

West Lutheran High School
State of the School Report
Minnesota Nonpublic School Accrediting Association (MNSAA)
2025–2026 School Year

Introduction

West Lutheran High School continues to be richly blessed by God's grace as we fulfill our mission of helping students Learn, Believe, Grow, and Achieve. Guided by our 2025–2026 school theme, *"Unshakable Peace"* from Isaiah 26:3-4, we have witnessed God's faithfulness throughout another successful year of Christian education.

Isaiah reminds us, *"You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord himself, is the Rock eternal."* Throughout the school year, this promise was evident in the accomplishments of our students, the dedication of our faculty and staff, and the support of our families, congregations, and donors.

Enrollment and Recruitment

West Lutheran concluded the 2025–2026 school year with an enrollment of 205 students and celebrated the graduation of 52 seniors. Looking ahead, enrollment projections for the 2026–2027 school year remain strong, with an anticipated incoming freshman class of approximately 43–47 students and an overall enrollment projected between 193–195 students.

Recruitment remains a strategic priority. Throughout the year, West Lutheran hosted numerous events designed to strengthen relationships with association schools and congregations while introducing prospective students and families to our ministry. These efforts included:

- Warrior for a Day visits
- West Lutheran Day
- Grade School Matinee Performances
- Pizza and Ice Cream Socials
- Future Warrior Athletic Events
- Dig Pink and Coaches vs. Cancer community events

These programs continue to build excitement for Christian secondary education and help families experience the welcoming culture of West Lutheran.

Staffing and Leadership

West Lutheran is thankful to begin the 2026–2027 school year fully staffed with 17 called workers and 8 staff members. During the year, five called workers received divine calls to serve elsewhere, yet each was led to remain at West Lutheran. We praise God for His continued provision of dedicated Christian educators and leaders.

Faculty, staff, and students also participated in a leadership development opportunity this year. Twenty-two representatives attended the WELS Leadership Conference in Chicago, gaining valuable insight into Christian leadership and service within the church and community.

Academic Excellence

West Lutheran remains committed to providing rigorous academic opportunities while maintaining a Christ-centered educational environment.

Student scheduling for the upcoming school year is nearing completion, and the school continues to expand opportunities for advanced learners. Beginning in 2026-2027, West Lutheran will offer 12 Advanced Placement courses, including the addition of: (New) AP Precalculus, AP Psychology; Additional AP offerings include: Drawing, Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Science, Physics, Computer Science A, Computer Science Principles, U.S. History, Literature, and Calculus.

The expansion of advanced coursework reflects West Lutheran's commitment to preparing students for success in higher education and future vocations while integrating a biblical worldview into all areas of learning.

Student Life and Spiritual Growth

One of the greatest blessings of Christian education is the opportunity for students to grow in faith while serving others. This year provided numerous opportunities for students to develop as Christian leaders both on and off campus.

West Lutheran students participated in mission outreach through two summer mission teams. Sixteen students and two chaperones traveled to Idaho in partnership with Truth in Love Ministry, engaging in door-to-door witnessing opportunities to members of the Mormon community. An additional team of three students and one chaperone served in New Orleans through community outreach and evangelism efforts. These experiences allowed students to boldly share the gospel while allowing their own faith to be strengthened as well.

Student life remained vibrant through a variety of academic, leadership, service, and extracurricular opportunities. One notable event was Senior Decision Day, which celebrated the future educational and vocational plans of our graduating seniors.

Fine Arts

The Fine Arts Department experienced an exceptional year of growth and achievement.

The fall play, *Treasure Island*, traveling grade school theater production, *Shakespeare Unbound*, and spring musical, *Newsies*, were all highly successful, with outstanding performances by cast and crew and strong attendance from the community. Students demonstrated remarkable dedication and talent while using their God-given gifts to entertain and inspire audiences.

West Lutheran also hosted the 2026 WELS Regional Bandfest, welcoming 85 student musicians and directors from WELS high schools throughout the region. The event culminated in a memorable concert showcasing the musical excellence of participating students and talents of their clinicians, Dan Hubert and Caleb Dobberstein (teacher at Bloomington Lutheran-West Association School).

Additionally, the annual Showcase Concert and Art Show highlighted the creativity and artistic talents of West Lutheran students. Art displays filled the gymnasium with exceptional work from both traditional and AP Art students, while the concert featured outstanding performances by various music ensembles.

The success of these events further solidified West Lutheran's reputation for excellence in fine arts. West has also been chosen to host the 2028 WELS Choralfest, which will welcome over 200 students and directors.

Athletics / Extracurricular

West Lutheran athletes experienced another outstanding year of competition and achievement.

Highlights included:

- Girls Basketball advancing to the Section Championship Game.
- Girls Softball making its second state tournament appearance in three years and advancing to the State Championship Game.
- Boys Baseball advancing to the Section Championship Game.
- Multiple school records broken in boys and girls track and field.
- Strong postseason performances across numerous athletic programs.
- Robotics reaching State First Robotics event for 5th appearance out of 4 years. Both robotics teams qualified for the 2025-2026 State competition.

Beyond wins and championships, athletics continue to provide opportunities for students to develop Christian character, leadership, teamwork, and perseverance.

Professional Development and Continuous Improvement

As part of West Lutheran's commitment to continuous improvement, faculty and staff have been actively preparing for the upcoming MNSAA accreditation visit scheduled for the 2027–2028 school year.

Faculty members have met regularly throughout the year to:

- Review accreditation standards and evidence.
- Update curriculum maps and course syllabi.
- Evaluate instructional practices.
- Discuss departmental goals and future planning.
- Maintain consistency in academic expectations and procedures.

These efforts reflect West Lutheran's dedication to maintaining high academic standards while remaining firmly grounded in its WELS mission and values.

Facilities, Development, and Stewardship

The generosity of West Lutheran supporters continues to strengthen the ministry.

The annual "The Future Is Bright" Gala raised more than \$217,000, providing support for:

- Exterior building repairs
- Waterproofing and tuckpointing projects
- Tuition assistance for students and families

Major exterior restoration work began in June 2026 and will help preserve and enhance the facility for future generations.

Additionally, the school's Give to the Max campaign raised more than \$50,000 toward the purchase of a new grand piano. This instrument has already become an important resource for music instruction, rehearsals, concerts, and student performances.

West Lutheran also benefited from a valuable partnership with Stratasys 3-D Printing, providing additional opportunities to enhance educational programming and student learning experiences.

Looking Forward

As West Lutheran looks toward the future, we do so with confidence in God's promises and gratitude for His abundant blessings. Enrollment remains stable, academic offerings continue to expand, facilities are being strengthened, and students are growing in faith and service.

Most importantly, West Lutheran remains committed to its mission of preparing young men and women to live as faithful Christian leaders in their homes, churches, communities, and future vocations.

We thank God for His continued guidance and extend our sincere appreciation to our families, congregations, alumni, donors, faculty, staff, and friends whose prayers and support make this ministry possible.

"Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord himself, is the Rock eternal."
Isaiah 26:4 (NIV)

Respectfully Submitted,

Dave Gartner
Principal
West Lutheran High School