



## Mr. Fitzsimmons' Winter "State of the School Ministry Report"

Dear St. Paul's School Parents, Congregation Members, and Friends,

My goal in this School Ministry Report is two-fold, and, therefore, this report is divided into two parts. In part one, I share with you some notable student and staff achievements over the past semester. In part two, we will look ahead, plan, and dream as we seek the Lord's will for what is best for the ministry of our Lutheran school here in Muskego. It is a great blessing to serve the Lord and our families with the staff here at St. Paul's!

### *Part One*

#### **Student Highlights**

**Baptisms!** Most importantly, we have had three families request baptism for their children! God's Word is at work through our school ministry and the Christian parents with whom we are blessed to partner. We pray for all to grow in faith and God's Word, bit by bit, day by day!

**Robotics:** Our 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade EagleBots team "The Ducks" qualified for the FIRST Lego League's state competition. Coach Eric Schlevensky said, "The Ducks did a great job at sectionals finishing third in the robot competition. They were also named as one of the top three for the Programming Award in the robot judging. They finished sixth overall and are one of 9 teams advancing from this Sectional to the state tournament." Go get 'em at state, Ducks!



**Spelling Bee Champ!** 8<sup>th</sup> Grader Jackson Rossman was the champion speller at this year's grade school spelling bee at Wisconsin Lutheran High School.

**Student Helpers:** Each week, four 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students tutor four Kindergarten students before school to assist reading growth. We thank Sophia Lepke, Brooke Weber, Jenna Goelz, and Kate Klein for this. We also have various other 7<sup>th</sup> graders assisting with (1) younger student library time and (2) classroom recycling. All these efforts support our 5<sup>th</sup> core value of student character development, especially servant-leadership.

Lion's Club Peace Poster Contest Winners: Congratulations to Lauren VanLandeghem (3<sup>rd</sup> place), Lilly Bohman (2<sup>nd</sup> place), and Sydney Younk (1<sup>st</sup> place) for their drawings this year! The girls received these certificates as well as a small cash prize at the Lion's Club meeting in November. Sydney's drawing now advances to the regional competition.



### Multiple Partnerships Between Older and Younger Students



8<sup>th</sup> + 2<sup>nd</sup> Investigating Cells



5<sup>th</sup> + 3K's Cooking thru the Alphabet



7<sup>th</sup> + K Create Advent Chains

Student Council: These 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders have experienced something new this year – guest speakers. These speakers talk about their careers, the education needed, and the leadership skills used in their jobs. Kristin Paschke (right) was one this year.



The student council was also blessed to attend the Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> Veteran's Day program at WLHS. They are pictured (right) with former Eagle Jacob Meyer, who serves on WLHS's student council. So far this year, our students have coordinated the winter clothing drive, food pantry donations, student birthday cards + candy, Christmas hallway decorations, and basketball popcorn sales. Some remaining projects include the dodgeball tourney, school dance, and Soles for Jesus donation.

