**LUTHERAN** SCHOOLS

Fall 2025



# A Call for Encouragement and Prayers

The Lord continues to provide abundant opportunities for us to accomplish his mission through our schools. In recent years, opportunities have far outweighed the workers available to carry out that mission in many places. Your encouragement, joy, and zeal can motivate others to consider training for ministry, and provide a boost for your colleagues currently serving. Annually less than 70 teachers retire from service. During the last school year over 90 teachers retired. We expect a larger number of retirees in the years to come as nearly one-third of all teachers are over 50 and last year the average retirement age was 64. God bless our efforts to recruit and retain ministry brothers and sisters!

## **Quick Links**

Lutheran Schools News wels.net/subscribe

Lutheran Schools Resource Center cls.welsrc.net

facebook.com/WELSschools instagram.com/wels\_schools

Congregational Services welscongregationalservices.net

**lutheranschools@wels.net** for questions or assistance.

## **Our Mission**

The Commission on Lutheran Schools (CLS) exists to guide and assist WELS congregations in advancing the gospel of Jesus by providing resources, training, and personal assistance for starting and strengthening Lutheran schools.

# **Theology Curriculum Project**

As the Lutheran Schools team continues developing the new theology curriculum and instructional programs, they are seeking feedback on the options for the project title, program names, and digital and print resources. View a brief video and complete the survey **bit.ly/ Fall2025Theology** to share your thoughts with the team. The survey will be "live," beginning October 8.





## **Teacher Call Window**

The window for calling active teachers from the field begins on **October 15, 2025** and runs through **April 15, 2026**.

- Teacher call list requests are submitted electronically at wels.net/callrequest.
- Request forms must be complete and submitted at least 14 days prior
  to the requested call meeting. Calling bodies should use the two
  weeks to prepare all items for the call packet electronically, so that the
  call and accompanying documents may be e-mailed to the candidate
  called within 12 hours of the meeting.
- Remember to include compensation information using the compensation calculator: cwcompcalc.wels.net.

## **WELS Cloud Account**

Called workers can update personal information anytime via their WELS Cloud Account. Current information and preferences are essential for WELS benefits and call purposes. Visit **cloud.wels.net/me** to review and update your information **annually** or as your circumstances warrant.

Contact **support@wels.net** or 414-259-4357 if you need help accessing your account. Contact **lutheranschools@wels.net** for help with the forms in your account.

### **Profile**

Review each form and complete/update as applicable. Be sure to indicate your ability to consider calls outside of your home area, distance you are willing to commute, and any additional information on relocation limitations in the **Called Worker Information form**.

## Profile (i)

Personal Information

| Contact Information

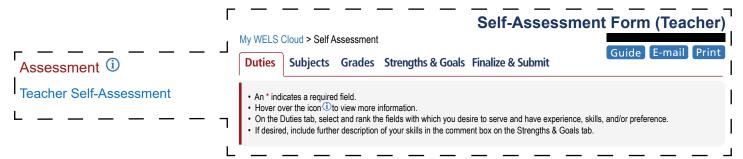
Family Information (Spouse and Children)

Education/Spiritual Growth Information Called Worker Information

**Special Circumstance** 

## **Teacher Self-Assessments**

Teacher Self-Assessments are important for calling bodies and worker self-development and should be updated **annually**.



### **Self-Assessment Guidance**

\*The Teacher Self-Assessment is multi-faceted and can take time. Save your work often. If left open without activity for an extended period, of time the form will become inactive for security purposes. Data entered will not save unless you first refresh the page or log-in again.\*

- 1. Enter information in the *Duties, Subjects*, and *Grades* tabs of the **Teacher Self-Assessment**. Focus on categories in which you have experience and/or interest. Leave blank those that don't pertain to you.
- 2. Indicate your Top 5 Strengths (optional) and Ministry Goals and Interests in the Strengths & Goals tab.
- 3. Have your Self-Assessment reviewed by someone who knows you well by following the guidance in Steps 1-5 on the *Finalize & Submit tab*. We suggest a principal or your current pastor to serve as reviewer. When you and your reviewer have discussed your Self-Assessment please add any additional Comments, complete the Reviewer Information at the bottom of the page, and click **Save & Submit**. This will upload your assessment to your WELS Cloud account.

### IMPORTANT! Your Self-Assessment is not saved to your profile until you click Submit!

Once submitted, your Self-Assessment will be available for viewing in **Personal Biography** under Reports.

Additional Self-Assessment help can be found at **cls.welsrc.net**. Questions? Contact **lutheranschools@wels.net**.

Reports ①

Personal Biography

Personal Education Report

Historic Summative Teacher Evaluation



### **Accreditation in WELSSA Schools**

Accreditation gives credibility to our WELS school system by assuring families and communities that students are receiving a high-quality, Christ-centered education. Through WELSSA, Lutheran schools receive the encouragement they need to strengthen their mission, demonstrate accountability, and commit to steady growth in ministry and academics.

