

Mr. Fitzsimmons' December "State of the School Ministry Report"

Dear St. Paul's Parents,

In December and May of each year, I plan to prepare a "State of the School Ministry Report." My goal in this is two-fold and, therefore, this report is divided into two parts. In the first part, I share with you some notable student and staff achievements highlighting some of the ministry the Lord has blessed us with over the past semester. In the second part, 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 here at St. Paul's! God is <u>always</u> good!

Part One



Accreditation Renewed – Our school continues to maintain Exemplary Accreditation status dating back to 2010. This process is completed through the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod School Accreditation (WELSSA), which is a nationally recognized accrediting agency of the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA).

Volleyball Excellence – Ist in conference, Ist at the WISCO tournament, Ist at the Hales Corners Lutheran tournament, and 2nd place at the Lutheran State Tournament. In the awesome words of Coach Jodi Sievert, "What a season for this team! I loved the girls' Christian attitudes, sense of humor & competitive spirit. Being the team that also won the Sportsmanship Award at State is a testament to how well they conduct themselves! So proud of all of them! Keep playing girls!"





lst quarter mission offerings to Nepal and

Pakistan – The students offered up \$840 to bless this ministry half-way across the world. Mission offerings help our students understand the blessing of being a "synod" and the wide gospel-reach we can have together. Christian Generosity in Action! Pastor Duncan (pictured left) spoke to our kids in September about the spread of the Gospel in Nepal and Pakistan. 2nd quarter mission offerings are supporting the LightHouse Youth Center in Milwaukee.



<u>2nd grade donates to hurricane efforts</u> – Miss Stack's 2nd graders gathered nine boxes of school supplies during October and sent these gifts to Texas to help students affected by Hurricane Harvey. Christian Generosity in Action again! Multiple other classrooms are donating Christmas gifts to local charities as well. More on that in May!

Art Contest Winner! – Congratulations to 8th grader Megan Schneider for winning 1st place in the Muskego Lions Club Peace Poster contest. Megan was up against eleven other top three finishers in 6th-8th grade from Bay Lane, Lake Denoon, St. Leonard's, and St. Paul's. With this honor, she is one of ten posters which will now be judged at the state of Wisconsin level within the next few weeks.

SPLS Student Council – This year's Leadership Team members are 8th graders Savannah Sievert, Grace Schneider, Marcus Fitzsimmons, and Megan Mueller, and 7th graders Jack Goelz, Anna Bonack, and Abigail Prosser. So far this year they have coordinated simple hallway decorations, reminded classrooms about our playground Buddy Bench, coordinated a Food Drive for the Muskego Food

Pantry and a Winter Clothing Drive for Garden Homes Lutheran. They also deliver personalized birthday cards to students every week. In October, they visited WLHS's StuCo (pictured above with WLHS junior and St. Paul's alum Katie Lunow – far left) to learn from them. In November, they visited Muskego HS's early morning StuCo Exec Board meeting. There are also ten additional 7th graders and one 8th grader who are a part of the Large Group SPLS Student Council who join in serving and leading. Their plans for 2nd semester include another simple Soles for Jesus shoe drive, planning the school dance with UNITY, the 5th-8th grade dodgeball tournament, and organizing school Box Tops. Servant leadership development in action!

EagleBots – Congratulations to both of our EagleBots teams on a successful season! The teams competed against a total of 23 teams at the Mukwonago Regional Tournament on Nov. 12th. In FIRST LEGO League, students are immersed in real-world science and technology challenges. Teams design their own solution to a current scientific question or problem and build autonomous LEGO robots that perform a series of missions. This year's theme was Hydro Dynamics, and was all about how to find, transport, use, or dispose of water. The *Water Wackos* (top picture), Mason Mazziotti, Lizzy Veley, Noah Gruetzmacher, Emilia Trettin, and Abby Esmeier won the Programming Award. The *Aquabots* (bottom picture), Sam Kneser, Trevor Jahns, Kierstin Schlevensky, Brady Rudoll, and







Amber Larson won the Research Award for their project focusing on zinc coated antimicrobial wipes and their potential for keeping water from drinking fountains cleaner. The *Aquabots* were also named the alternate team for the Sectional Tournament since they finished 8th out of the 23 teams.



