



MN DISTRICT SCHOOLS COORDINATOR

It has been a pleasure seeing more routine things happening in the MN District, but we are still not at full operation. Here is a synopsis of items happening from our schools and Early Childhood Centers in the MN District.

On September 23-24, 2021, all the district school coordinators and early childhood district coordinators met at WELS Center for Mission and Ministry – Waukesha, WI. This meeting helps set the tone for all that will be happening at Commission on Lutheran Schools (CLS) during the year as well as speaking about what is being planned in each person's district. Each year CLS puts out a yearly report and I have included that link. [CLS Report](#). This report addresses many things happening in synod and here a few to encourage you to go to the report: call window updates, accurate call information from schools and churches, recruitment of public school teachers, ministerial growth and evaluation process(MGAEP), new religion curriculum updates, Telling the Next Generation (I just got back from one in Florida), Hearts Imprints devotional resources, Early Childhood ministry devotions, Early Childhood Emerging Leader Cohort, Principal Credential Cohort, Early Childhood Director Training Program, Principal Training Program, Business Certificate for School Leaders at Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE), WELSSA (accreditation), WELS National Education Conference (#EDU22) June (19) 20-22, 2022, Special Education Call Requests, and School Consulting.

One very important topic that was discussed this year synod wide was how to address the issue of having a vacancy and you were not able to receive a graduate from the assignment committee and you don't have a person ready to step into your program who is W/ELS. There were 11 step-by-step instructions for our ministries to go through in an effort to fill our teacher vacancies. [Teacher Vacancy Guidelines 2022](#) Share this document with your leadership team to better navigate during these times of called worker shortages.

The MN District on its own had several things taking place. This year our Minnesota District Lutheran Teachers Conference (MNDLTC) took place October 21-22 at West Lutheran High School in Plymouth. We had early childhood, elementary, and high school teachers present with amazing keynotes for all grade levels along with sectionals that were valuable to be used immediately back in the classrooms. This year's conference will be held on October 20-21 at MLC with the theme: United in Christ and using Ephesians 4:11-13 as our focus.

This year the MN District welcomed our new Early Childhood District Coordinator, Mrs. LaShawn Smith. She currently serves at Jesus Loves Me Learning Center, Mankato, MN. This year has been a year getting used to the position and we look forward to having a summer to make plans together for our ECM ministries. We will be looking to put together an ECM Conference where the teachers can get together with other ECM teachers. Please encourage your boards and committees to give proper administrative release time for our early childhood

directors. They are the front lines and the doorway to your church and K-8 programs. In many situations their positions are more demanding and immediate than principals.

One of the main focuses of our MN District teachers is to fully adopt the new Ministerial Growth & Evaluation Process for conducting teacher assessments, but also to encourage and track educational and spiritual growth of our teachers. COVID really slowed down this process, but schools are getting back on track and several teachers have sent in their data to synod offices. Please encourage your teachers and principals to adopt and dive into the MGAEP. Feel free to contact me or I can also set you up with the proper person(s) to ask your questions.

This MN DSC position does have a team that assists me:

LaShawn Smith – Jesus Loves Me Learning Center, North Mankato (EC District Coordinator)

Jared Christensen – St. Paul's, St. James (MNDLTC)

Eric Kaesermann – St. Paul's, Arlington (WELSSA Accreditation)

Macord Johnson – Prairie Lutheran Schools, Fairfax (School Counselor)

Kelli Green – MLC (Special Education)

Dr. Robert Klindworth – MLC (School Law)

One area that I get to work with in our district is consulting with schools. I am willing to help in whatever way I can and if I feel that a different kind of help or more focused degree of help is needed, I work with Jim Sievert who works part-time at synod offices. He can help set up a lengthier visit of 1-3 days for consulting and doing a congregational assessment.

I know this is said very frequently lately, but please speak to those members in your congregation about being a called worker. We are seeing many second career individuals, many teachers who used to teach in the public school sector and are coming to teach in our W/ELS schools, and some who stepped away from teaching for awhile and now are ready to teach again. Teachers, share why you became a teacher and your love for the position. Pastors and staff ministers encourage those that may have the gifts and share why you became a called worker. God's got a plan and he has us right where he wants us right here and right now.

It is a pleasure to serve the MN District and so please let me know if I can be of any help to your early childhood, elementary, or high school ministry. Blessings to our called workers and lay workers in the MN District.

Yours in Christ's Service,

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