Key documents for governing bodies

Lutheran Education Australia

January 2015
Key Documents

There are regularly reviewed and updated.

It is expected that this book of key documents is redistributed on an annual basis with January as the anniversary date.
Key documents for governing bodies

Contents

Lutheran Education Australia has developed a range of policy documents to articulate the church’s understanding of the purpose and practice of Lutheran education. These documents reflect the expectations of the LCA of its schools and the Lutheran theology on which they are founded.

The following key policies / statements comprise the current core documents:

1. The Lutheran Church of Australia and its schools
2. Why all the attention on accreditation [BJ Kahl, Schoolink May 2011]
3. A framework for Lutheran schools [A vision for learners and learning in Lutheran schools 2005]
4. Staffing policy for Lutheran schools
5. Church membership and the Lutheran school principal
6. The teacher in the Lutheran school
7. Core propositions describing highly effective teachers in Lutheran schools
8. Christian Studies in the Lutheran school
9. The role of the pastor in the Lutheran school
10. Statement on school worship
11. The Lutheran school as a place of ministry and mission
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA
AND ITS SCHOOLS

1. The Lutheran School

1.1 The Lutheran Church of Australia (hereafter called ‘the church’) has a variety of agencies through which it carries out its ministry and mission to the people of Australia and New Zealand.

1.2 One such agency is the Lutheran school. The church, through its congregations and districts, owns and operates kindergartens, primary schools, and secondary schools. It does this in order to make available to its members and to others in the community a formal education in which the gospel of Jesus Christ informs all learning and teaching, all human relationships, and all activities in the school. Thus through its schools the church deliberately and intentionally bears Christian witness to students, parents, teachers, friends and all who make up the world of the school.

1.3 Specifically, through its schools the church offers a program of Christian education which
- serves students, parents, the church, the community, and the government, by providing a quality education for the whole person
- strives for excellence in the development and creative use by all students of their God-given gifts
- equips students for a life of service to God in the church and the community
- provides an alternative to a secular, humanistic philosophy and practice of education
- includes, as a core part of the program, a Christian Studies curriculum which has been developed deliberately and consciously from the perspective of what the Lutheran church believes and teaches
- involves the school community in regular Christian worship.

2. The Lutheran school and education

2.1 The Lutheran school is committed to serving its students by providing quality education which meets the requirements of the state. Such quality education also responds to the needs of students and develops their God-given abilities as fully as possible within the resource limits of the school community.

2.2 The principal functions as educational leader in the school. He or she is responsible to the governing council for the total program of the school.

2.3 The Lutheran school operates from an underlying holistic world view. All learning and teaching is integrated into this world view, which recognises the role in education of both God’s revelation and human reason.

3. The Lutheran school and worship

3.1 The Lutheran church confesses that worship of God is central to the life of the people of God in mission to the world of the school. Within the school such worship may be
(a) public worship by the faithful, involving the ministry of word and sacraments. This worship is open to all and is organised to meet the needs of the school and of the wider community. Or it may be
(b) school or class devotional exercises which are part of the regular program of the whole school and which in different ways involve all students and staff.

3.2 The church urges and encourages schools and local congregations to work together in worship and mission in the world of the school.
- The school pastor serves as worship leader. He oversees and encourages staff, students, and others as they serve as leaders in class and school devotions. He feeds and equips the people of God for service and leads them in mission.
- Christian principals, teachers, and other staff are key persons in ministry and mission to the world of the school. They participate in worship and lead it when appropriate. They model the Christian lifestyle and uphold Christian values.
- The school worshipping community works in mission together with surrounding congregations, either as a distinct worshipping group or as an extension of a local congregation.
4. The Lutheran school and the responsibilities of the Lutheran Church of Australia

The church commits itself to the promotion and support of its schools by
• assisting and encouraging congregations, associations, and districts to provide for the Christian education of members, in keeping with the command of Christ
• providing means and opportunity for the professional theological pre-service and in-service education of teachers
• encouraging congregations and parishes to follow up and minister to the contacts made in the wider community by the school, and to involve the members of the school community in the ministry and mission of the congregation
• working with the schools to help them realise their full potential as mission and nurturing agencies of the church.

5. The Lutheran school and the responsibilities of governing councils and principals

The church expects the governing councils and principals of its schools to
• staff its schools with skilled and registered educators who are able to uphold the teachings of the church and model the Christian lifestyle. In the first instance it seeks to use the services of active members of the church. Beyond that, the church seeks to staff its schools with active Christians from other denominations who are willing to uphold Lutheran teachings
• support and encourage in-service training — including theological training — for the professional development of teachers
• promote the purpose of the school in the local congregation, zone, or district
• help local congregation, zone, or district to use the school as a means of establishing and maintaining contact with the wider community
• actively pursue every opportunity for maximising the school’s effectiveness as a mission agency of the church

6. The Lutheran school and parents

The church acknowledges that parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. Through its schools, therefore, the church seeks to support parents in the fulfilment of this responsibility to their children. Furthermore, the church, through its schools, offers to all parents the option of a Christian education for their children.

7. The Lutheran school and the government

7:1 The church acknowledges that the state has accepted responsibility for providing schooling for all its citizens. This education is compulsory, free, and secular in its orientation.

7:2 The church further acknowledges that the government permits non-government authorities, such as the churches, to operate schools, provided that they meet certain government-determined criteria, such as curriculum and health and safety requirements.

7:3 The church will continue to own and operate its schools in accordance with government requirements, provided that meeting these requirements does not bring the church into conflict with the word of God and the teachings of the church.

7:4 The church will continue to accept financial assistance from the government under conditions determined by the government from time to time, provided that the teachings of the church are in no way or at any time compromised.
Why all the attention on accreditation?