<u>**Girls Cross Country 3rd at State</u>** – Congratulations to Katelynn Schneider, Emma Eilertson, Sophia Kennedy, Jenna Goelz, Lucy Younk, and Ella Bennett for earning 3rd place at the Lutheran Schools Association State Meet held at Concordia University – Mequon. Also, congratulations to 7th grader Sophia Kennedy for earning 2nd place overall! Thank you coaches Curt Eilertson and Bill Schneider for all your time, coaching, and faithful service to our kids.</u>

40th Anniversary and New Staff – At a special worship service and lunch, Miss Martens was recognized on Sept. 17th for 40 years of service to the Lord in the teaching ministry. Praise the Lord! On that day we also welcomed Mrs. Sami Loescher (3rd grade) and Mrs. Taryn Volbrecht (K) to our teaching staff. Special thanks to Wendy Hendrix and the Called Worker Care Team for putting on this great event, and to Joel Trettin for the fun video for Miss Martens!



Faith Families & Partnerships – To give our upper graders opportunities to serve and lead, our 5th, 7th, and 8th graders partner with our 3K and 4K students for "Faith Families." Each week, Families share highs and lows, and then close with prayer and song. We also have K-8th grade Faith Families after our chapel services. Again, a blessing for our students' growth! The far-right picture is helping make Advent chains in 3K, 4K and 5K. What a blessing it is to partner our oldest students with our youngest at St. Paul's! Speaking of Pre-K, here's Mrs. Drska...



Pre-K Update from Mrs. Drska, our 3K-4K director

Our Pre-Kindergarten which includes the 3K and 4K children at St. Paul's is blessed to have 88 children enrolled. We welcomed Andrea Klein and Laura Walz as aides to our staff this year. We are following the theme "Here I Stand", based on **Romans 5:1, 2**

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.

To help our Pre-K students understand the importance of standing on God's Word, we are studying verses from Ephesians 6:10-18, where Paul instructs us to stand firm wearing the armor of God. We are thankful for the little knights in our classrooms and the privilege we

have been given to help prepare them to be warriors for Christ. How significant for us to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation as we stand firm in our faith like Martin Luther did so many years ago.

Our traditional fall events, including our field trip to the Elegant Farmer and our Thanksgiving program, were both well attended by family and friends. This Advent season we focus on the birth of our Savior in Bethlehem. As always, the faith of our children expressed in their telling of the Christmas story is a blessing to behold. We are looking forward to being a part of the school Christmas service on December 22nd.

Our Pre-Kindergarten remains committed to providing an excellent program. Both of our 3K teachers are taking classes through Martin Luther College to obtain synodical certification. We expanded our 4K program to offer a second classroom with a full day option for this year. Our core values continue to serve as a guide as we daily work with the children in our care and formally prepare for the future of our Pre-K ministry.

We are looking forward to January when we host an open house and begin enrollment for the next school year. We are considering different ways in which we can offer a quality program and better serve the needs of our families. Our participation in the school choice program will enable us to reach more children with the truth of the saving Gospel message of Jesus' love and forgiveness. It is our prayer that God will continue to bless us with full classrooms of children needing to learn of God's love and grace. We also pray for our dedicated teachers and aides to stand firm in faith having "feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace." Ephesians 6:15.

We are grateful for the opportunities the Lord has provided for us to share Jesus' love in our Pre-K ministry. It is such a privilege to serve God's children. As always, we appreciate the prayers and support of our St. Paul's family. – Mrs. Drska



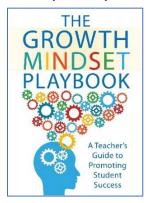
Reading Buddies

<u>Reading Buddies Success in Year #3</u> – About 13 reading sessions have taken place so far this year for a total of 8,800 minutes or about 147 hours of 1-on-1 reading. What a blessing to have this in our curriculum for our Kinders, 1st, and 2nd graders! We are so thankful to <u>each</u> of the Reading Buddies for serving the Lord and our children this way! If

you or someone you know would like to join the Reading Buddies team, please contact me!