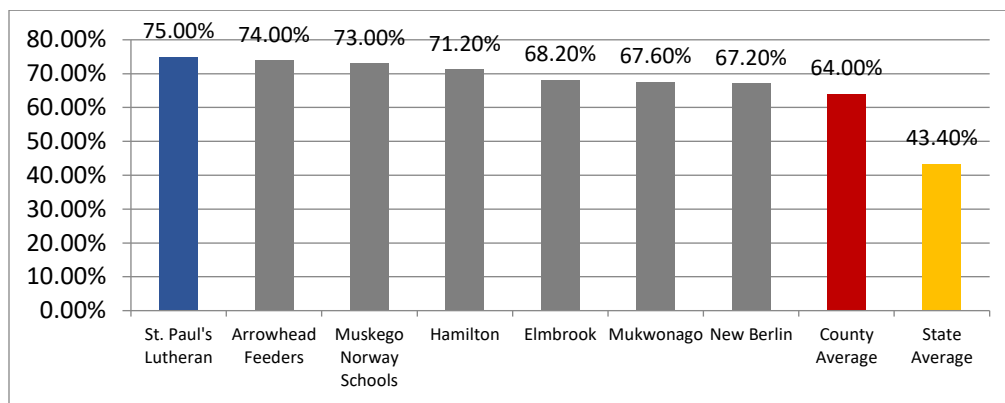


Former Eagles Supporting Current Eagles: It is always a special thing when former students return to school, the gym, or the athletic field to reunite and cheer on current Eagles. Pictured left are Sophia Kennedy and Emma Eilertson cheering on Jenna Goelz at a cross country event.

Strong Test Scores: Muskego-Norway Public Schools (MNPS) shared their 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade spring 2019 test score rankings compared to all other public school districts in Waukesha County. See the results on next page.

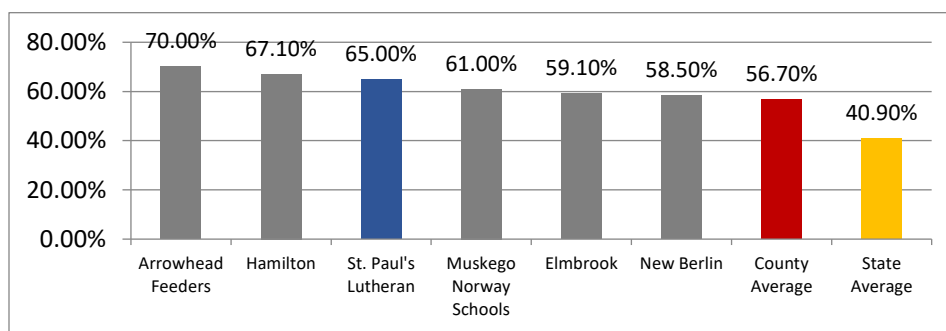
## In Math...

- St. Paul's had 75% of 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders scoring "proficient or advanced."



## In English-Language Arts...

- St. Paul's had 65% of 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders scoring "proficient or advanced."



## Staff Highlights



### Grants Received

Three St. Paul's teachers received \$150 each in grant funding to support our classroom reading libraries. Zach Lindow (pictured left) attended a November 1<sup>st</sup> faculty meeting on behalf of the Meemic Foundation to present the grant checks to Mrs. Noffsinger (1<sup>st</sup> grade), Mrs. Steinbauer (2<sup>nd</sup> grade), and Mrs. Shevey (6<sup>th</sup> grade).

Also, for the third year in a row, we were awarded field trip grants from the Kohl's Foundation totaling \$2,500 to help us keep field trip fees as low as possible.

**Synod Certification Completed:** This summer, Mr. Lepke (our 7<sup>th</sup> grade home-room teacher and athletic director) completed his WELS certification. This is for our teachers who did not graduate from Martin Luther College, our synod's teacher training college in New Ulm, MN. Congrats to Mr. Lepke! Other teachers enrolled in synod certification include Mrs. Meyer, Mrs. Klopff, Mrs. Schneider, Mrs. Noffsinger, Mrs. Steinbauer, and Mrs. Strutz.





### Partnership with Muskego Public Library

Once a month, Abby Bussen (pictured right) comes in to speak to our 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders. She gives “book talks” to promote some of her favorite books for this age group. Abby is a fun, knowledgeable, and energetic person, and we are excited to have begun this partnership with her!



New Hot Lunch Team: We are thankful to Carrie Rynders and her team for their great food, warm smiles, and Christ-centered service to our kids and staff this year through our hot lunch program. Pictured (left to right) is this year’s team of Ashley Novak, Sheila Lewis-Lorum, Carrie Rynders, and Jodi Rynders.

### Volunteer Highlights

Thank You, Volunteers! – Our school ministry is RICHLY blessed by the many volunteers who serve in various ways. Librarians, room parents, coaches, field trip chaperones, UNITY members, Reading Buddies, hot lunch helpers, and more. Our school and our kids are blessed through your generous offerings of time, talents, and treasures.