At the heart of WELSSA are three core values:

**Continuous improvement** – committed to excellence in every aspect of ministry.

**Distinctly Lutheran** – grounded in the truth of God's Word and the heritage of our church.

**Discerning accountability** – faithfully evaluating progress while responding wisely to changing circumstances.

Incremental development is expected. We strive to continually strengthen our ministries so that God is honored, families are blessed, and students are nurtured in the sure hope we have in Christ. While ministry circumstances may shift, our schools balance local needs with a steady focus on long-term goals and plans.

### **Statistics**

Six schools are to be approved by the Commission on Lutheran Schools for first-time accreditation this fall, bringing WELSSA's accredited total to 163. These early childhood ministries, elementary schools, and high schools are located in fifteen states serving over 26,000 students. WELSSA continues to grow as there are eleven new ministries that will be seeking first-time accreditation during the next two school years.

### **Improvement Project Updates**

YoungStar – We are partnering with the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families to finalize recognition for our early childhood ministries. Currently, a provider number is required for recognition, and at present, this number is only granted through licensure. We are carefully exploring every available option and confirming the correct interpretation of Wisconsin statutes.

Self-Study Template Pilot – Schools that participated in piloting the self-study template—as well as the visiting teams—found the new process valuable and efficient. If your self-study is approaching, please contact the WELSSA office to see examples or to request access to the template for your school.

Standards Revision – This summer, the standards revision team presented most of the updated standards to our captains. Their feedback was invaluable, and the team is working through those insights. A draft of the revised standards is expected for piloting by early 2026. Special thanks to Mike Henning, Amber Terry, Landon Zacharyasz, Justin Danell, and Andy Baxter for their leadership and work on this important project.

#### **Get Involved**

If you are interested in serving on a site visit team or learning more about accreditation for your school, please contact our office at **welssa@wels.net**.

### Congratulations to our first-time accredited schools!

- Christ Lutheran School Port St. Lucie, FL
- Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran School La Mesa, CA
- St. Peter Lutheran School Weyauwega, WI
- St. Stephen's Lutheran School Beaver Dam, WI
- Trinity Lutheran School Campbellsport, WI
- Trinity Lutheran School West Bend, WI

## **Telling the Next Generation**

Each day our WELS schools and early childhood ministries strive to provide high quality education and connect children and families with the gospel. Telling the Next Generation seminars guide your ministry team in the development and implementation of a written harvest strategy. Due to generous donations, we are able to waive the registration fee for any attending congregation. tellingthenextgeneration@wels.net

## **Synod Sub Rate**

Synod substitution rate for teachers in the 2025-26 school year is \$114/day.

## **WELS Devotions**

WELS publishes daily devotions and Bible readings, teen devotions, early childhood educator, and family devotions. wels.net/subscribe

#### Contact us

414-259-4354 lutheranschools@wels.net

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### **Heart Imprints**

This resource provides ideas for your children's message that will coordinate with Sunday worship planning. It consists of a Bible reading, an object lesson outline, and a suggested order of service. cls.welsrc.net/heartimprints

### **Kids Connection**

Kids Connection monthly videos share stories about people, places, and programs around WELS. **wels.net/kids-connection** 

### **Business Certificate for School Leaders**

Through a grant from the Kern Family Foundation and in partnership with Milwaukee School of Engineering, you can earn a Business Certificate for School Leaders. Classes in Finance, Marketing, Organizational Change, and Project Management are paired with a project that addresses a need in your school. For more information reach out to Lutheran Schools Associate Director, Paul Patterson or MSOE Program Director, Michele Trawicki trawickim@msoe.edu or 414-412-7378.

## **Training for Future School Leaders**

The Principal Credential Cohort and Early Childhood Credential Cohort programs provide opportunities for those either not currently serving in, or new to a leadership role with professional development and training. The cohort provides support from mentors and fellow participants, three leadership training events and a 50% scholarship for graduate coursework through MLC. For more information or to nominate a teacher for either program visit **cls.welsrc.net** or contact our office.

## **School Openings**

- Good Shepherd Lutheran School (ECM) Sioux Falls, SD
- Messiah Johns Creek Preschool (ECM) Johns Creek, GA
- New Hope Lutheran Academy (ECM) West Melbourne, FL
- Anchor Early Learning Academy (ECM) Rockwall, TX
- Hope Academy Microschools (LES) Prescott, AZ
- Victory of the Lamb Preschool (ECM) Katy, TX

## **School Closings**

- St Peter Lutheran Preschool (ECM) Modesto, CA
- Our Shepherd Child Care Center (ECM) Appleton, WI
- Little Lambs Preschool (ECM) Chesapeake, VA
- Our Savior Lutheran School (LES) Wausau, WI
- St John Lutheran School (ECM & LES) Westland, MI
- Zion Lutheran School (ECM & LES) Hartland, WI
- Little Lights Preschool (ECM) Waukegan, IL
- Life Lutheran School (ECM & LES) Friendswood, TX
- St Philip Lutheran School (ECM & LES) Milwaukee, WI
- St John's Lutheran School (ECM) Dowagiac, MI
- Beautiful Savior Little Lambs Preschool (ECM) Spooner, WI
- Little Lambs Preschool (ECM) Mandan, ND

