

LSEM

Lutheran Special Education Ministries

"Enabling children with special learning needs to receive a Christian education since 1873."

Winter 2009
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THE ADVOCATE NEWSLETTER

The Picture Tells The Story

You can just look at Eiffion Boykins, former LSEM student at Zion Evangelical Lutheran School in Matteson, Illinois and know he is a happy active second grader that is excited about learning.

Eiffion and LSEM teacher Mrs. Lapsansky are working together on his vocabulary words from Eiffion's reading text book. Mrs. Lapsansky takes every opportunity to make learning fun for Eiffion and his classmates and this day is no exception.

The boys in Mrs. Lapsansky's class are especially competitive so a game is always on the horizon. In this



LSEM Teacher Arlene Lapsansky & former LSEM student Eiffion Boykins

particular game Eiffion and his fellow classmates are racing to see who can

copy their vocabulary words faster on their dry erase board. As you can see *"the picture tells the story."* There's no doubt that Eiffion is the winner!

But Eiffion is not the only winner. We are all winners as we work together to enable children with special learning needs to receive a Christian education. We know that without the support of our friends it may be a very different story. So we thank our friends that support the work that we do and for this picture. A picture that portrays the story of a happy child of God who is excited about learning!

Blessed To Be A Blessing

Tom and Janet Ahlersmeyer know all too well the challenges of raising a child with special learning needs. But more importantly, they know they are **"blessed to be a blessing"** to other families who have children that struggle with special learning needs, too. Their encouragement and support is a source of hope for the lives they touch each and every day with their story.

At LSEM we are also blessed by the progress that Caleb is making through our special education

program at St. Paul Lutheran School in Ann Arbor, Michigan. *"Caleb is a delight. He tries hard even though things aren't easy for him,"* says Mrs. Schroeder his LSEM teacher. Because Caleb is Autistic he can do some things very well, but struggles with others.

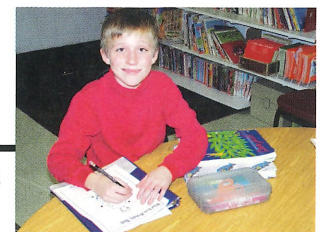
There is no doubt that Caleb is flourishing because he is blessed with wonderful parents that love him unconditionally. Caleb's parents are making sure that he is in the best possible environment in order for him to grow and be all

that God intends him to be.

There is also no doubt that Caleb is a blessing to the many lives he inspires with his enthusiasm to learn and his heart warming smile.

We want to say **"thank you"** to Tom and Janet Ahlersmeyer and to their family for their support. You are a blessing to us and to all the children we serve.

We also want to say thank you to Caleb for making us smile. We know **Jesus** is smiling, too!



*Caleb Ahlersmeyer
A heart warming smile*

REACH...



"Not to worry. We've had plenty of storms in our 136 year history."

I Thought Our Friends Might Be Wondering...

What impact is the market and the economy having on LSEM? Everyone is talking about how bad things are, but what about LSEM? In the short term we're just fine due to some pretty spectacular legacies (*wills/bequests*) we expect by the end of our fiscal year in June. It's possible we could even end the year with a surplus. Wouldn't that be incredible! I like to call it "**God's bail out plan!**" But the story could have a downside next year and beyond if the market recovery is prolonged.

In recent years LSEM has been able to depend on its investments, especially the endowment fund, to generate income for up to ten percent of the operating budget. What a blessing this has been. Unfortunately, the market free fall has really hurt our ability to benefit from the endowment so we will have to continue to be conservative as we budget for 2009-2010. We will also have to rely on increased donations and/or reserves while we weather this global economic storm. Not to worry. **We've had plenty of storms in our 136 year history.** God stilled the waters each and every time.

This reality explains why I remain so calm now as I look at a future for LSEM that remains bright. Thank you for your prayers and support.

*Dr. Roger DeMeyere
President & CEO*



The Resource Center Is Here To Serve You



Welcome to the LSEM Resource Center headed by Director Susan Lewis. The Resource Center supports Christian schools,

churches, and families who have children with special learning needs.

Support is Offered in a Variety of Ways

The LSEM Resource Center is here to help with problem-solving. As concerns arise, individuals are encouraged to contact the Resource Center to ask questions. These questions can be about curriculum,

materials, teaching approaches and techniques, interventions and accommodations, "*next step*" actions and where to go for help.

A resource specialist fields the questions and gathers background details in order to provide options for the specific situation. The help provided also takes on different forms. It may be contact information of organizations whose mission it is to assist individuals with concerns regarding a specific disability or disorder. Help may also be identifying specific curriculum and instructional materials and where those materials may be purchased or accessed via the internet at low cost or no charge. Other

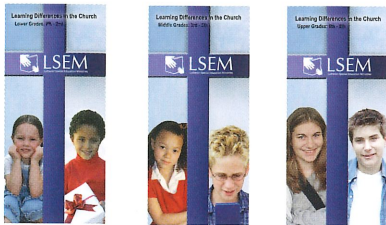
times parents or teachers may forward reports to the Resource Center for assistance in establishing appropriate classroom accommodations or behavior plans. And then there are those times when the resource specialist takes down the information and says, "*I'll need to research this and get back to you.*" In these situations, the resource specialist may know another person on staff who has expertise in this area or resources need to be identified for a specific region of the country in order to best serve the needs of the individual.