Barry J Kahl is the Director of Lutheran Schools Association (SA/NT/WA)

Why all the attention on accreditation for service in Lutheran schools?

For us and for our Lutheran schools, Jesus is the reason for our existence and the presence of the school. He is its hub, its pivot, its whole being, and we gather around him in worship and service as he gives purpose to our lives. This, then, is Christian Education. A school that espouses Christ is one that practises Christian Education. Such a school has as its motto that Christ is in all things [Colossians 3:11]. Therefore, Christian Education becomes from God and each person is encouraged to find his or her place in the big picture, to discover the talents that God has provided, and to return those talents to him through a life of service to others. It is the Christian Education program that enables all life to become a celebration of discipleship.

The responsibility for the Christian Education program of the school is one that every staff member holds. Christ is to be in the teachers who walk in the school ground with students and as they work together with those in their care in the school's learning program. Christ is to be in the other staff members who support the life of the school and interact with its entire population. Indeed, Christ is to be in all as they mingle with the extended school community.

Such an awesome responsibility requires an awareness of what it means to live like Christ and be his ambassador. To assist study of that knowledge about God. It allows the doubter to voice doubt and permits the sceptic to critically question. By so doing the subject, Christian Studies, also provides the believer with the opportunity to witness. Christian Studies is about providing an awareness of God and, therefore, bringing people face to face with Jesus. It is about allowing them to struggle with this knowledge, which might mean struggling with God. It is about dynamic discussion.

Those who facilitate this area of learning need a depth of understanding about God and how people learn. Preparation for the privilege of teaching Christian Studies may occur through the Australian Lutheran College strand in Bachelor of Education programs, or the Graduate Certificate of Religious Education. As an in-service program, Equip has been developed to allow teachers of the Christian Education's canopy that covers, within its skin that enfolds and throughout the substance that permeates, there are a lot of things going on.

Under Christian Education's canopy that covers, within its skin that enfolds and throughout the substance that permeates, there are a lot of things going on.

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Studies subject to experience the same rigour they expect of their students, to have their own encounter with the Word, and enable collective reflection of how to approach such an essential ingredient of the Lutheran school.

Under Christian Education’s canopy that covers, within its skin that enfolds and throughout the substance that permeates, there are a lot of things going on. There is the social web of the school and its management structures, as well as the school’s recreational and promotional activities. The person entrusted with oversight of the school is the principal, the spiritual head of the school. To assist the principal, and others who lead, to see the total world of the school as God would view it there are leadership development and post-graduate studies which promote an expansive view of what constitutes a Lutheran school.

If all these things are in place we are well on the way to being a truly Lutheran school, but what are the marks one could expect of a Lutheran school? Surely, it is more than ownership by a district of the Lutheran Church of Australia, or a congregation, or an association of Lutheran members. Surely, it is more than having the word ‘Lutheran’ in the school’s name, or as a sub-title. Surely, it is more than having a principal who is a member of the Lutheran Church. We undergo supervision and meet requirements of registration by state or territory authorities, or if we aspire to be an IB school we are put through a rigorous authorisation exercise. So, should we be required to meet certain provisions to be accredited as a Lutheran school, what might be the signs against which a Lutheran school could be assessed?

The possible accreditation elements to which a school might aspire could include the following:

» **Acceptance** of the station of others is patently noticeable.

» **Accreditation of staff** as required by the Lutheran Church of Australia is given diligent attention.

» **Behaviour management policies** reflect the school as a grace place.

» **Christian Studies** is esteemed as a Key Learning Area.

» **Learning** is affected by the Lifelong Qualities for Learning and uses appropriate pedagogy to assist students to discover and develop their talents to the fullest in order to live a life of service to Christ and others.

» **Nomenclature** clearly defines the school as a Lutheran school and part of a wider network of Lutheran schools.

» **Pastoral care** of each other amongst staff, students and the extended school community is clearly supported.

» **Policies** mirror the Christ-centred objectives of the school, and the requisite policies of the Lutheran Church, Lutheran Education Australia and Lutheran systems are known and applied.

» **Service** is an essential element of learning as a response to the Gospel, for Christ’s sake, and for the sake of others, and not for the purpose of promoting the school.

» **Spiritual development of staff** is given a regular and high priority.

» **Values**, generically accepted for Lutheran schools, are displayed and receive focus in learning programs and activities.

» **Visual evidence** of the centrality of the Gospel is openly exhibited through various art forms.

» **Worship** is meaningfully provided for students, staff and the extended school community.

To how many of these are you able to give a tick in the school where you serve? Where you are in doubt, why not work on it? If you have a perfect record, thank God, but strive to ensure their effectiveness and relevance.

Blessings and God’s strength to you as you strive to make, or preserve, a Lutheran school which is true to its claims.
**Ethos**

We believe:

- the Bible is the supreme authority for Christian faith and life
- the Holy Spirit works through the teaching of God's Word in our schools so that persons may know and trust in God as Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier
- all people are created and loved by God, and God is for God's glory and theirs
- each person is a unique creation of God and a person loved by God
- God's knowledge and truthfulness, God's gift to people for their well-being
- service to others through actions that demonstrate is a reflection of and response to God's love

Therefore, in Lutheran schools we see:

- the Bible as the authority informing what we do and teach
- the works of the Holy Spirit in the life of each person
- forgiveness being forgiven and reconciliation
- that God's grace shines through Jesus, love, wisdom, and justice
- living God's and worth of each person
- God's gifts of knowledge and learning
- a spirit of service reflecting God's action in our lives

Value-based learning is further developed by contextual roles particular to individual school communities.

Lifelong Qualities for Learners

As central to their mission and ministry, Lutheran schools seek to nurture individuals, who are aware of their humanity, open to the influence of the Holy Spirit, and growing in and living according to a Christian worldview.