<u>Technology Upgrades</u> – Updates that happened this summer included 10 touchscreen Chromebooks for K-4th grade classrooms and Mr. Wetzel's Promethean Board. We continue to partner with TSR Solutions to assist with day-to-day tech needs when they arise. Thank you for your support of technology through special gifts!





Professional Development Days – Our teachers have been blessed by our two professional development days so far this school year. Being the 500th year of the Reformation, we are discussing the book Why I am a Lutheran – Jesus at the Center for spiritual growth. We are also reading and discussing The Growth Mindset Playbook as we seek to get better and better at helping our kids develop grit and the mindset of growth. We have also dug into MAP test data to analyze our curriculum. These days for professional learning during the school year are very important for a high-quality staff, and we are using them well to improve and reflect on our school's teaching and learning as we live out our core values.

<u>Great fall MAP test scores</u> – Like them or not, standardized tests are simply a part of school. We put about 15% of our eggs in this standardized test basket, and we base the other 85% of our student assessment on daily work, quizzes and tests, projects, etc. Celebrate with us that...

- 92.2% of our 1st-8th graders scored proficient <u>or</u> advanced in Reading (75.2% are advanced).
- 94.3% of our 1st-8th graders scored proficient <u>or</u> advanced in Math (75.6% are advanced).
- 95.14% of our 4th-8th graders scored proficient <u>or</u> advanced in Language (79.6% are advanced).
- 92.4% of our 5th-8th graders scored proficient <u>or</u> advanced in Science (68.4% are advanced).

<u>Tuition Assistance</u> – This school year, school families received \$52,000 of additional financial aid, which assists 40 different students to receive a Christ-centered education. However, our Lutheran Elementary School Tuition Assistance (LESTA) account only has about \$13,000 in donations received to date this school year. How do we account for giving out \$39,000 more tuition assistance than is in the LESTA account? Our congregation is com-mitted to our school families, and this aid demonstrates that. Our congregational budget takes on this additional \$37,000 trusting that God's people will rise to meet this LESTA need through May. Would you consider an end of year gift toward LESTA? If so, please contact me or our Church Administrator Randy Fink (finkra@stpmuskego.org). We are so thankful for the many people who give gifts to the LESTA fund, whether regular or one-time gifts.



<u>Thank You, Volunteers!</u> – 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 servers, and more. Our school and our kids are blessed through your generous offerings of time, talents, and treasures.

Here are three specific shout outs from our teachers... "Shout out to UNITY for always providing meals for us whether it be teacher appreciation month, or the day of parent/teacher conferences! It is always much appreciated, and I always look forward to it!"

"A shout out to Sharon Faherty for her tireless efforts to make our library great and for running the book fair so smoothly!"

"Kindergarten classes benefitted from the volunteer work provided by Mary Sievert and Debi Foley. Both ladies gave of their time to help assess the Kinders so the teachers could use the information for individual learning and progress reports!"

On behalf of all our teachers – THANK YOU!







<u>Generous Donations for Reading</u> – Multiple 1st and 2nd grade parents and grandparents gave gifts to purchase of LLI - Leveled Literacy Intervention. In short, LLI materials assist individualized reading growth! On Nov. 14th, Mrs. Volbrecht, Miss Stack, Miss Martens, and Mrs. Kuehl (pictured left) were trained by Anne Scholovich, Muskego-Norway Public School's literacy coach and LLI trainer. From 4-6pm, our dedicated teachers "went to school" themselves to grow in using LLI well with our kids. Anne has offered to assist our teachers with any questions. What a blessing to have Anne's assistance as we have begun using LLI materials.

Part Iwo

This second section looks ahead to 2nd 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.



<u>Hearts on a Mission</u> – "By every possible means we bring every person within our area of influence closer to Christ."

