



LUTHERAN SPECIAL EDUCATION MINISTRIES



2023-24
Annual Report



A message from
Stacy McGhee
President/CEO of LSEM

Students are Our Harvest...

Every year as President/CEO it is my privilege to reflect on another year of growth, impact and progress at Lutheran Special Education Ministries and this year is no different. Through the tireless work of our teachers and staff, we remain committed to helping students realize their fullest potential, keeping them at the center of everything we do.

Within the pages of this report, you will see numbers and statistics. But more importantly, I hope you see that behind those facts and figures, there are students whose lives are being impacted by the love of God through our ministry.

However, there's one key ingredient to our success that I haven't mentioned yet – YOU! You may be wondering what role you play in the mission and vision at LSEM. Well, it's pretty simple. We couldn't do this without you! Your gifts, prayers, and encouragement all play a vital role in the success of our programs, and God has certainly blessed us with your talents and treasures.

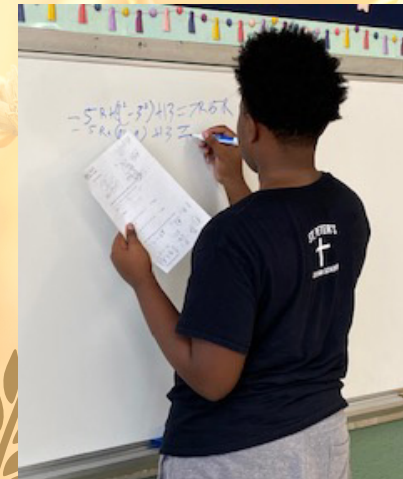
But we cannot stop there. We are currently impacting the lives of over 1700 students, but that's not enough! As you sit comfortably at home, reading this letter there are students sitting in classrooms in Lutheran schools all over the country who desperately need our help. I'm reminded of the second verse of the tenth chapter of Luke where Jesus says, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few" (ESV).

Let Us Labor for Them!

The students are our harvest (there are plenty!) and we – ALL of us – are the laborers. Later in that same chapter of Luke (verse 21), Jesus rejoices in the Father's will by saying, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will."

We must remain steadfast in His will and bring knowledge and understanding to the students we serve. We are committed to His will and cannot wait to see how it all unfolds in 2025! Thank you!

Stacy McGhee



LSEM Biannual Teachers Conference

Every other year, Lutheran Special Education Ministries hosts a conference that brings together all our teachers from across the country. This June 11-13, 2025, we are excited to welcome our teachers to Frankenmuth, Michigan, for three days of transformative learning, professional growth, and fellowship.

This year, our goal is to raise \$75,000 to ensure every teacher has access to the resources they need to inspire and empower their students. Your support makes this possible.



Sponsoring or donating to the 2025 Teachers' Conference is more than an investment in professional development—it's a way to directly impact the lives of educators who are changing the future for children with unique learning needs.

Here's how you can make a difference:

\$500 covers registration fees for one teacher.

\$1,000 provides materials and tools for effective learning.

\$2,500 helps offset travel costs for teachers from across the country.

\$5,000 or more gives you the opportunity to become a **Champion of Inclusion** with named recognition and direct support for our mission.

Your gift—whether big or small—ensures that these dedicated educators receive the training and support they need to continue inspiring their students and advancing our mission. Together, we can meet our \$75,000 goal and ensure that every child has access to a quality, Christian education.

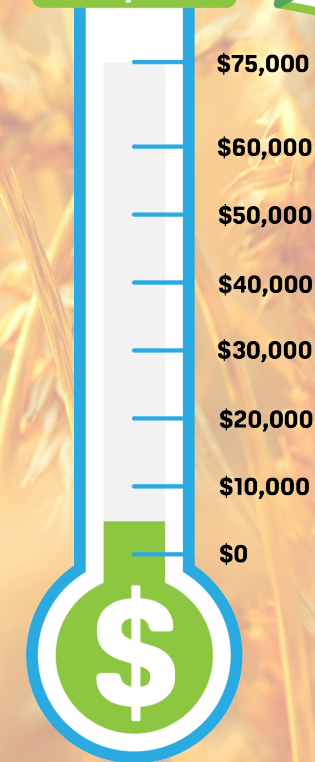
Please join us in making this event a success by contributing today. Visit our Teachers' Conference webpage online or scan the QR code to donate or become a sponsor.



Thank you for your generosity and partnership in this vital mission!

