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.

Stay in Touch

Keep up-to-date with Lutheran Schools news by subscribing to the weekly CLS e-News at wels.net/subscribe.

Submit your news stories to lutheranschools@wels.net to be featured in the CLS e-News.

Principals and directors will receive a bi-monthly Lutheran Schools Leader electronic newsletter.

Administrators are encouraged to join our Google group “adminmail” for principals and directors to ask questions and share information. E-mail lutheranschools@wels.net to request an invitation.

IRS Section 107 Reminders

This summer WELS shared this important notification regarding an update on how the IRS viewed ministers of the Gospel. Men and women who are called and ministry certified can claim this tax status.

Please contact your pastor or principal if you are unsure if your congregation completed their tasks or to learn more about the benefits of the Minister of the Gospel Tax Status.

Ministerial Growth and Evaluation Process

The WELS Ministerial Growth and Evaluation Process understands that reflecting Jesus’ love to others within a changing educational climate requires WELS educators to have a steadfast commitment to lifelong learning, continuous growth, and ongoing ministry development.

Recorded webinars of all four training modules are available at cls.welsrc.net/mgep for on demand viewing. Contact our office if you would like access to additional leader guides or assistance in implementing the Ministerial Growth and Evaluation Process with your staff.

All teachers in WELS should have or be working on a Ministry Development Plan. Summative Evaluation is now available for all teachers. School and early childhood leader evaluations will be available in spring 2021.

Save The Date!

The Lutheran Schools team has begun planning for a WELS National Education conference June 19-22, 2022 in Pewaukee, Wis. Save the date and stay tuned for more details to come!
WELS Profile & Self-Assessments

Called workers can update their personal information any time via the WELS On-line Called Worker form. Updated information is greatly appreciated by calling bodies when names are submitted to them as they look to issue a call. Visit cloud.wels.net/me to access your forms.

Teacher Information & Self-Assessment

Under Profile in the Teacher/ Staff Minister Information form you may indicate your ability to consider calls outside of your home area, distance you are willing to commute, and any additional information on relocation limitations.

The Self-Assessment “strengths” tab, refers to strengths determined by the on-line CliftonStrengths assessment. If you are interested in completing this section, visit store.gallup.com to purchase the assessment. Share the top 5 strengths which are reported in your assessment results. This information can be helpful to those preparing and reviewing call lists. If you have not taken the CliftonStrengths assessment, please leave this section blank.

Active Teacher Calling Window

Please be reminded, the window for calling active teachers from the field who would begin serving in a new location for the 2021-22 school year begins on October 15, 2020, and runs through April 15, 2021. The volume of teacher calls remains high and congregations are encouraged to plan ahead, keeping the following in mind:

- 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 emailed to the candidate called within 12 hours of the call meeting.
- Remember to include compensation information using the compensation calculator: cwcompcalc.wels.net.

Training Future School Leaders

The Principal Credential Cohort program invites individuals who have demonstrated three or more years of successful teaching experience, recognized leadership gifts and characteristics, and are not currently serving in a principal role to participate. The cohort provides support from mentors and fellow participants, three leadership training events and a 50% scholarship for graduate coursework through MLC.

The Emerging Leader Cohort for early childhood directors provides opportunities for those either not currently serving as an early childhood director or new to the director role with professional development and training.

For more information or to nominate a teacher for either Leadership Candidate Training or Emerging Leader Cohort programs visit cls.welsrc.net or contact our office.
Accreditation is a fabulous way for schools to improve the Christian education experience for students and families. Among the many benefits of becoming an accredited school is appreciating the many blessings our gracious God provides and identifying ways in which the school can better serve its students and surrounding community.

Gaining WELSSA accreditation also earns you accreditation recognition with the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA).

Congratulations to our 2019-2020 first-time accredited schools:
- Christ our Redeemer Lutheran School – Aurora, CO
- St. Paul’s Lutheran School – East Troy, WI
- Crown of Life Christian Academy – Fort Atkinson, WI
- King of Kings Lutheran School – Garden Grove, CA
- St. Paul’s Lutheran School – Howards Grove, WI
- St. John’s Lutheran School – Lomira, WI
- Immanuel Lutheran School – Manitowoc, WI
- St. John’s Lutheran School – Mukwonago, WI
- Redeemer Lutheran School – Tucson, AZ
- Kingdom Prep Lutheran High School – Wauwatosa, WI
- St. John’s Lutheran School – Watertown, WI

As a synod, 63% of Lutheran elementary schools and 100% of Lutheran high schools are accredited with WELSSA or another accrediting body. There are currently 145 WELSSA accredited schools (128 LES, 16 LHS, 1 standalone ECM) in 14 states serving over 20,000 students. There are 15 schools holding candidacy status that will be hosting a first-time site visit within the next two years. This fall, we finished all site visits that were put on hold due to Covid from the 2019-20 school year. There are 27 full site visits scheduled for 2020-21 and over 35 expected in 2021-22. More than 125 experienced educators from schools around the country will volunteer to serve WELSSA as a consultant, site team captain, or team member this year. The WELSSA program is thankful for their service. May God continue to bless the WELSSA program!

All three handbooks (ECM, LES, and LHS) have been updated within the past year and a half. The 2019 version of the LES handbook was sent out to schools last year. This year, the LHS handbook was updated with some minor language changes, combinations or eliminations of previous standards, and a brand-new section addition. The ECM handbook received a complete overhaul with major updates to strengthen areas of curriculum, credentials, and governance. Our next steps are to use the newly updated ECM handbook, written for 3K and 4K programs, to update the 3K/4K addendum for EC programs connected to Lutheran elementary schools. These handbooks are available upon request from welssa@wels.net.

If you are interested in serving on a site visit team, learning more about accreditation for your school, joining the WELSSA email group, receiving a newly updated handbook, or using the WELSSA logo for your website, email our office at welssa@wels.net.
WELS Devotions

WELS publishes daily devotions and Bible readings, teen devotions, and early childhood educator devotions. **NEW THIS YEAR**, WELS Family Devotions are published three times a week, and the devotions coincide with the previous Sunday’s Bible readings. Each devotion is complete with a set of questions for different age groups, a prayer, and hymn verses that can be sung or spoken. Sign-up at wels.net/subscribe.

Early Childhood Ministry Educator Devotions are written for anyone who serves young children. On-line devotions are shared once a week. Visit wels.net/serving-you/devotions to view and subscribe.

Lutheran Schools Webinars

This summer Lutheran Schools hosted several webinars. These webinars were recorded and are available to view on demand. Visit cls.welsrc.net/webinar. Webinars with Christian Family Solutions including “Help for the Helpers: Implementing Resilience as a Practice” and “A Discussion on Anxiety and Stress in the Classroom” offer practical tips for recognizing the effects of stress and what you can do about it.

Lutheran Educator Series

**NEW THIS YEAR!** The Lutheran Educator Series are monthly articles for you. Articles will feature encouragement in a variety of topics. Visit cls.welsrc.net/lutheran-educator. Remember to check out Forward in Christ and their Parent Conversations each month for articles and videos for yourself and to share with your school families. Visit forwardinchrist.net/tag/fic-series-parent-conversations.

School Consulting

Commission on Lutheran Schools welcomed recently retired WELS principal James Sievert to lead our consulting efforts as a part-time school consultant for Lutheran schools. Jim joins a number of trained consultants available to assist congregations seeking to strengthen a struggling ministry or start a new Lutheran elementary school or early childhood ministry. E-mail james.sievert@wels.net for more information.

2020-21 Substitute Reimbursement Rate

The daily substitute reimbursement rate for teachers approved by the WELS Synodical Council is 106.