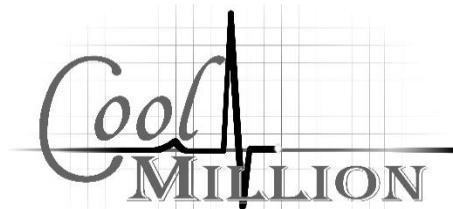


School Ministry Action Team (MAT): To assist my work of leading our school ministry, the St. Paul’s Ministry Board appoints members to serve on the School MAT. I am very thankful for the many years of service to the School MAT which Mark Sievert and Mick Meitner provided. Both men completed their service at the end of the 2018-19 school year. The new members of the School MAT are Adam Volbrecht and Dan Kneser. We thank Adam and Dan for stepping up to serve in this way along with Kerri Dibb, Cherie Esmeier, Chris Haag, and Luke Hudock.



Weekly Reading: We are thankful to the 40 individuals on our Reading Buddy list, who give of their time on Wednesday mornings to come in and listen to our K-3<sup>rd</sup> graders read. It is something that all involved look forward to during the week. Thank you, Reading Buddies!

Cool Million Parent and Staff Response: 30 school families and staff responded with a gift or pledge to the Cool Million in November and December. The total given was \$41,050. The congregation’s grand total so far exceeds \$820,000. We are extremely grateful for this generosity! Having the new HVAC system running in August and September this year was so nice. THANK YOU!!!





This quote and picture of Jenny + Nick Navarrete will be sent to the Muskego community on the back of our school postcard promoting our Open House and upcoming enrollment window. #grateful

## Part Two

This second section looks ahead to 2<sup>nd</sup> semester, next school year, and farther down the road. I pray that you join me in asking the Lord for wisdom as we seek His will, not our own, for what is best for the work He has blessed us to do. But first, it's important to review our mission, vision, and core values, which need to guide everything we do through our school ministry.



**Hearts on a Mission** – “By every possible means we bring every person within our area of influence closer to Christ.”

**With a Vision** – Our vision is to assist more and more families in raising up sons and daughters to become Christ-like disciples and servant-leaders through our homes and Christ-centered education.

**Achieving the Mission & Vision** – “By every possible means”...we want to do whatever we can to partner with more parents (one by one...) so more kids enroll in our school to learn more about their Savior and to learn from our Christian teachers each day. **“More and more families”**...This means more families from our congregation (one by one...), more families from our community (one by one...), more families from area WELS churches that don't have schools (one by one...), more families from your circle of friends, neighbors, and co-workers (that's right...one by one!). You, our parents and congregation members, are the #1 mission advancement team whom God will use to bring more families closer to Christ. **Could you invite someone?** This word of mouth approach to school ministry is THE best method, and thank you in advance for doing this!

**“Raising up sons and daughters to become Christ-like disciples and servant-leaders”**...this is our ultimate goal – to connect kids to Jesus so their life on earth has an eternal impact, and so their Christian character is visible. Our top priority is raising up spiritual champions who have Christian hope, peace, contentment, the Fruits of the Spirit, and a drive to serve the Lord faithfully in whatever career they choose. What will our kids become? Whatever it is, we pray they will use their life in service to others and stay connected to Jesus all their years until spending eternity in heaven, **with you**. God grant it! **Amen!**



**K-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Core Values** – In 2015-2016, our K-8 teachers and School MAT worked together to formalize our “core values” that we strive for as a Lutheran school ministry.

I first shared these core values in May 2016, and I include them here again to keep them in front of us.

The purpose of formalizing core values is to establish priorities. They also then serve as a guide and framework for planning ministry. What always needs to be most important for our school? These are our K-8<sup>th</sup> grade Core Values.

We thank Tammy Miller, our church administrative assistant, for creating the graphic you see below.