Teachers' Conference
FUNDRAISING GOAL

\$75,000



2023-24 Programs & Services

EANS Impact

In the Spring of 2021, the federal government approved a bill providing Emergency Assistance for Non-Public Schools (EANS). Two rounds of grant funding totaling \$5.5 billion were dispersed to schools to help solve the challenges they faced due to the pandemic. One of those challenges was to combat learning loss.

As a result, Christian schools were able to utilize a portion of their funding to start or grow their LSEM program. This allowed LSEM the opportunity to partner with new schools and to serve hundreds of additional children with learning needs. Now that the funding window has closed, LSEM is proud to continue to work with many of those schools who came to us with EANS funds but have maintained their commitment to building brighter futures for the students in an LSEM program.

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See Us in Your Town!



Every year, LSEM's Directors and select teachers travel from coast to coast, providing professional development and educational resources along with information about LSEM's programs and partnership opportunities.

We logged a lot of miles and met a lot of great people at nineteen teacher conferences and meetings. Chances are, we spent some time in your neck of the woods!

Phoenix, AZ
San Diego, CA
Breckenridge, CO
Orlando, FL
Collinsville, IL
Indianapolis, IN
Frankenmuth, MI
Fraser, MI
Grand Rapids, MI

Roscommon, MI
Roseville, MI
Saginaw, MI
Roseville, MN
Seward, NE
Rocky River, OH
Seaside, OR
Corpus Christi, TX
Grapevine, TX

WOW Story!

Sometimes it isn't the big reveal, all the sirens and lights, or even the figurative lightbulb. Sometimes it is looking back over the past three years and knowing the difference the journey has made.

B is one of those kids. He is a sweet, rambunctious boy who is just peaking in maturity and finding wisdom in all of the consistent messages education is bringing his way. For three years, he has rushed through his work, made careless mistakes, and taken pride in being done first. His frustration came out as complaining and whining.

B is now in third grade. He is just now starting to take care in his work. He erases numbers when he has written them too sloppily to read. He will read the problem more than once, underlining important information in the problem while reviewing it to make sure he

understands the question. He even gives the test a once over once completed to see that he has answered all the questions and labeled his work correctly.

I am so proud of his growth! B has become confident and independent. He is proud of himself that he has learned his multiplication facts, that he is able to answer questions correctly in class and do well on his tests. He has matured into a confident, reliable, caring young man.

-Pam Bierbaum, St. James Lutheran School in Shawano, WI



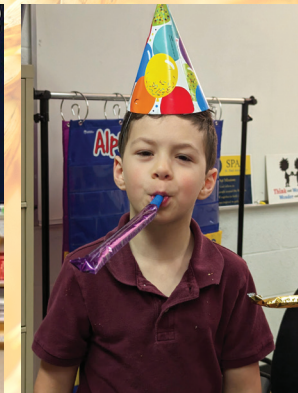
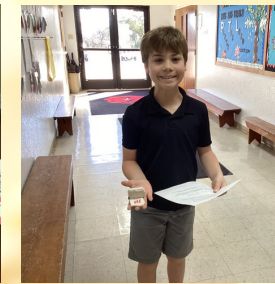
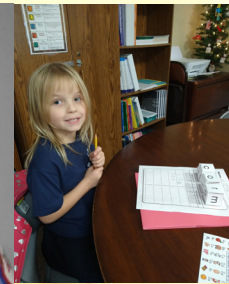
The students recently moved into project-based learning. The benefits of project-based learning are that it promotes student engagement, tackles real world problems, promotes personal connections, utilizes critical thinking skills, and most importantly it is student centered. I loved seeing all of their ideas comes to life for their Shark Tanks project.

-Caroline Contreras, Zion Lutheran School in Georgetown, TX

A Growing Outreach

LSEM started serving just a small handful of children in Michigan in 1873. Now we have grown to serving thousands of children across the country and internationally.

An Annual Birthday Celebration!



“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven” Matthew 5:16

Day of Giving July 5, 2025

It's our 152nd birthday on July 5, 2025, and **YOU'RE INVITED!** This is the day LSEM was officially founded, our articles of incorporation were approved, and we became a ministry.

We will be celebrating throughout the month of June by inviting our classrooms across the country to throw birthday parties. We'll share photos, fun facts, stories, and more, culminating in our special Annual Day of Giving fundraiser in honor of our birthday on July 5th!

