EVANGELISM IN LUTHERAN SCHOOLS

'Lutheran schools share Christ'

Issues:

- Some congregations appear to operate with the idea that Lutheran schools are primarily for Lutherans.
- Lutheran schools that enroll nonmember children frequently do so to increase tuition income.
- Although approximately 50 percent of the enrollment in Lutheran schools is from nonmember families, few congregations have programs to assimilate students and their parents into the life of the school and congregation.
- Further study reveals that Lutheran schools with ineffective evangelism programs are often operated by congregations that also lack strong, outreach-focused mission statements.

Conclusion

- We have moved away from being a school of the parish to being a school of parents. This is based on the national average that over 50% of students in our schools are from non member parents.

Philosophy Statement

- Evangelism is a corporate responsibility of the whole congregation, not just full-time church workers or evangelism committees. Reaching out with the Gospel of Christ through the Lutheran school can be a vital strategy for achieving this part of the whole congregation's mission.

COMMUNITY LUTHERAN SCHOOLS

In addition to the elementary and secondary schools that remain the heart of Lutheran education, two relatively new agencies are providing great opportunities for sharing Christ by congregations.

Pictures of the year by NBC
Jim Lavrakas / Anchorage Daily News

Early Childhood Centers

- Early Childhood centers have grown at the rate of approximately 10 percent per year. Early childhood centers enroll a high percentage of nonmember children. There are more early childhood centers not affiliated with elementary schools than there are elementary schools. Approximately 85 percent of the children come from nonmember homes. Children from unchurched homes account for 19 percent of the enrollment in a typical early childhood center.

Day Care Programs

- Day care is in great demand. They either provide care of young children all day long or supervision and programs for school-age children before and after school. These programs answer a great need in a society in which both parents frequently are employed outside the home.

Your Challenge!!

- Effective Lutheran schools of the 21st century will reach out to all segments of the community for school membership.

Ideas that Work (Marketing)

1. Maintaining an attractive school building and grounds is a key factor in the recruitment of students and parents.
2. Placing an attractive sign on your school grounds. Also, the use of a "message" sign.
3. Develop several attractive brochures, fliers, door hangers, etc.

Marketing continued

- 4. Develop a plan for using community publications to tell the story of your school and express your interest in the community.
- 5. Develop a mailing list of people in your community and particularly in your target groups.
- 6. Advertising via billboards, placing ads in local publications, and posters in conspicuous places.

Marketing Continued

- 7. Identify the many ways in which your congregation and its school can express its interest in the community.
- 8. How your school facilities can serve the community or groups in it.
- 9. Invite parents in your target groups to special events and activities. Recognize and welcome them.

Marketing Continued

- 10. Participate in parades, holiday events, or other special community events.
- 11. Tell good news stories about students and their achievements.
- 12. Help students and parents of community feel that your school is their school.
- 13. Assimilate parents of the community with members of the school family and congregation.

YOUR CHALLENGE!!

- Lutheran schools of the 21st century will have and use an effective marketing plan.

Don't Ask

EVANGELISM APPROACHES

- Conversational evangelism: Asking questions that lead to conversations in which you share your faith rather than telling people what they should do.
- Friendship evangelism: Becoming friends with individuals and sharing personal faith with them. Includes invitations to church and school activities, willingness to transport, and informal invitations to the home.

EQUIPPING TEACHERS

- Based on research, 10 specific skills have been developed for teachers to learn and use in their work as evangelists. These skills are to be used for incidental or intentional contacts, inside and outside school.

SKILLS

- One minute witness
- Active listening
- School purpose witness
- Jesus Talk
- Bible Talk
- Communicate care
- Witness planning
- Prayer witnessing
- Prayer requests
- Prayers of praise

The Final Challenge!!

Lutheran schools of the 21st century will aggressively seek out the lost to enroll them in a Lutheran school, where they daily can hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ through which the Holy Spirit has promised to work.