Lifelong values of living in community and reflecting characteristics of God through core values, especially love, justice, compassion, forgiveness, service, humility, courage, hope, quality, and appreciation.

Contributing to communities by being:

- self-directed, insightful investigators and learners
- discerning, resourceful problem solvers and implementers
- adaptable, creative producers and contributors
- open, responsive communicators and facilitators
- principled, resilient leaders and collaborators
- caring, steadfast supporters and advocates

Lifelong qualities are developed by having a shared vision and common core beliefs that learning communities are committed to having a shared identity.

Beliefs about Learners

- All learners are valued as who they are and what they are
- All learners need encouragement and deserve support
- Learners learn in different ways, at different paces
- All learners have the ability to learn and learn best when:
  - They experience success
  - They take responsibility for their own learning
  - They can work both independently and collaboratively
  - Subject matter is meaningful
  - High, specific learning expectations are present
  - They are appropriately challenged
- Learners need to learn how to think and think well
- Collaborative partnerships between experts/caregivers and schools support learners and learning

Beliefs about Learning

- Learning goes beyond the classroom and includes the personal, physical, emotional, and spiritual as a learning role
- Learning tasks affective and intellectual dimensions as well as cognitive
- Learning is lifelong
- Learning involves learners progressing through developmental stages
- Learning is facilitated when individual needs of the students are addressed
- Learning occurs in a context and is driven by curiosity, need, and mastery
- Learning builds on previous knowledge, experiences, and understanding

Beliefs about Learning Communities

- All people are learners
- Safe and supportive learning environments foster and solve learning
- Effective learning communities stimulate learning and enhance reflection, practice and productive habits
- Learning communities are committed to having a shared vision and common core beliefs
- Learning communities collaborate and respond to the world by using and ways that are appropriate and reflect the future with confidence and choice
Lutheran Church of Australia
Board for Lutheran Education Australia

Staffing Policy for Lutheran Schools

1. **Context**
The Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) has a variety of agencies through which it carries out its ministry and mission to the people of Australia. One such agency is the Lutheran School in which the Church makes available to its members and to others in the community a formal education in which the gospel of Jesus Christ informs all learning and teaching, all human relationships, and all activities. Thus through its Schools the Church deliberately and intentionally bears Christian witness to all who make up the world of the School.

2. **Appointment of staff**
The Church seeks to staff its Schools with educators who are able to uphold the teachings of the Church and model the lifestyle of a Christian. In the first instance it seeks to use the services of competent, registered educators who are active members of the Church. Beyond that, the Church seeks to staff its Schools with people who are active Christians from other denominations willing to uphold the Lutheran teaching of the School. The Church avoids negative bias against the differently-abled, people of minority races, females and males.

The leadership positions of principal, deputy principal, head of subschools and head of Christian Studies are to be filled by active communicant members of the LCA.

3. **Expectations of those who work in Lutheran Schools**
The LCA expects that those who work in the Lutheran School in whatever position:
- contribute towards the mission of the School as they live out their vocation in their specific appointment,
- are professionally competent to undertake the task to which they are appointed, and,
- are a witness to the love of God through Christ in the full range of relationships, programs and activities in which they are involved.

In addition, the LCA expects that those who hold positions of responsibility as educators:
- have a basic understanding of and commitment to the Christian faith and a basic understanding and commitment to support the teachings of the Church, and the mission of the Lutheran School,
- contribute to the mission of the School in some of the specific Christian activities of the School – worship, counselling, Christian Studies, and,
- reflect on how they can develop in their understanding and competency to contribute more effectively to the mission of the Lutheran School.

4. **Theological development of staff**
In order to advance the ethos of the School, the Church reserves the right to develop practices which ensure that all who work as educators in its Schools are willing to uphold those teachings in both word and deed. The Church establishes standards of theological training required to carry out particular educational tasks and leadership roles.

The Church expects that those who work in the Lutheran School understand and support the School’s mission and are equipped to fulfil the Church’s expectations. These requirements reflect the responsibilities that each person has in the Lutheran School. Those involved in the education program as teachers and administrators are...
expected to have a clear understanding of the mission of the Lutheran School and engage in ongoing reflection on the practice of Lutheran schooling as it applies to their role. Other staff are expected to have an orientation to the ethos of the Lutheran School.

5. **Accreditation of those involved in the education program of the Lutheran School**

All educators in Lutheran schools are required to be accredited by the Church. Accreditation involves the completion of required study that is relevant to the responsibility held, and is maintained by ongoing study and reflection.

Accreditation is the means whereby the Church can be assured that its teachings are known to and understood by those who work as educators in Lutheran Schools, and that those who lead the School or teach Christian Studies have an adequate grounding in Lutheran theology.

Requirements for accreditation are established by General Church Council on the advice of BLEA.

The process of granting accreditation is the responsibility of the LEA National Office. A register of those people who have been accredited for employment in the Lutheran School is maintained.

It is the responsibility of the employing body to ensure that educators are properly equipped for their tasks in accordance with this policy. Letters of Appointment for all educators will include the Church’s expectations of the person for theological development.

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**Glossary of Terms Used in Staffing Policy for Lutheran Schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BLEA:</td>
<td>Board for Lutheran Education Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Studies:</td>
<td>Those parts of the formal curriculum of the Lutheran School dealing specifically with Christian knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church:</td>
<td>The Lutheran Church of Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educator:</td>
<td>Those employees of Lutheran Schools with educational qualifications who are teaching or administering Schools. The policy applies to those employed for 12 months or more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCA:</td>
<td>The Lutheran Church of Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal:</td>
<td>The head of a School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School:</td>
<td>The early childhood centres, P-12 colleges, secondary colleges, secondary Schools and primary Schools which operate in the name of the Lutheran Church of Australia.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lutheran Education Australia

Church membership and the Lutheran school principal

1. It is the policy of the LCA that principals of its schools be active communicant members of the LCA. Since it is a policy of the LCA, it is not for individual schools to determine whether the policy applies to them.