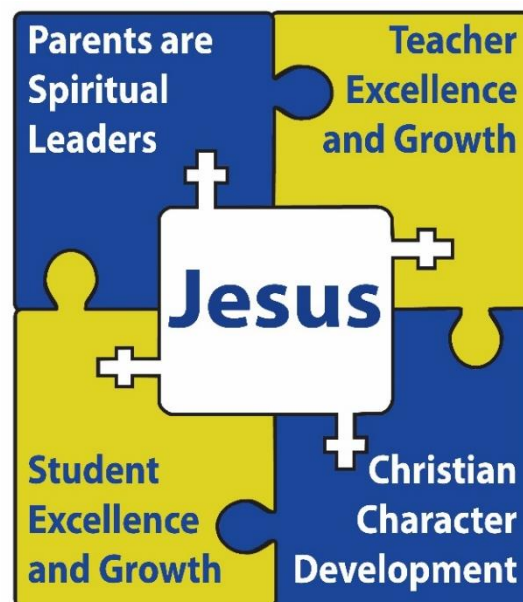
### **Core Value #1 – Jesus is the center of our school.**

God’s Grace through Christ always wins. We are the Hope of the world because of Jesus. Our teachers lead with this, and our students are surrounded by this encouragement each and every day. If this focus on Jesus our Savior ever changes, our doors should be closed. Every class – each and every class – connects to Christ, to our God, to our Creator, and to the one “in whom all things hold together” (Colossians 1:17). We want more children at our school because of Jesus – He is our mission statement and He is our most important core value.

### **#2 – We value that parents are the primary spiritual influence in their child’s life.**

We seek as a school to assist parents. Parents are always in the spiritual driver’s seat for their children while they’re living at home. We want to always encourage our families to cultivate Christian homes through Spirit-led, disciplined effort, which, Lord willing, will grow up a generation of young Christians who believe that they indeed are the hope of the world through Christ. How can we as a school ministry best encourage and equip our families to be the very best, impactful Christian parents they can be? This is a core question! And here is our constant prayer for your family -

O God, our dwelling place in all generations, look with favor upon the homes of our school. Embrace husbands and wives, parents and children, in the arms of Your love, and grant that each, in reverence for Christ, fulfill the duties You have given. Bless our homes that they may ever be a shelter for the defenseless, a fortress for the tempted, a resting place for the weary, and a foretaste of our eternal home with You; Make this happen, Lord, through the Spirit’s power living in us. In Jesus’ Name – Amen!



**St. Paul's  
Lutheran School  
Core Values**

### **#3 – We value instructional excellence and growth for each of our teachers.**

A great school is created as a result of hard-working, skilled, great teachers – period. Great learning happens first and foremost through the planned efforts and instruction of teachers. Students will go where we teachers lead them, and this core value sets before us the goal to always be growing as Christian educators. Staff collaboration is vital. Continuing education is also very important – classes, workshops, webinars, observations, personal reading, and more. Our teachers’ modeling the Growth Mindset is a very important part of this as well. More on this later in the report!

### **#4 – We value academic excellence and growth for each of our students.**

The Lord says to do all things to His glory (1 Cor. 10:31) and every day during our morning announcements the kids say, “Do your very best, and pray that it’s blessed.” Doing their very best...this is what we seek for each of the kids – that they do their very best each day. Helping our students cultivate a Growth Mindset is a very important part of this core value too!

### **#5 – We value developing our students’ Christian character – especially servant leadership.**

In Galatians 5:22-23, the Spirit tells us through the words of Paul, “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.” The fruits of Christian character are fruits that we teachers seek to cultivate in our students every day at school through the Holy Spirit’s work in each of their hearts. Jesus also taught us to serve others. Christian character and servant-leadership are timeless, and they have the potential to change the world one family, one business, one church, one person at a time – all in the name of Jesus.

These are the five core values that we seek to live out and lead with each and every day. May God cause all of these core values to thrive at St. Paul’s Lutheran School!

