

TEACH ME TOO — PRESCHOOLERS WITH LEARNING NEEDS

Lutheran Special Education Ministries

Lutheran Special Education Ministries (LSEM) has seen a growing desire for early intervention support of children with learning needs. In 2017, LSEM successfully launched entry into preschool education for exceptional children with learning needs by establishing the Let It Shine Academy. This academy was designed to administer intervention strategies and address the unique needs of children with autism spectrum disorder in an early learning environment. By reaching out and serving these children early in their learning years, they provide tools, strategies, and support to help these learners succeed now and as their education continues. They help them to be successful learners. This preschool creates a place where God's Word can be shared with these children. LSEM is currently directly serving children at 59 schools and churches in 11 states.

LSEM has received special requests by schools to present preschool specific training for their staff. They have completed school visits to perform observations and assessments numerous times. With statistics stating that one in five children have a learning need, and many more areas across the United States

where LSEM sees the need to serve preschool and early childhood children with learning needs, there is great need for growth and expansion of their services.

Organizations professing their faith within the context of academic instruction are not eligible to receive financial support from the government through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. LSEM, unable to receive public funding, relies on partnership fees and donations. Mission Grant #2 would provide funding to:

- *Support educational and spiritual growth among preschool aged children by growing the Let it Shine Academy to include more students, being a witness of God's love for ALL his children.*
- *Provide scholarship funding for children in need whose families cannot afford the cost of the Let It Shine program.*
- *Support children and families who need assistance and education but are not part of an LSEM partnership program.*
- *Educate preschool teachers in methods of early intervention for children who have a learning need.*

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