2. The rationale for this requirement:
   a. If schools are part of the mission and ministry (‘an integral part of the ministry’ according to the model constitution) of the LCA those that lead them must be able to identify in all ways with this mission and ministry.
   b. The principal is required to ‘perform to the best of [their] ability the specific duties assigned to [them] by Council and in so doing, seek at all times to promote the aims of the school and build up its distinctive Lutheran character’ (Principal/School Council Letter of Agreement).
   c. The model constitution requires that the Lutheran school operates according to the Confessions of the LCA and this means that those who lead them need to have both a working knowledge and an acceptance of them.
   d. The LCA requires that pastor and principal operate in a spirit of mutual ministry.
   e. The principal is required to provide spiritual and theological leadership to the school.

3. The LCA is committed to provide quality Lutherans to undertake the position of principal. This requires planning and resources to ensure adequate provision of principals. Directors work with councils, administrators and educators to ensure that this policy enables Lutheran schools to be all that the LCA requires of them.
WE APPOINT YOU AS PRINCIPAL IN OUR SCHOOL ON THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS AND MUTUAL AGREEMENTS:

THAT YOU:

• See your administration and leadership as a ministry to the students, staff and parents of the school;

• Keep your practice in harmony with the Word of God, the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, the Constitution and By-laws of the Lutheran Church of Australia, and the constitution of the school;

• Work in Christian harmony with the staff and Council of the school and with congregations and pastors in the school’s catchment area;

• Develop and maintain a relationship of mutual trust and open communication with the school pastor;

• Provide spiritual leadership within the school community;

• Perform to the best of your ability the specific duties assigned to you by Council and in so doing, seek at all times to promote the aims of the school and build up its distinctive Lutheran character;

• Ensure that your teaching is in harmony with the Word of God as revealed in the Old and New Testaments in its truth and purity according to the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as contained in the Book of Concord;

• Maintain proper order and evangelical discipline, and serve as an example in Christian conduct.

THAT WE:

• Receive you as our Principal, a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, and accord you the love, respect, goodwill and cooperation due to your position;

• Support your work among us in prayer, word and deed;

  Undertake to show concern for your total well-being – spiritual, social, and physical;

• Provide you with a salary, entitlements and conditions as mutually agreed;

• Provide you with opportunity and support to undertake professional studies which will assist in your ministry.

This offer may be terminated only in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Constitution and By-laws of the Lutheran Church of Australia or as may be laid down from time to time by this Church.
May the Lord our God, whose direction and guidance we have earnestly sought, grant you His Holy Spirit, co guide you according to His will in the consideration of this offer. We request you to acknowledge receipt of this Letter of Agreement immediately to

acknowledge receipt of this Letter of Agreement immediately to

Signed

[Chairman of Meeting]

Dated

ATTESTED BY .................................................... Director

................................................................. President

Of the Lutheran Church of Australia ........................................ District

Dated

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

To .................................................................................................................................................. .

The Lutheran Church of Australia upholds the position of Principal of the Lutheran school as an important position in its mission and ministry. Therefore we

having called on the Lord our God for guidance at a duly convened meeting held

at ........................................................................................................ on........................................................................................................

have elected you to become Principal of

In the name of the Triune God we invite you to consider this offer knowing that should you assume the responsibilities of this position you will endeavour to perform faithfully, according to the Word of God, all the duties of this ministry as outlined in this Letter of Agreement or as may be resolved and mutually agreed upon from time to time.
Lutheran Church of Australia

THE TEACHER IN THE LUTHERAN SCHOOL

1. The Lutheran school is an agency of the Lutheran Church of Australia through which the church seeks to carry out its ministry and mission to the people of Australia.

2. The specific ministry and mission of the Lutheran school is to provide quality formal education in which the word of God informs all learning, teaching, and other activities. In this environment, forgiveness and grace govern the relationships of the members of the school community.

3. In order to fulfil this ministry and mission, teachers in the Lutheran school will be qualified and competent educators. In addition, they will also
   - be committed to the Christian faith
   - understand and support the faith as confessed by the Lutheran church and practised in the Lutheran school
   - be willing to identify with, uphold and promote the Lutheran ethos of the school
   - exemplify and model the Christian lifestyle in and beyond the school.

4. The church will determine from time to time what particular qualifications it requires of teachers to equip them for the ministry and mission of the church in Lutheran schools. The church encourages local school authorities to commission teachers who are appointed to serve in a Lutheran school. Every appointed teacher who continues to meet the requirements determined by the church will be an Accredited Teacher in the service of the church.
Core propositions describing highly effective teachers in Lutheran schools

1. **Context**

1.1 This paper describes some core propositions for highly effective teachers in Lutheran schools. These propositions are expressed as descriptors of the kind of qualities the Church would wish to see as the distinguishing characteristics of teachers. It has its origin in wide-ranging consultations and is to be regarded as a document in progress that reflects the recognition of the BLEA, Australian Lutheran College and schools that an appropriate template of teacher characteristics is needed for schools in the LCA. Readers will readily see the link between the direction of this paper and the wider educational context – especially the priority being given to teacher quality and, for the LCA, the outcomes of the recent Australian Conference on Lutheran Education.

1.2 Delineating the attributes of highly effective teachers in Lutheran schools has a range of potentially valuable applications in:

- Appointment of staff
- Staff orientation programs
- Design of continuing professional education programs
- Determining professional standards
- Endorsing best practice, rewarding accomplishment and acknowledging the psychological importance of praise for the teacher and the modelling of such affirmation
- Preparation of teachers for Lutheran schools

2. **Framework**

'Teacher quality' has both generic features which are cross-sector in scope, and school – system – specific dimensions which, inter alia, enable schools to conduct teaching and learning in ways that are congruent with their vision statements.