### **Looking Ahead to 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester...**

Commitment to Marriages in 2020: As a part of supporting Core Value #2 (that parents are spiritual leaders), we will be offering the following in 2020:



- February 1<sup>st</sup> – Parent Date Night Child-Care
- On-Demand, In-Home Marriage Workshop Videos from “Grace for Marriage”

29 of 40 spots have already been taken for Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>. See January 3<sup>rd</sup>’s email for the link to sign up. More information about “Grace for Marriage” will be shared via email and Facebook later in



January. We pray that both these items prove to be great supports for accomplishing a very hard thing - cultivating a healthy, Christ-centered marriage and family.

### Camp Phillip Summer Camp

St. Paul's has a **STRONG** relationship with Camp Phillip and is a "member congregation" which brings a lower price for you. Visit [www.campphillip.com](http://www.campphillip.com) for more information. We pray that many students attend again!!!



### Looking Ahead to Summer and Next School Year...



Shop Class for Middle School: We would like to begin a few short-length, once-a-week, shop class electives beginning next school year for our middle school students. We have a lead teacher for (1) a woodshop class, and (2) a small engines class. We are looking for volunteers who may be interested and skilled enough to assist. Ideal candidates may be retirees with skills in basic tools, woodworking, or small engine repair, or any of the other trades. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more, please contact me. I am also interested in exploring some basic cooking and baking skills electives as well.

Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Technology (DCIT): Mr. Wetzel, our current 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, has accepted the call to be our school's first DCIT beginning in July 2020. The DCIT call is part of our vision of constantly asking "How can we continue to be a leading Lutheran school in our area?" We strive to be excellent and leading in order to bring as many students as possible closer to Christ through our school ministry. We are thankful to be able to extend this call to Mr. Wetzel because of a combination of continued generous congregational offerings, a healthier and more sustainable school tuition philosophy, and funds generated through our participation in the Wisconsin parental choice program. Exciting times!



As for the "T" in DCIT, at one time at St. Paul's we had a part-time position on staff just handling tech. Keeping tech going in our building is way beyond a "nice to have"...it is vital to our whole campus.

The primary duties of the DCIT call are to (1) lead K-8 curriculum review, development, and documentation, (2) observe K-8 classroom instruction and assess teacher instructional goals regularly, (3) review standardized test data to analyze curriculum effectiveness, (4) teach 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade tech classes, and (5) resolve basic technology issues.

This DCIT will help make our school experience the best it can be for our students (Core Value #4), and our teachers (Core Value #3), and for our school and office technology as well.



Curriculum Review: We are currently reviewing our Reading and Religion curriculums in our regular cycle of content area revisions. We look forward to sharing those additions and changes with the students in the fall.



#### Promethean Board and Large Screen TV Upgrades

We are almost finished replacing all our SmartBoards with either 75" Promethean boards or 75" TV's. Three Prometheans were installed in summer 2019, and Lord willing four more this summer as well. Also, two classrooms added 75" TV's. We are thankful that these upgrades were accomplished in part through the support of Wish List requests.

Pre-K iPad Upgrades: We are about one-third funded for our plan to upgrade our 20 Pre-K iPads to assist this part of our 4K curriculum. Would you like to support this Wish List item? If so, let me know! We are very thankful for Matthew Ward's support and management of our iPad technology in Pre-K.

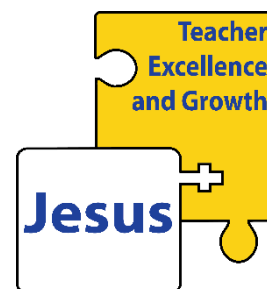


#### K-8 Chromebook Upgrades

We plan to upgrade most of our Chromebooks this summer in addition to purchasing enough to add a second class set for the 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders to assist their work time at school.

Necessary tech upgrades like these are again only possible through generous congregational support, a healthy tuition philosophy, school choice funds, and grants. We are thankful for each source of support to our students and ministry!

