



## LUTHERAN SCHOOLS REPORT

### State of the Schools

The landscape of Ohio District Lutheran schools has peaks and valleys. Several schools have added grade levels and significantly increased in enrollment during this triennium. Unfortunately, the majority of our schools are plateaued or declining which is very representative of most LCMS congregations. We are increasing the emphasis of schools existing to “make disciples” of Jesus Christ as we are commanded in Scripture. This needs to be our focus.

The majority of students in our Cleveland schools are using state vouchers to pay for tuition. While this is a current blessing, any withdrawal of this state program would close these schools immediately.

The 2006 Ohio District Convention unanimously adopted the LEAF project for obtaining needed tuition funds for children who live within our Ohio District geographical boundaries. As of this report being written, only five people (1 pastor, 2 principals, and 2 laypeople) from the entire district have responded to the opportunity to serve in this effort to make disciples. Therefore, this initiative has not yet begun.

However, the current economic and societal realities are providing us with wonderful opportunities to share the Gospel through God’s Lutheran schools.

### School Statistics

# of Free-Standing Early Childhood Centers (not part of elem. School): 46

# of Elementary Schools: 22

# of High Schools: 2

Total 2008-09 Enrollment in Ohio District Lutheran Schools = 6,594

### Education Task Forces

**Hearts for Jesus.** A “Hearts for Jesus” task force oversees this annual mission and stewardship effort essentially supported by our district children. Our current 2009 effort is providing **Financial Aid for Appalachian Lutheran Preschools (Lancaster, Chillicothe, Parkersburg, and Zanesville)**

The **Entry Year Teacher** task force is overseen by Dr. Paul Bruhn. This guides teachers through their initial two years of teaching and results in a regular teacher license in Ohio.

The **Early Childhood Education Advisory Cabinet’s** purpose is to advise Mr. Stuckert on issues related to early childhood programs. They also provide consultation services to congregations regarding early childhood education. The current cabinet members are: Anja Vincent, Bonnie Stottlemeyer, Laurie Schneider, Gil Schepmann, Lisa Creager, Lori Salyer, and Jeannie O’Shaughnessy.

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**NLSA (National Lutheran School Accreditation)** is a self-improvement process based on a set of national standards specifically designed to help evaluate and improve not only the curriculum and administration, but also the religious dimension of the school. NLSA is also recognized for school chartering by the State of Ohio. Our NLSA District Accreditation Commission oversees NLSA in the Ohio District. Its chair is Mary Giese. The Ohio District preschools and elementary schools currently accredited by NLSA are listed below.

St. Mark	Brunswick
Luther Memorial	Cleveland
St. John	Cleveland
Redeemer	Cuyahoga Falls
St. John	Defiance
Immanuel	Hamilton
King of Kings	Mason
St. John	Marysville
St. Mark's	Milford
St. Paul	Milford Center (Chuckery)
St. John	Napoleon (Freedom)
St. Paul	Napoleon
Royal Redeemer	North Royalton
Our Shepherd	Painesville
St. Paul	Painesville
Bethany	Parma
St. John	South Euclid
Trinity	Toledo
St. Paul	Westlake

The **Ohio District Educators Conference** continues to be held annually except on years when the Lutheran Education Association Convocation replaces it. Its chair is Krista Nagy. It will be replaced this year (2009) by the Ohio District All Professional Church Workers Conference in October.

The **Local Professional Development Committee** assists Mr. Stuckert in overseeing the Ohio certification and licensure process for our principals and teachers. Jack Lelle supervises this program.

The **Technology Task Force** provides direction and support for technology hardware, software, and instruction in our schools. The current chair is Sharon Wallace.

### **Education Office Services**

**In-service education** for Lutheran school personnel continues through two semi-annual district principals' conferences, a fall district educators' conference, spring regional workshops for early childhood educators, and an annual early childhood directors conference.

**New teacher orientation** workshops are conducted annually. These are for teachers (both rookies and seasoned) who are new to Ohio District schools.

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**Prospective Teacher and Principal Candidates.** Lutheran teachers are listed on a synodical Internet list which is accessible by school principals and other authorized congregational leaders. Concordia teacher graduate candidates are also listed on an Internet listing. Mr. Stuckert's office can provide assistance related to these two search processes for teacher candidates.

The **Genesis Project** is provided by the LCMS District and Congregational Services – School Ministry to help congregations and communities explore opportunities to start Lutheran early childhood programs, elementary schools, and secondary schools. Ohio District congregations use Genesis services regularly. Contact Mr. Stuckert's office for assistance.

**Government relations** are an important segment of Mr. Stuckert's responsibilities. He represents Lutheran schools on the State Superintendent's Advisory Committee for Nonpublic Schools in Ohio, a group appointed by and which works with the Ohio Superintendent of Public Instruction. He also serves on the state superintendent's advisory committee for development and administration of regulations for chartered nonpublic schools.

The **SSAC (Strengthening Schools and Congregations) Project** of the LCMS has been utilized by several Ohio District congregations. Its purpose is to strengthen and revitalize Lutheran elementary schools that are experiencing problems, so that the mission of sharing the caring Christ can be more effectively accomplished in that place. Contact Mr. Stuckert's office for assistance.

The **Principals List Serve** allows principals throughout the district to use the Internet for instant communication between principals and the superintendent. Information is shared and questions are answered without waiting for the mail to arrive or a meeting to be held. All of our principals are connected to this. Many of our principals are also connected to a Lutheran principals list serve throughout the synod. The **Early Childhood Directors List Serve** provides the same timely information. Only about one-half of our directors are using this resource.

**Salaries and Benefits** need much attention in the Ohio District. Low salaries and declining benefits coverage are having a negative effect upon the attraction and retention of quality professional church workers. Ohio District compensation guidelines are shared annually with congregations and schools.

**School Board Training** is provided by Mr. Stuckert for individual boards.

Mr. Gordon Stuckert  
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Ohio District LCMS

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