The following represents a five-point 'map':

- How is teacher spirituality to be understood as it applies to Lutheran schools?
- What are the specific ways in which Christian vocation influences teacher behaviour?
- Which aspects of Lutheran theology are important to the work of the Lutheran teacher?
- How is relational Christianity to be manifest in the work of the Lutheran teacher?
- What are the essential features of the teacher as professional in Lutheran schools?

These questions are based on five intersecting domains:

- Spirituality [growing into Christ]
- Vocation [servant hood in Christ]
- Theology [expressing Christ]
- Relational Christianity [sustaining positive Christian relationships]
- Professional [exercising the craft of the Christian teacher with integrity and effectiveness]

3. **Core propositions**

3.1 **Proposition One**: a teacher in a Lutheran school will have a Christ-centred spirituality that is characterised by a growing personal faith, an understanding of the Gospel and an integration of faith and living
**Behavioural outcomes:** the teacher is one who:

- undertakes ongoing biblical and theological study and participates in worship, devotional activities and congregational life.
- appreciates that all interactions are opportunities for the Holy Spirit to work
- demonstrates grace, forgiveness and compassion in interactions with members of the school community and the congregation
- understands the Christian and secular world views and lives the former to influence and permeate the latter

**3.2 Proposition Two:** the teacher in a Lutheran school is called to be a servant of Christ and to serve him through serving others.

**Behavioural outcomes:** the teacher:

- understands teaching as a vocation from God and views teaching as a Gospel ministry
- understands the educator’s role in the mission of the Church and school
- understands servant leadership and its implications for carrying out responsibilities in the school arena
- has a love of, and respect for, all in the school community with special reference to young people
- relates to all pastorally

**3.3 Proposition Three:** a teacher in a Lutheran school has a sound understanding of Lutheran theology, the LCA and its schools.

**Behavioural outcomes:** the teacher

- Understands Lutheran theology, especially the grace alone, faith alone, Christ alone; and Law and Gospel and their implications for self and relationships
- Has a mature familiarity with the catechism
- Has an awareness of the theological convergence and divergence of Christian churches in their ecumenical association
- Upholds the ethos of the Lutheran school
- Recognises the way in which theology informs critical areas of school life such as administration, discipline, pastoral care, Christian Studies and worship

**3.4 Proposition Four:** a teacher in a Lutheran school is able to develop positive relationships with others.

**Behavioural outcomes:** the teacher:

- understands the gospel and its influence on daily life and relationships with others
- has positive self-esteem, is emotionally robust and has an awareness of his/her personal gifts and talents
- possesses high levels of communication and negotiation skills
- has a well developed emotional intelligence and is able to read the emotional state of individuals, groups and workplaces and respond appropriately
- has a keen awareness of different cultural groups and belief systems in Australian society
- values people in their uniqueness, having their own gifts and talents, and accepts them as they are
- has a special empathy for, and positive relationship with, young people
- has the capacity to work easily and effectively in teams and a strong sense of community

**3.5 Proposition Five:** a teacher in a Lutheran school is committed to best practice in teaching and highly professional conduct
\textit{Behavioural outcomes} : the teacher:
- has sound knowledge of learning areas and is passionate about teaching and learning
- sees himself/herself as a collaborative member of a learning community and models learning to students
- uses a range of methodologies that promote active learning and is skilled in important aspects of the craft of teaching
- has the capacity to reflect on practice and to adopt changes that lead to ongoing improvement
- maintains a high level of general knowledge and awareness of social trends, especially those that impact on the lives of learners, and keeps informed through news, films and reading
- possesses a critical awareness of developments in education and has the ability to assess the significance of trends and their impact
- seeks regular professional development opportunities, values professional growth and is responsive to mentoring
- shows management skills of a high order and empowers others through leadership skills

4. \textbf{Conclusion}

It may well be the case that using resources to improve teaching and to strengthen the work of teachers produces more important gains than putting resources into other school-related projects. The core propositions expressed above direct attention to critical aspects of the desired teacher profile in Lutheran schools and provide guidance for teachers themselves, principals, systems and the Church as they are engaged in initial teacher education and continuing professional education programs.
Christian Studies in the Lutheran school

Context
Christian Studies is a learning area that belongs to the formal curricular program of the Lutheran school and as such should operate within the same parameters as other learning areas, with appropriate assessment and reporting, timetabling, budget, staffing and resourcing. Teachers who have responsibility for the teaching of Christian Studies are supported professionally by meeting the accreditation requirements of the LCA Staffing Policy for Lutheran Schools which provides them with the opportunity to reflect on their spirituality and to articulate a personal vision for teaching Christian Studies.

Christian Studies is an essential and distinctive part of the Christian education program, which is the total life of the school and which is expressed through the culture of the school, all teaching and learning activities, the worship program, pastoral care for students and staff, behaviour management policies and practices, voluntary Christian groups and activities that address the personal spirituality of staff and students.

The students who participate in Christian Studies bring a wide range of faith, life and spiritual understandings and experiences embodied in differing worldviews. This diversity has implications for the planning and teaching of school-based Christian Studies programs and the need to accommodate varying levels of biblical literacy and engagement. While faith responses or commitment to Christ are not a general expectation in the formal curriculum, there are areas of the broader framework of Christian education where these can be actively nurtured and expressed.

Rationale
Christian Studies provides a safe and supportive context in which students can reflect on their experiences of the world and on their own beliefs and spirituality as they attempt to make sense of their rapidly changing and complex global environment, and as they develop their identity as individuals. They do this on the basis of their study of Christianity and their increasing awareness of how the Christian faith relates to all aspects of lived reality.