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Golf Outing

We had an incredible turnout for our 19th Annual Golf Outing! We sold out our capacity, and welcomed over 100 golfers on a beautiful, warm fall day. Your support of this event, through donations, registrations, sponsorships, and event games raised over \$32,000. Thank you! Join us again on **September 15, 2025**, for our milestone 20th outing and enjoy more fun, fellowship, and fundraising.



19th annual LSEM Golf Outing
at Cherry Creek Golf Club



Make a Gift to LSEM

Join us on the journey of helping children who learn differently! There are so many ways to get involved with our ministry. The following QR code takes you to our donation page where you can become a part of the legacy of love, benefitting this and future generations.



**“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus
to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”**
Ephesians 2:10

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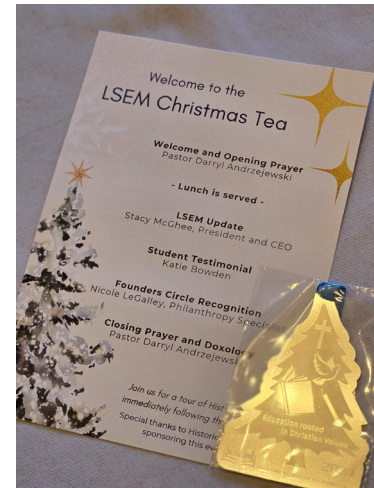
Christmas Tea

We hosted our annual Christmas Tea at Historic Trinity Lutheran Church in Detroit, MI, in the very room where the idea that would eventually lead to the Lutheran Special Education Ministries (LSEM) of today first took root.

Katie Bowden, a former LSEM student, spoke about the impact that our ministry had on her life and academic success as she went on to obtain a masters degree and find success in her job. We also recognized many new inductees to our Legacy Society. We welcome you to attend next year's event on **December 4, 2025**.

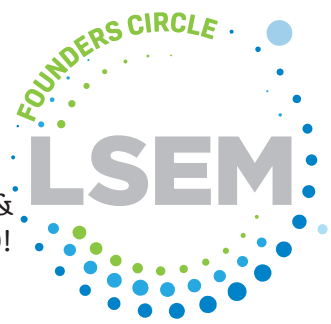


**And the angel said unto them,
'Fear not: for, behold, I bring
you good tidings of great joy,
which shall be to all people.'
Luke 2:10**



New Honorees

At the 2024 Christmas Tea, we honored new inductees to the **LSEM Founders Circle**. These individuals, family foundations, & organizations have a lifetime cumulative giving of over \$25,000!



The Wallace & Irene Bronner Foundation

Hilda F. Bretzlaff Foundation

- Gerald & Janelle Radtke
- Kathy Lindbeck

Susan Vogt (posthumously)

- Michael & Jessica Vogt

Linda Fritsch

Edward & Henrietta Knabusch Trust No. 1 & 2

- Charles & Maryann Knabusch

Edwin & Ruth M. Shoemaker Foundation

Michigan District CEF

- Jim Saalfeld & Andy Sohn

Michigan District, LCMS

- Rev. David Davis

Join our Founders Circle or 1873 Legacy Society. Contact Nicole LeGalley (nlegalley@luthsped.org) to see how your transformational gift can help children for years to come.



