions, and Learn360 subscriptions with the remainder to cover salaries/office expenses, and further development of the GEM program. [Visit the website](#) to make your contribution or to subscribe to [PowerSchool](#), [Curriculum Mapper](#), and [DE Streaming](#).

Christ-Light Update The Lutheran elementary school module (New Testament) is on schedule to be available for the 2014–2015 school year this April. Those schools on the Old Testament cycle for the 2014–2015 school year will still be able to purchase the original Christ-Light Old Testament materials. Several of the teaching resources for the LES classroom are available on CD and include the following:



- Teaching Pictures for each lesson in both high and low resolution for printing and projection
- 38 memory treasure hymns with both accompaniment and vocal tracks, and accompaniment alone
- 61 core Bible passages set to music with both accompaniment and vocal tracks, and accompaniment alone
- Many of the copy master songs for prekindergarten through grade 4

All materials can be used with the original Christ-Light as well as the revised curriculum. [Go to the website](#) to view introductory presentations for Sunday school teachers, Lutheran elementary school teachers, and pastors, as well as samples of both the Sunday school and Lutheran elementary school material.

The WELS School Accreditation (WELSSA) program The list of accredited schools in WELS continues to grow. WELSSA has 31 scheduled accreditation site visits for the 2013-14 school year, and thirty or more site visits are expected annually as new schools are added to the program and current schools reach the end of their five-year accreditation cycle. We are thankful for the hundreds of active and inactive educators who volunteer to serve on site visitation teams as part of the process. WELSSA maintains three core tools to accredit early childhood ministries, Lutheran elementary schools, and Lutheran high schools. The Commission on Lutheran Schools is considering recent updates and revisions to allow for an accreditation of all grade levels (Prek-12) in a single site visit. Contact [Jim Rademan](#) for information on the WELSSA process.



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- ☞ **Adminmail** A new listserv for principals and directors has been created. [E-mail us](#) to join.
 - ☞ **Assessments** The assessment forms for 2013-2014 are [now available](#). Forms are due June 13.
 - ☞ **Call List activity** As of January 31, there have been 100 call lists prepared as compared to 112 at the same time the previous year. The call lists to date contained 321 different names used and experienced a 46.9% acceptance rate.
 - ☞ **Compensation Rates** The synod recommended [compensation rates table](#).
 - ☞ **CLS Weekly E-news** [Sign up](#) today and keep informed!
 - ☞ **Foundations** Learn more about the program and see videos by [visiting the NPH website](#).
 - ☞ **National School Leadership Conference** • June 15-18, 2015 at Country Springs Hotel & Conf. Center, Waukesha WI
 - ☞ **School Statistics** The two-page WELS [schools statistics report](#) for 2013-14 is available.
 - ☞ **Testing report** [This overview](#) from the ECRA Group highlights some of the results for the Class of 2014.

[Contact us](#) at the CLS office.



[Contact your district coordinator](#).

The spring Teachers' Conference Update newsletter is posted on the [CLS website](#).
All the clickable links in this publication will provide more detailed information on the item of interest.