<u>With a Vision</u> – Our vision is to assist more and more families in raising up sons and daughters of the King to become Christ-like champions through our homes and our excellent, Christ-centered education.

Achieving the Mission & Vision - "By ever 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 of the King to become Christ-like champions"**...this is our ultimate goal – to connect kids to Jesus so their life on earth has an eternal impact, 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!**

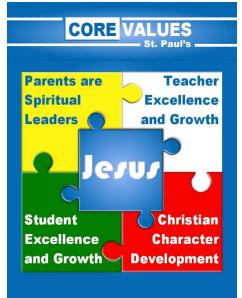
<u>K-8th Grade Core Values</u> – In 2015-2016, our K-8 teachers and School MAT worked together to formalize our "core values" that we strive for as a Lutheran school ministry.

Tammy Miller, our church administrative assistant, blessed us with the graphic that you see here.

I first shared these core values in May 2016, and I include them again here in December 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-8th grade Core Values.

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

God's Grace through Christ <u>always</u> wins. We <u>are</u> 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!

#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 (I 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 <u>each</u> of the kids – that they do <u>their</u> very best each day. Helping our students cultivate a Growth Mindset is a very important part of this core value too!

Core Value #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!



Welcome Pastor Strobel! Pastor Nathan Strobel will be officially installed to serve as our Resident Missionary on January 7th during the 10:45am service. In his role as Resident Missionary, Pastor Strobel will work hard to build and strengthen relationships with the many families who come onto our campus without a church they call home. We would love for St. Paul's to become the place where these families connect to Christ! There will be a reception at noon on Jan. 7th to welcome Pastor Strobel and his wife Jean into our St. Paul's family. We invite you to join us for that special day!



Spring Play – Please save the dates of April 18-20, 2018 when our 5th-8th grade students will be performing "Night at the Wax Museum." The hysterical meets the historical in this comic romp through the wackiest wax museum where the magic of history comes alive... literally! Auditions (grades 5-8) will take place in January. We are so thankful for all the

work that our adult volunteers and all the kids involved with props, lights, sound, and acting will be putting into this production. We ask God's blessing over it all! If you are interested in helping in any way, please contact Pastor Bonack.



Anniversary Time! During the 2018-2019 school year, we will be celebrating our school's 50th anniversary and the 60th anniversary of the Centennial Gym. We plan to use this occasion to begin a multi-year effort to enhance our campus for future ministry. Initial plans include the paving of the playground parking lot behind the school, improvements to the Centennial Gym, and replacing the school's aging heating units with heating and air-

conditioning units to provide a space better suited to the year-round ministry that St. Paul's offers. We are still developing cost estimates, but we know it will be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. If you would have interest in serving on the 50th anniversary planning team, let me know!



<u>**Tuition**</u> – We are very thankful for every family's support of our school ministry through tuition. We do our best at this point in the year to plan for ministry next school year, and we are planning for a congregation member tuition of \$2,890 for the first child, \$2,790 for the second child, and \$1,525 for a family's third child to offset a portion of the cost of

operating our school ministry. Parents who are members at other area WELS churches should contact their church leaders about the level of support to their families next year. We will also be changing to a 12-month tuition payment plan compared to the current 9-month option. A letter was shared December 6th with more details about our costs, revenues, and vision for tuition. As mentioned above in Part One, families in need of additional financial support for tuition through the LESTA account are encouraged to apply before the spring deadline.

<u>Kindergarten Enrollment Projection</u> – 16 parents completed our Pre-K survey desiring to enroll in our Kindergarten next year. We also have five prospect families at this point in time who have contacted us for more information. Therefore, we are projecting a K class of 23 students. Do you know anyone with a child this age? Invite to come in for a school visit!

Antioch Grant Application – Relating to the abovementioned 50th Anniversary celebration, I have applied for a \$15,000 grant from the Antioch Foundation to support the resurfacing of the playground blacktop. I will hear back from them by January Ist. Lord willing, I will have good news to share in January!