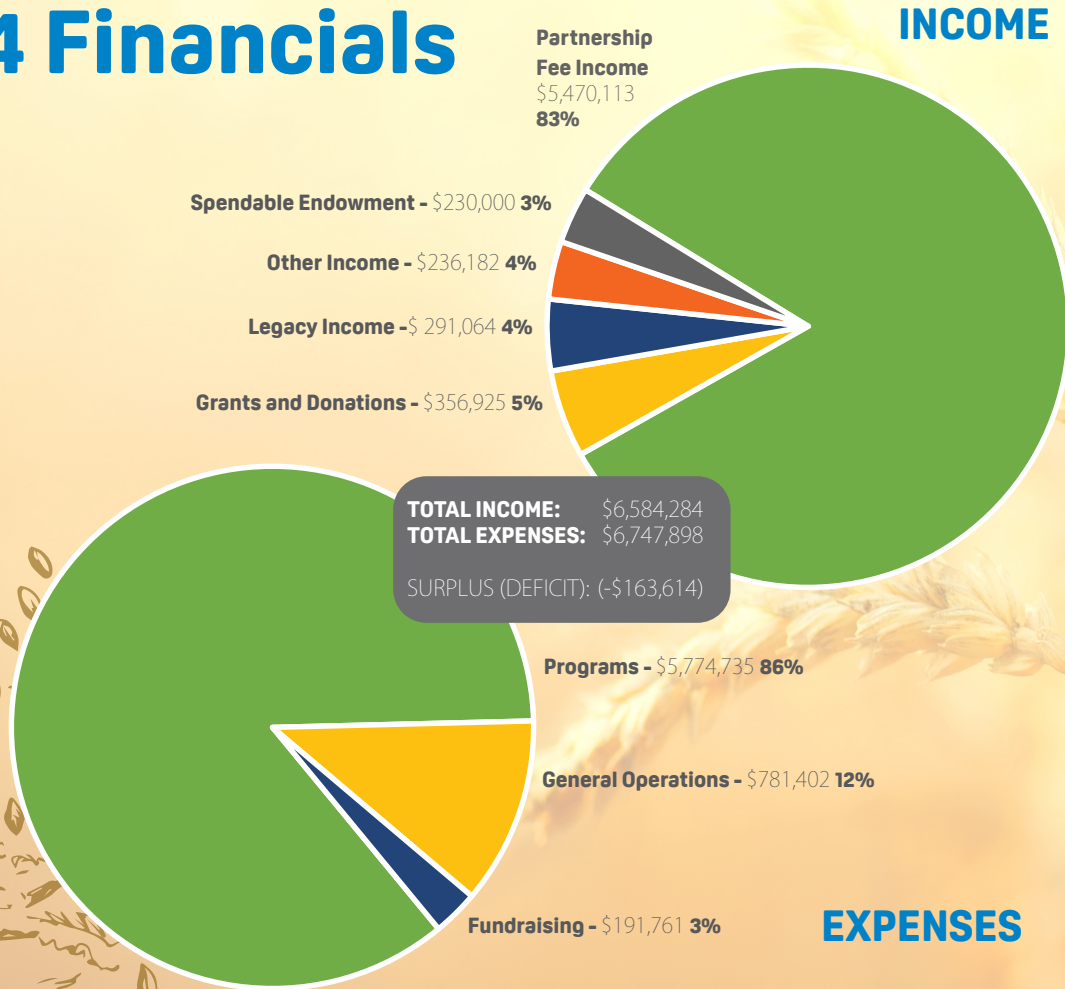
Founders Circle Members

- Ernest C. Fackler, III (2023)
- Stacy McGhee Janetzke & Jim Janetzke (2023)
- Marsha Leiphart (2023)
- Peter & Monica Rynearson (2023)
- Ken and Andrea Sanke (2023)

