

# Pastors Leading Churches with Schools

**A** congregation with a school is truly a blessed place. With generations of students formed for faith and life in the world as servants of God, these congregations are inextricably linked to their school ministry. However, as those generations have passed, there are increasing pressures placed upon congregations with schools. It costs more today to teach each student than ever before. Staffing costs including salary and benefits, curriculum costs and the inclusion of and maintenance for ever-changing technology have raised the cost to alarming levels. It is critical that congregational leaders take a serious look at their education ministry.

As the challenges arise, there is temptation to cut corners. There are those who hire teachers not trained in the Synod. Others simply balance the ever-challenging budget on the backs of the faithful workers by freezing salary, increasing benefit contributions and the like. When this happens, there is a rise in "institutional survival" mode. This is a mentality that says that the institution must be preserved at all cost. This makes most congregations adverse to even considering other options for educational ministry.

For educational ministry to survive and thrive, corners must not be cut. Aggressive, out-of-the-box ideas must be pursued if the local Lutheran school is going to be the ministry that the Lord has given it to be. We will explore some of those options in the upcoming webinar on this topic on Aug. 16, 2018. Join us to add to the conversation. (Or if you can't join us for the live event, watch the recording in the RSTM archive at a time that's convenient for you.) We will likely raise more questions than provide answers. But this is a critical conversation to be had!

*Contributed through the LCMS Rural & Small Town Mission monthly newsletter by Rev. Dr. Nathan Meador.*

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