

Dear High School Administrators...PLEASE share the following information with your entire staff. Thank you!

Sunday, January 26th, officially begins the first school day of National Lutheran Schools Week! Lutheran Schools Week is being celebrated by these schools this coming week under the theme "Joyfully Lutheran." based on 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24. What a great week ahead!

Isn't it a blessing that there are 201,307 students attending 1,950 Lutheran schools around the country taught by 21,764 educators and they are all joining together along with YOU to praise and thank our gracious Lord for the training and preparation received in Lutheran schools? National Lutheran Schools Week provides us the opportunity to come together to celebrate one of God's greatest gifts to His church, Lutheran schools. From its beginning, the LCMS, founded in 1847 with 12 congregations and 14 schools, has built schools. Education has always been a priority for Lutheran congregations. Schools have never been an after-thought for our great Synod.

We celebrate together our rich heritage of Lutheran education, our *Connectedness in Christ*, and our freedom to share the precious Gospel of Jesus' saving love in this country and especially in our communities!

The Pacific Southwest District is one of 35 districts in the United States. The PSD is blessed to have 98 preschools, 49 elementary schools, and 8 high schools in Arizona, Southern California, and Southern Nevada, plus our institution of higher learning, Concordia University Irvine. Our schools, according to 2019-20 statistics, have 18,841 students enrolled, preschool through high school. Children enrolled in Lutheran schools in the Pacific Southwest District are from nearly all ethnic backgrounds.

Since our schools are essential "mission outposts", sharing God's love in Christ is central to everything we do and say, and our faith is integrated throughout the curriculum. As a result, many children are baptized, and families join the congregation and become active in the life of the church. Our 2019-20 statistics (based on 100% reporting) indicate that 294 children attending one of our district schools were baptized and 193 adults were confirmed in the faith. All glory to God!

My sincere thanks and appreciation to each of you for all you do each day to share your faith and love of the Lord, and as such, witness to the saving grace of Jesus to your students! What an impact you make! Celebrate the blessing of our Lutheran schools in the Pacific Southwest District and across the nation and world! Have a wonderful week in the Lord, celebrating together!

God's grace and peace in Christ Jesus, the Master Teacher!

Rachel Klitzing

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"Connected in Christ"

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