Our goal is to assist you in helping children with special learning needs. Whatever the need, ***we are here to serve you!***

SERVE...

Learning Differences in the Church

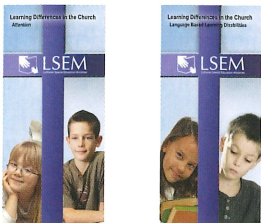
The Resource Center publishes informational brochures for the purpose of guiding organizations and individuals in how to best interact with children with special needs in their Christian educational setting. The series is entitled, *“Learning Differences in the Church.”* (LDC)



Three brochures of the series focus on specific grade levels:

- Lower Grades, PK – 2nd
- Middle Grades, 3rd – 5th
- Upper Grades, 6th – 8th

Each of the brochures outlines characteristics common to children within that grade range, as well as helpful suggestions for lesson presentation to students who struggle with learning difficulties. These brochures are beneficial to volunteer teachers in the church setting such as Sunday School teachers and Vacation Bible School teachers.



Two of the brochures in the LDC series focus on a specific disability or disorder: **Attention** and

Language Based Learning Disabilities. Each brochure lists the general strengths and weaknesses found in individuals with the disorder and then offers potential teaching approaches and techniques that would generate a successful outcome.

The most recently released brochure in the LDC series is **“Confirmation Resources.”**

This brochure lists bibles, publishers, curriculum and instructional materials, resource materials, and helpful websites for those teaching confirmation to individuals with a special learning need.



In addition to the six brochures already a part of the LDC series, new titles will be added in the near future. The Resource Center is always interested in hearing what topics would be most beneficial in serving children with special learning needs in a Christian educational setting; forward potential topics and titles to the attention of the Resource Center Director.



“Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”
Matthew 19:14

Workshops and In-Services

The Resource Center supports churches and schools through workshops, in-services, and conference presentations on topics associated with serving children with special needs in a Christian educational setting. Districts, churches, and schools may contact the Resource Center with a topic of interest, date, and timeframe. Resource specialists with expertise specific to the topic create and present practical teaching strategies and accommodations to those attending the in-service. Let the LSEM Resource Center guide you through your next professional development event.



LSEM Resource Center Contact Information

RC Director: Susan Lewis

Toll-Free: 1-888-488-LSEM (5736)

Extension: 112

Email: slewis@luthsped.org

ENABLE...



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6861 East Nevada St., Suite 2

Detroit, Michigan 48234-2983

Toll Free: (888) 488-LSEM (5736)

E-mail: LSEM@luthsped.org

Website: www.luthsped.org

Campbell's Labels For Education

Keep those labels coming!

By collecting labels from Campbell's products and sending them to us, we can use them to "purchase" much needed classroom materials.

Thank you for your gift!



Lutheran Woman's Missionary League

We want to thank the LWML MI District and the LWML Northern IL District for their support of our programs and services in the Detroit and Chicago areas.

Thrivent GivingPlus® Program

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans GivingPlus® Program is an opportunity for our friends to increase their donation to LSEM. If you are a Thrivent Member you are eligible to increase your gift by completing the matching gift form included with this newsletter. **For every \$2 donated Thrivent will contribute \$1.** In addition, when you volunteer even more is given. If you give **25 or more hours of volunteer service** to the organization you support Thrivent will contribute an additional **\$25 per year.**

In 2008 we were blessed to receive **\$18,405** from the GivingPlus® Program. We thank God for the continued financial blessings through our friends and the matching gift program.

If you would like more information about the GivingPlus® Program you may visit Thrivent's website at www.thrivent.com and enter "GivingPlus" or you may contact **Kathy Anderson in the Business Office at ext. 104.**

Thank you for your support that enables children with special learning needs to receive a Christian education.

4th Annual Golf Outing

A big thank you to our friends for your past support of our golf outings. We are excited to be planning our 4th annual event and we hope that you will join us on **Friday, June 19, 2009.** This year the outing will take place at the **Golden Hawk Golf Club** located at **9861 Meisner Rd., in Casco, Michigan 48064.**

Special guest, **Karen Newman**, Detroit's own voice of the Red Wings

will join us once again to pose for pictures with our golfers and to sing the National Anthem to begin the day.

All proceeds from the event will help to support our programs and services for children with special learning needs. Following is the cost to sponsor the event:

Major Sponsor - \$1,200
Key Sponsor - \$800
Hole Sponsor - \$100

If you would like to join us for a day of golf the cost is **\$120 per person.**

Early registration helps us in our planning, so please register early! For more information or to sponsor/register for the event you may call us toll free Monday - Friday at **888-488-LSEM ext. 108.**

We look forward to spending the day with our friends. *Hope to see you on the links!*

