

Lutheran School Funding Academy

It's all about the kids. It's all about the opportunity to share Jesus' love in our classrooms and in our community. It's all about Him.

School Administrators face many challenging tasks today. Studies point to the importance of curricular updates. Scheduling issues are on-going, and addressing staffing needs has become a daily task. Why one more workshop, one more event?

Bill Cochran, Director of Schools for The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, gathered a special task force to explore the issues related to school funding. He is keenly aware of the reality that unless there is a strong fiscal foundation for a school, the forum for teacher student interaction is limited. Unless there is a clear plan for the fiscal operation of a school, it will not reach its potential and children will not be able to hear the message of Jesus' love in their classrooms.

The task force explored all areas of school funding and developed the first National Lutheran School Funding Academy curriculum. The Academy is an intense, three day workshop which empowers participants to understand their current methods of school funding, compare their model to that used by others and expand their knowledge to improve and enhance their local operation.

Bible Study-Through Bible study, participants explore the role of the school administrator in stewardship education, the joys of personal stewardship, and the challenge of institutional stewardship.

The Fiscal Leader-Participants gain insight into leveraging their abundance to provide the margin that empowers ministry, accepting "ownership" for their school's finances, leading with a vision instead of needs, addressing the "sacred cows" of financial leadership, learning to "mine" for efficiencies, and allocating costs.

Fiscal Assessment-Time is spent looking at the method of operation. How much is allocated for task "a" and for ministry area "b"? Where do your funds come from? How are they allocated for disbursement? Are there ways to improve the systems that are currently in place? Participants are required to gather specific information and bring that to the workshop. Fiscal leaders are guided to do self-evaluation and to look for efficiencies in current operations.

Gift Development- It would be difficult to operate a school today without the receipt of special gifts. There are significant resources available to schools, they just need to be found. The reality is that not only must they be found, but they also must be groomed. To receive a gift, an audience must understand the school's purpose and promise. In this section, participants explore gift development and learn new ways to encourage support for ministry.

Strategic Planning-Unless we plan to succeed fiscally we plan to fail. Special focus is placed on fiscal planning as well as institutional planning that can lead to successful and healthy schools. Special emphasis is placed on developing a business plan that assures an institution not only has today's needs addressed but those that will help it grow for years to come.

Seats and Students-We cannot teach if a student is not present. Empty seats carry a ministry price in terms of lost opportunities to share His love. Empty seats also carry a fiscal price and limit our ability to operate our institutions at an optimum level. Participants work through the importance of student recruitment and retention and learn ways to reach out to the community.

There are many facets to a well funded school. During the academy participants have the opportunity to explore a wide array of practical topics that will chart the direction of their schools for years to come!