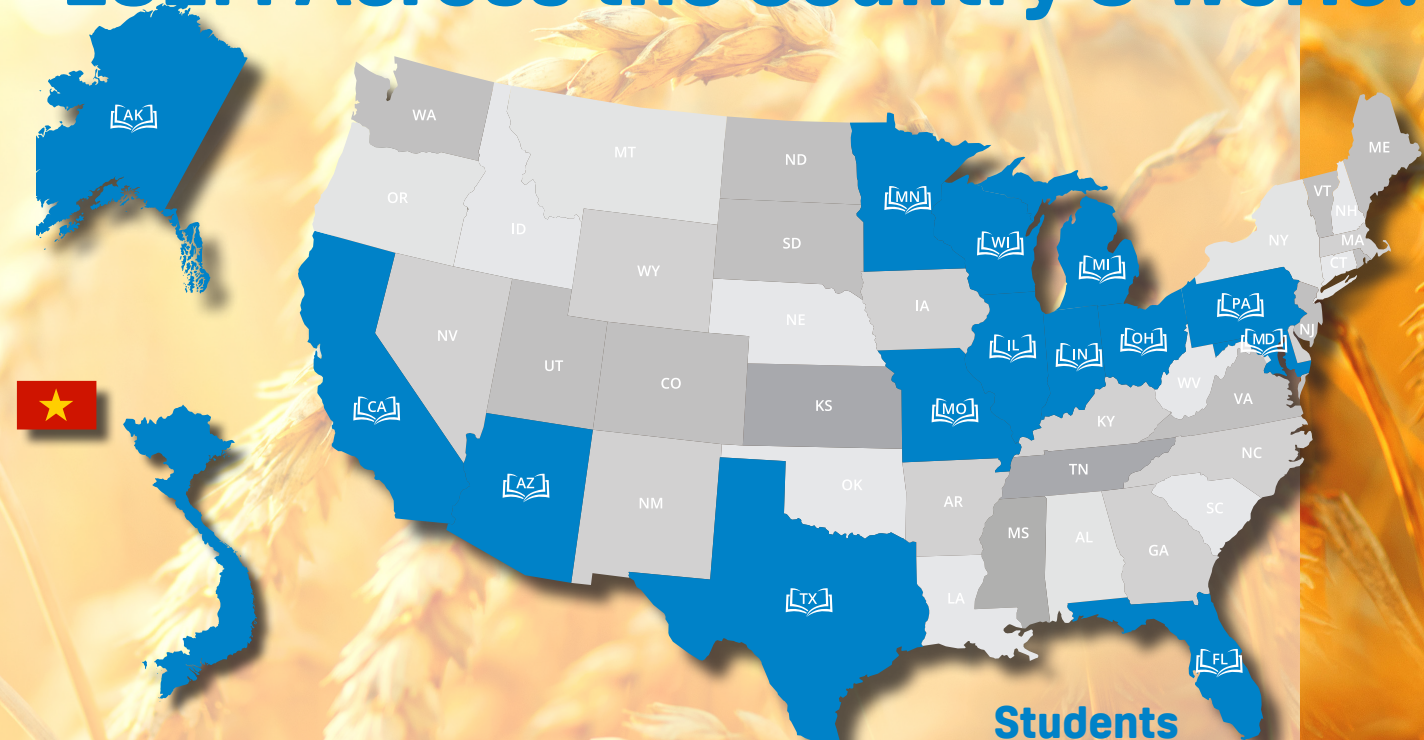
1873 Legacy Society Members

- Marlene Herzog (2023)
- Alecia Winterstein (2023)
- Peter and Monica Rynearson (2023)

2023-24 Financials



LSEM Across the Country & World!



Partner Schools

109

States

14

(plus Hanoi, Vietnam)

Teachers

90

Students
Directly Served

2,000

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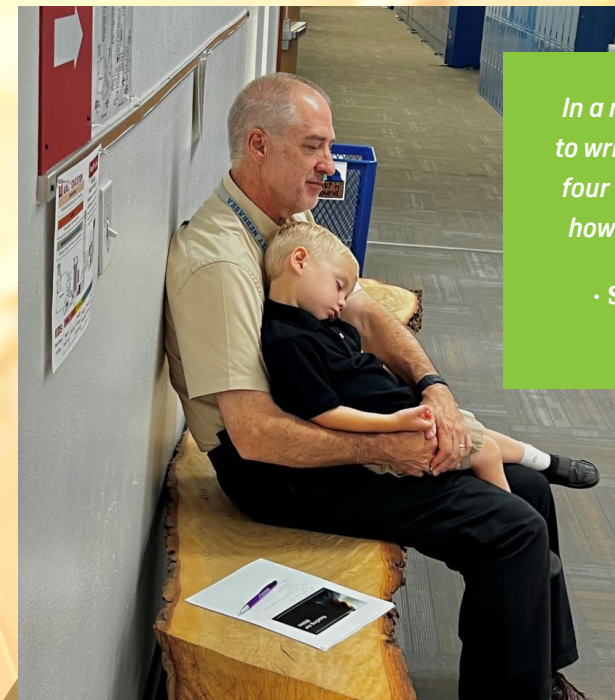


WOW Story!

J started attending our school (Anchor Lutheran) in late November. He is an autistic sixth grader who has many struggles. Notably, he never learned how to properly form his letters and couldn't write legibly. He also struggles with spelling, despite being a fairly good reader, and he had no idea how to add, subtract, multiply, or divide. J's family had lived in a different state, and his parents mentioned that at his previous school, they were spending most of the time dealing with his behaviors, rather than focusing on his academic progress.



The plan we put in place was to have J work with me three days a week during the 6th grade math class along with providing him with a ¾ time aide to assist him in his other classes. I began working with him on how to form his letters through lots of practice and taught him how to use the touchpoints to add and subtract. Once he learned how to form his letters, we began working on copying words, and then sentences. He now has legible handwriting and can take notes in class. We are now working to help him learn to spell some of the most common sight words.



In a matter of a few short months, J has become confident in his ability to write, his spelling abilities have improved, and he knows how to do the four basic math operations. J has made tremendous strides and shows how resilient kids can be if someone takes the time to work with them.