Christian Studies orients students into biblical literacy and the teachings, culture and history of the Christian church in general, and the Lutheran Church in particular. It provides the opportunity to examine Christian insights, teachings, practices, challenges and responses to issues of justice and ethics in light of other major world religions and philosophical thinking. Christian Studies is a forum for reflecting on, engaging with and responding to the extent of human need, the servant role of the Christian church in society, stewardship for the world, and to the biblical call and challenge to be in relationship with God.

For many students, Christian Studies also provides the opportunity for them to grow in their Christian faith and in the expression of that faith in their lives.

The Christian Studies Context
Teaching and learning in Christian Studies occurs in a supportive, inclusive and safe environment. Strategies used reflect a respect for the diversity of students’ knowledge, faith backgrounds and worldviews and are inclusive of different learning styles and contexts.

Learners are engaged in intellectually challenging experiences that actively involve them in journeys of inquiry and constructing their own meanings. Students pose their own questions, gather, analyse, critique, apply and reflect on content and concepts. It is a hoped for outcome of the journey of learning that students broaden and deepen their understanding of the content and concepts, however, there is no assumption that all students will arrive at the same level of understanding at the same time. Responses to learning in Christian Studies open opportunities for a growing spirituality, the nurture of Christian faith and its expression in a variety of ways and contexts.
1. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1.1 Congruence with the office of the public ministry
It is desirable that every Lutheran school has a school pastor so that the connection between the school and the mission of the church is reinforced and supported. In some instances the school pastor will also be the pastor of the local congregation. In other instances, especially in the secondary schools, larger primary schools and composite schools, there will be a pastor/s called to serve specifically within these schools.

A school pastor will exercise a ministry that is congruent with his ordination vows. Thus such a ministry will be centred in leading the school community in worship and find full expression in the ministry of Word and Sacraments. The ministry of each school pastor will be further shaped by the particular context of each school.

1.2 The purpose and ethos of the Lutheran school
Through its schools the Lutheran Church of Australia offers a program of Christian education which

- serves students, parents, the church, the community, and the government, by providing a quality education for the whole person;
- strives for excellence in the development and creative use by all students of their God-given gifts;
- equips students for a life of service to God in the church and the community;
- provides an alternative to a secular, humanistic philosophy and practice of education;
- includes, as a core part of the program, a Christian Studies curriculum which has been developed deliberately and consciously from the perspective of confessional Lutheranism;
- involves the school community in regular Christian worship.

1.3 Theological expertise
A pastor has specialised training in theology. By virtue of this training and his calling as a pastor, it is expected that the school pastor will be actively involved in school life and provide pastoral guidance in matters within the school that have to do with the faith – worship, pastoral care, the shape and content of faith life curriculum, ethical and moral issues, mission and apologetics.

2 THE CONTEXT

2.1 Nature of schooling
A school is a distinct educational and social institution which is concerned with providing education to young people. It involves communicating knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills so that young people can live effectively in society. There is a set of structures, authority patterns and general procedures appropriate to such an institution. The pastor will need to understand these if he is to operate effectively in it. The context of the school is very different from that of the congregation.

2.2 Nature of the school team
A pastor operating in a school will be part of a team working together with principal and staff in a shared ministry that will vary according to the local context. Some will be
full time in the school, whilst others will serve in the school as part of their parish ministry.

The school council is responsible for all that happens in the school. The principal is the agent of the council. This provides the context in which the school pastor works.

The pastor will be part of a team and will need to work on developing good working relationships with the school team in general and the principal in particular. There should be no public criticism of the endeavours of each other, with a commitment to discuss differences in private.

Activities which might nurture an open relationship with the principal could include regular meetings which are sometimes formal and sometimes informal, common study of the Word, the Confessions and educational issues, prayer, and occasional shared recreational activity. Such activity would build the three critical areas of required mutual respect, namely theological, professional and personal.

This team spirit is also manifest as the pastor listens to the educational wisdom of the principal and the principal listens to the theological wisdom of the pastor. Open and honest discussions on issues that effect the life of the school and congregation will foster a good working relationship. Such discussions will be enhanced with respect for their confidentiality and also for each others views.

It is also recommended that the school pastor be regarded as a consultant to the school council.

2.3 Nature of the school in relation to the congregation
There are some differences between a school of the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) and a congregation of the LCA, and this therefore requires a recognition that the pastor's role in a school is different from the pastor's role in a congregation.

Within the congregation a key focal point for worship, leadership, learning, administration and fellowship is the pastor. Within the school, the key focal point for administration, learning, leadership and responsibility is the principal.

2.4 Responsibilities and relationships
Those whom the Church ordains (rightly calls) are set aside for particular tasks which only they can perform. Simply stated they are to publicly proclaim the Gospel and administer the Sacraments. This is their responsibility and for it they must answer to the Church and to God. In practical terms they are responsible to those people appointed by the Church to have oversight of its activities in various spheres. Thus there is a clear responsibility to other people.

An ordained person acts within the proper structures of the Church. For all ordained pastors there is a clear responsibility to be answerable to the president of the district in which they work in matters of doctrine. As well, they must be prepared to place themselves within the organisation to which they are called in service, accepting its structures and limitations on their freedom, so long as such structures and limitations do not prevent them from executing their particular role.

The pastor is responsible to the principal and comes under the jurisdiction of the school council except where a teaching of the Church is at stake. The district president will determine if an issue concerns a teaching of the Church.

Where other differences occur between principal and pastor, as they inevitably will from time to time, it is important that they sit down to sort them out in a spirit of Christian love and concern for one another. If resolution does not come quickly it may be helpful to use the school's administration team to resolve the issue. This enables the issues to be placed in a wider context.
The principal and pastor will use commonsense and Christian maturity to discuss matters of disagreement and seek mutually satisfactory outcomes. They will not allow them to linger on, using whatever resource is appropriate. This is done for the sake of a healthy working relationship in the interests of the gospel.