Teacher Professional Growth This Summer: Thanks to Title II funds and generous congregational support of our "Teacher Professional Growth Fund," multiple teachers will attend workshops this summer to grow as educators (Core Value #3). Writers Workshop, Readers Workshop, and Student Emotional Wellness are some of the topics to be attended.



#### Summer Care Program Includes 5<sup>th</sup> graders in 2020

Beginning this summer, we will be accepting students entering 5<sup>th</sup> grade for our Summer Care program. Signing up for Summer Care is due in May. Wishing for warmer, sunny days here ☺!

School Open House – January 26<sup>th</sup>: Do you know someone who might be interested in learning more about our school ministry? If so, our annual Open House is January 26<sup>th</sup>. Below are some graphics from the postcards that every home in Muskego will be



receiving the week prior. However, a personal invitation is always best. **Can you think of someone you could invite? Please do!** I would love to show them around our school, answer their questions, and see if St. Paul's could be a good fit for their children and family.



**Generous Tuition Assistance:** This school year, 18 school families received \$44,340 of additional financial aid through our Lutheran Elementary School Tuition Assistance (LESTA) Fund. This is assisting 40 students to receive a Christ-centered education here at St. Paul's.

We will do whatever it takes to provide the necessary level of financial assistance to any family who needs it because this supports our mission statement and core values. Our congregation is committed to our school families' spiritual growth, and this tuition assistance through LESTA, combined with over \$600,000 of additional financial support from our church demonstrates that. We are so thankful for the many individuals and families who give. We continue to pray for planned, proportionate, and regular worship offerings from all in the family of believers at St. Paul's and for special gifts to the LESTA fund in support of our school ministry and families.

**School Choice Year #4:** Choice continues to be a great blessing for our school ministry, helping us fulfill our mission to "by all possible means, connect families to Christ." The 2020-21 income limits for the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP) will be published in mid-January, but 2019-20's limits are pictured here. If you or someone you know thinks they might qualify based on these WPCP income guidelines, contact me for more information. Applications accepted Feb. 3-April 13.

2019-2020 WPCP Income Limits		
Family Size	Single Parent Income Limit	Married Parents Income Limit
3	\$45,716	\$52,716
4	\$55,220	\$62,220
5	\$64,724	\$71,724
6	\$74,228	\$81,228
***Add \$9,504 for each additional family member		
2020-21 actual limits coming in mid-January		

**One Final Family Church Encouragement:** Continue to make regular worship attendance, home prayers, and devotion or Bible reading time a priority for your family so that your children develop these most important life habits. Stay connected to Jesus, brothers and sisters. We love partnering with you.



In  
Closing...

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this school ministry report. No doubt, there are more items that could be included, but I pray that what has been shared here brings you joy. There are so many awesome things that continue to happen in and through our students and teachers each day. I ask that you continue to keep our school's ministry in your prayers. Each week, the Lord allows our teachers to bring over 300 children closer to their Savior through Christ-centered care and learning. Pray for our kids. Pray for our teachers. Pray for our pastors. Pray for our staff ministers. Pray for our office staff and aides. Pray for our Ministerial Team. Pray for our School MAT. Pray for our Ministry Board. Pray for our parents. Pray for our volunteers. Pray 😊

Again, I set before you here a theme verse that has guided ministry plans for me over the past ten years or so. It is from Malachi 3:10-12 and it reads, “<sup>10</sup>Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. <sup>11</sup>I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe,” says the LORD Almighty. <sup>12</sup>“Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,” says the LORD Almighty.”

Serving Jesus and your family,

Mr. Fitzsimmons

Principal

[sfitzsimmons@stpaulmuskego.org](mailto:sfitzsimmons@stpaulmuskego.org)

(414) 422-0320 ext. 118



***Set Your Minds on Things Above, Not on Earthly Things***

*Colossians 3:2*