• Sandi Goerisch, Anchor Lutheran School in Anchorage, AK

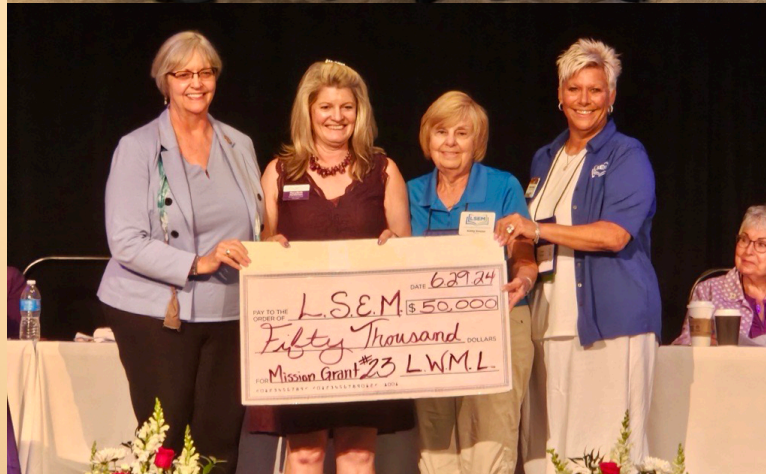
Once he learned to add and subtract up to three-digit numbers with or without regrouping, we moved on to learning how to multiply. J was quick to learn many of the multiplication facts and now knows how to use his resources to help him with the more difficult ones. He also quickly learned how to long division.

Term	Info.	Picture
Odd number	modeled with groups of 2 and 1 left over	
even number	modeled with groups of 2 and 0 left over	
expanded form	a way to write a number that shows place value of each digit	$500 + 70 + 2$
standard form	a number written with 1 digit for each place value	572
place value	the value a digit has because of its place in a number	$\begin{array}{r} 572 \\ 5 - 500 \end{array}$
rectangular array	a group of numbers or objects arranged in equal rows and equal columns	

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LSEM Receives LWML Grant

LSEM was blessed to be a grant recipient of the ladies of the National LWML in the 2023-2025 biennium. This grant has helped us purchase resources, tools, and technology to help children with learning needs find success in the classroom. It also helped us provide screenings for students, research and curate effective, efficient, and empathetic services, and help our teachers grow in their knowledge. Thank you to the LWML and the ladies' mites that come together to make an incredible impact.

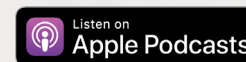


THE LUTHERAN EDUCATION PODCAST

LUTHERAN SPECIAL EDUCATION MINISTRIES

The Lutheran Education Podcast provides listeners with conversations that explore trends, issues, and events surrounding the world of Lutheran education. In each episode, we invite educational leaders and experts to shed light on topics that support the ministerial work of educators, administrators, and staff.

Search for "The Lutheran Education Podcast" wherever you listen.



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LUTHERAN SPECIAL EDUCATION MINISTRIES

Your Part in this Mission

At Lutheran Special Education Ministries (LSEM), we believe that every child, regardless of their learning ability, should have access to a Christian education.

Every day, there are children in schools who are feeling anxious, nervous, and ashamed because it's difficult for them to learn in the standard classroom setting. Our teachers are out there giving those same children hope, reassurance, and pride by teaching and supporting them in a way that works for their needs. They are showing these children that, yes, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13).

Everything that we do at LSEM, from direct teaching children in classrooms, student assessments and education plans, professional development for teachers, church visits, school chapel services, and answering calls from worried parents and grandparents is embodying Paul's message in his letter to the Philippians. We show them:



**“You are not alone. You have support. You have help.
You can do it. You are loved. God is with you.”**

However, none of this is possible without you. We need your help to continue making a positive impact in the lives of children with various learning abilities. Your generous donation will enable us to:



Provide specialized educational programs tailored to the needs of each child.

Offer resources, teaching, tutoring, and mentorship to students who struggle academically.

Equip teachers and schools with the tools to better support children with learning needs.

Together, we can empower these children to realize their full potential. We have accomplished a lot this past school year, but there is still so much work to be done. There are still so many children who need help and support to be successful. Donating to LSEM will make a lasting difference in their lives and help them believe that, just as the Bible says, with Christ's strength, they can accomplish anything.

Will you partner with us in this mission? Your gift, no matter the size, will bring us one step closer to transforming the lives of these children. Donate today and continue the faithful work of leaving a Legacy of Love.

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LUTHERAN SPECIAL EDUCATION MINISTRIES

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Connect with LSEM online to stay informed on the impact of our mission, find resources and support, and grow your own knowledge of special education in today's classroom. [Like](#), [subscribe](#), and [share](#)!