The first avenue of assistance in this matter ought to be the school council via the council chair. Either party should have the power to raise a matter of concern. If the matter cannot be resolved locally the district president and schools director should be used to identify a mutually acceptable mediator to help principal and pastor work through the issues.

In the end the district president, with the agreement of the schools director, will need to determine future action.

3 FUNCTIONS OF SCHOOL PASTOR

What is expected of the school pastor needs to be agreed to. The Letter of Call for School Pastors lists the following as responsibilities of the school pastor:

- Preach and teach the Word of God as revealed in the Old and New Testaments in its truth and purity according to the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as contained in the Book of Concord, and administer the sacraments in accordance with their divine institution.
- Promote faithfully the spiritual welfare of everyone in the school community, ministering to them according to their particular needs and applying the Word of God in worship, teaching, and pastoral care.
- Help the Christians in the school community to discover and use for the common good the gifts the Holy Spirit has given, equip them for service, and encourage and support them in their Christian vocation.
- Encourage the Christians in the school community to fulfil their responsibility to witness for Christ and to be involved in the mission activity in their school and of their congregations in their local communities.
- Provide pastoral leadership within the school community and in particular give theological guidance to the principal and staff.
- Keep practice in harmony with the Word of God, the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, and the Constitution and By-laws of the Lutheran Church of Australia.
- Serve as an example in Christian conduct by earnestly endeavouring to live in Christian harmony with the members of the school community, and with fellow pastors and their congregations.
- Carry out to the best of his ability the specific duties assigned to him by the principal or school council and at all times seek to promote the distinctive Lutheran aims of the school and to build up its distinctive Lutheran character.
- Participate in the church’s program of continuing education for pastors in order to equip himself better for ministry and adopt a cooperative attitude with principal or school council in determining the courses which will best help him develop his ministry.
- Assist in the regular evaluation of the ministry and mission of the school, including your own role in that ministry and mission.
- Cooperate with and support all pastors and congregations in the area served by the school.
- Ensure that all official pastoral acts conducted within the school are promptly and properly recorded and that those statistics required by the Lutheran Church of Australia are promptly and accurately provided.

4 ROLES

In the role of the school pastor the following are applicable:

Worship
- Proclamation of the Word
- Administration of the Sacraments
- Resource person
- Prayer

Adopted by
Board for Lutheran Education Australia
General Church Council
April 2002
• liturgy and hymnody
• School devotions – oversight and resources

Pastoral care
• Ongoing care and crisis care to:
• Principal and staff
• Students
• Family
• World of school
• Community
• Teaming with other counsellors / carers
• Referring when expertise and limits are recognised
• Confession and absolution

Teaching
• Theological development of staff
• Resource for Christian Studies teachers
• Teacher of Christian Studies
• Discipling
• Mentoring

Mission outreach
• Equip and encourage others in their mission
• Prepare candidates for baptism
• Prepare candidates for confirmation
• Orientation of new parents

Leadership
• Develop understanding of the LCA, its identity and purpose
• Prophetic role – remind people of their Christian commitment
• Building of ethos and morality
• Building links between congregation and school(s)
• Building links with other ministries of the LCA

5 PARTNERSHIPS

The LCA is committed to its schools being key agencies in its mission to the wider community. Accordingly it identifies the school pastor as a key link in leading people from the world of the school into a permanent worshipping community. To assist this process the following have been identified:
a) The full time school pastor should be regarded as a pastor who works in cooperation with supporting congregations and pastors
b) Where the pastor is not a full-time member of staff he should be regarded at the school as a partner in ministry, rather than a visitor to the school. This will be reflected in seeking to include him where possible in all aspects of the school life
c) The pastor-principal relationship is critical in facilitating mission. The following are suggested as exemplars of good practice:
• The working through of a shared vision for ministry and mission
• Mutual supporting of one another’s ministry
• A mechanism for principal, school pastor and congregational pastor(s) to plan joint ministry
• A commitment that principal and pastor will model partnership in mission
d) The district president and schools director need to also model this partnership in ministry working together and mutual encouragement
e) District presidents and school directors should ensure that it is clear which congregations are supporting which schools and they should ensure that there is orientation of principal and pastor where there is a change in personnel. Partnership in ministry should not be left to chance.
6 DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF A SCHOOL PASTOR
   a) pastoral skills and understandings which will enable him to exercise pastoral care both for young people and adults;
   b) an ability to work as a member of a team;
   c) a degree of maturity of Christian faith which will give integrity to his ministry with students, staff and parents;
   d) an open and warm personality which demonstrates a loving concern for others;
   e) an experience of life either in the parish or as a mature student.
   f) professional qualification in Religious Education or Education if class room teaching is a requirement of the position.
Lutheran Church of Australia

Statement on School Worship

What is Christian Worship?
Worship begins with the presence \(^1\) and acts of the Triune God \(^2\). It goes from heaven to earth, from God to human beings. This is clearly seen in the way in which God conveys love, grace and mercy to human beings through readings from the Bible, forgiveness of sins, proclamation of the gospel, the enactment of Baptism, the celebration of Holy Communion, and the performance of blessing. Worship can be understood to have a strongly **sacramental** thrust, which consists in God’s action towards us.

Human beings respond to God’s presence and activity in praise and thanksgiving. This dynamic of the presence and action of God prompting human response is brought into focus in by Paul’s teaching in Romans 12:1,

\[
I\text{ appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God [God’s presence and activity], to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship [human response]. NRSV}
\]

It is important to note that the human response of worship is not a result of a person’s superior spirituality or stronger moral fibre. Human response is itself empowered by a gracious God.