<u>Graphic Design Work</u> – We are so blessed to have the talents of Tammy Miller on our administrative staff. Tammy has developed the following drafts of items you will start seeing around school and church, our website, and our community over the next six months.

Welcome Wednesdays

Come see the St. Paul's difference... Meet with the Principal and see classes in action! Anytime between 9:00am - 5:00pm 3K - 8th Grade... We're worth the visit!









School Website – Over the past month, Emily Meitner and I have worked to update our school website, and we hope that the site continues to serve two purposes. First, our website is a "front door" for families interested in learning more about our Christ-centered school. We pray that after looking in through the front door of our

website, these families will call or complete the online form to set up a school visit with me to see our awesome teachers and students in action. Second, we hope that the redesigned site continues to serve our current school families as a home base for school information.



Staffing for 2018-2019 – If you are not aware, Miss Stack (our 2nd grade teacher) is getting married in May and is in the middle of determining if she and her soon-to-be-husband Ryan will be living here or in Kentucky. As they seek the Lord's will in this, please pray for Mr. Ryan to find a corrections facilities job opening here in the Muskego area so that Miss Stack can continue serving the Lord as one of our teachers.

Our current 5th grade class is split into two homerooms, and next year they will become one 6th grade class as they move into our 6th-8th grade middle school. We are very thankful for Miss Glodowski moving up to serve these students in 5th grade working with Mr. Wetzel this year.

Our current Kindergarten class is also split into two homerooms this year. After prayerful discussion, we have decided to combine this class together for next school year with Miss Martens in 1st grade. We are so thankful for the blessing that Mrs. Volbrecht has been for our Kinders this year working together with Mrs. Kuehl.

For the past year and a half, Miss Martens has served as our morning 1st grade teacher and afternoon Extended Learning Coordinator (ELC). Beginning next year, Miss Martens plans to return full-time to classroom teaching. Mrs. Goelz will serve in a part-time call next year teaching a couple of 1st grade afternoon classes during the week like art and gym. The ELC is off to a great start through Miss Martens' leadership and we are currently preparing the details for our next Extended Learning Coordinator to continue this great work into future years.

Also, Mrs. Loescher's husband (Mr. Phil) will be graduating from the Seminary in May and Lord willing will receive a call into the pastoral ministry. We are thankful for the blessing that Mrs. Loescher has been for our 3rd graders this year working with Mrs. Kirchoff.

<u>School Choice Year #2</u> – Choice continues to be a great blessing for our whole school ministry. The 2018-19 income limits for the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP) increased from 185% to 220% (see table). This increase will make a difference for three of our current school families who will now qualify for the WPCP, whereas last year at the 185% figures they did not. If you or someone you know

Household	220% Income	Married 220%
Size	Limit	Income Limit
3	\$44,352	\$51,352
4	\$53,460	\$60,460
5	\$62,568	\$69,568
6	\$71,676	\$78,676
****Add \$7,500 for each additional family		
member		

thinks they might qualify based on these WPCP income guidelines, please contact me for more information. One by one IN-reach and OUT-reach by all possible means...



Teacher Continuing Education (Core Value #3)

• On March 1st, the teachers and I will be attending the southeast Wisconsin WELS Metro Conference.

• I will complete my final two classes this summer for my master's degree in education administration from Martin Luther College.

• Over the next semester, teachers will begin looking for summer learning opportunities as well – Core Value #3 in action. We are thankful for Title II funds and, most importantly, for gifts of all sizes to the Teacher Professional Development Fund. Thank you!

In Closing...



Thank you very much for taking the time to read this biannual school ministry report. I pray it brings you joy to hear about the 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 300 children closer to Christ through Christ-centered care and learning. Pray for our kids. Pray for our teachers. Pray for our pastors. Pray for our office staff and aides. Pray for our Ministerial Team. Pray for our Leadership Team.

Pray for our Ministry Board. Pray for our parents. Pray for our School MAT. 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, "¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ 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. ¹² "Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land," says the LORD Almighty."

Serving Jesus and your family,

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