Thus the dynamic of Christian worship is God’s action, human response. The common order of worship in the Lutheran Church affirms this flow of God’s action (the so-called sacramental element) followed by our response (the so-called sacrificial element) of worship \(^3\).

The following table is useful to see this dynamic of God’s action and our response at work. It demonstrates how each action of God (his sacramental activity) has a corresponding human action (our sacrificial activity) \(^4\).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1 : The Dynamic of Christian Worship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>God’s Action</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God calls to worship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He forgives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He speaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He listens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He gives his gifts to us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He gives himself to us in the Lord’s Supper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He blesses us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He sends us into the world</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The School as a Context for Worship
There have been many attempts to draw parallels between worship as practised in the congregations of the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA), and worship as practised in the Lutheran School. While these efforts have been intended to affirm the validity of worship in a school context, it must be acknowledged that there are some very real differences between **school worship** and **congregational worship**. The major differences are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2 : The Difference between School and Congregational Worship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Worship</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No presupposition of a participant’s faith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No presupposition of baptism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No presupposition of involvement in congregational worship practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No presupposition of biblical literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory attendance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The congregation is defined in this document as a community of baptised believers who together share a common confession of faith, hear the Word of God, celebrate Baptism and the Lord’s Supper and are led by a called and ordained pastor.

This definition is distinct from the common understanding of congregation as a legally constituted organisation within the LCA or another denomination. Where a rightly constituted LCA congregation is intended, the term LCA congregation will be used.

School worship refers to a variety of worship contexts within the school where attendance is seen as part of the program of the school i.e. in whole school, in part of the school, and in class-sized contexts.

Both congregational and school contexts provide opportunities for public worship. It is therefore possible to have a congregation within a school.

**Appropriate School Worship**

The context in which schools meet for worship means that certain elements are appropriate, and others are not. Due to the compulsory nature of school worship, care must be taken not to put people in situations where a conflict of conscience arises. Such conflicts can exist when a person is expected to make a confession or response which does not reflect their faith. Appropriate elements for school worship may include the following:

**Table 3 : Appropriate Elements for School Worship**
- Bible reading
- Telling Bible stories
- Relevant Gospel message based on the biblical narrative
- Prayers of request and thanks - for students, school and the world
- Blessing
- Singing - in a context of optional involvement
- Group silence for meditation and contemplation
- Appropriate ritual acts (eg candles, signing of the cross for blessing etc)

It may be inappropriate to include the following elements due to situations where a conflict of conscience may arise.

**Table 4 : Possible Inappropriate Elements for School Worship**
- Confession of sins
- Confession of faith
- Responsive prayers
- Calls for commitment
- Celebration of Holy Communion

Worship in the school context must be done in a way which is accessible to students. It should be conducted in a language and style which communicates both the relevance of the gospel to the lives of students, as well as the sublime mystery of the Christian faith.

Furthermore, it is important to provide for a variety of expressions of worship as God works differently in different people at different times.

It is clear that the emphasis for school worship is on what God does for human beings, and not so much on human response to God.

**The Distinction between Worship and Teaching**

In worship the emphasis is on proclaiming and experiencing God’s word with the aim to create or increase faith. However, worship may also involve some teaching or explaining as well. In teaching, the emphasis is on explaining God’s word with the aim to increase understanding of the Christian faith. However, teaching may include some elements of worship.

It is important to be aware of these distinctions in planning and implementing school worship, and in planning and implementing the Christian Studies program in the school. While similar topics may be dealt with, they are dealt with in different ways according to their context.
Baptism
Baptism is the sacrament of entry into the Christian church. It happens in the context of the people of God who gather together to grow in faith and love. Thus, in the LCA, baptism is clearly seen as belonging to the ministry of the congregation. The congregation is the institution in which Christ’s gathered community is to be found. The question which the LCA and Lutheran school communities grapple with is whether it is appropriate to baptise in the context of school worship.

Baptising a student in a Lutheran School setting can be simple or complex, depending on the structure of the school. It is a simple matter in a school where there is a direct relationship between an LCA congregation and the school. Any pastoral acts done in the school can legitimately be seen as pastoral acts of that LCA congregation, and one would assume that its pastor has oversight of the pastoral acts that are done in it. The issue becomes more complex when there are a number of LCA congregations which support it, or when the school is sponsored by a district of the LCA.

Baptism can take place in a congregation within a school. While the baptised person is at school, this congregation may be best placed to provide ongoing pastoral care. However, when baptism happens in a school, links need also be developed with the LCA congregation that is best placed to care for the person and their family beyond the time that the young person is a student at the school. Where natural links with an LCA congregation do not exist, the school should seek to build bridges, and develop links with those LCA congregations that are well-placed to meet the ongoing pastoral needs of the students and their families.

Baptism of a student or staff member in the context of school worship must be accompanied by instruction. Such instruction will go beyond the normal teaching of the Christian faith in the classroom and the proclamation that is part of school worship, because it presupposes commitment to the faith.

Where there is a direct relationship between the school and an LCA congregation, instruction prior to baptism and after it will normally be the responsibility of the pastor of that congregation. Where there is a worshipping community within the school itself, it is the responsibility of the school pastor to see that such instruction is given as part of his duty to provide pastoral care.

Holy Communion
Communion may be celebrated regularly in Lutheran schools within a congregational setting. It is worthwhile restating that the congregation is a community of baptised believers who together share a common confession of faith, hear the word of God, celebrate baptism and the Lord’s Supper and are led by a called and ordained pastor. This definition is distinct from the common understanding of congregation as a legally constituted organisation within the LCA or another denomination.

Attendance at such services must be voluntary. Participation in Holy Communion is available to those who share our Lutheran understanding of it.

The pastors who preside at such services are responsible for the instruction and ongoing pastoral care of communicants in these services.

Summary of practical considerations for Lutheran Schools
- When worship is compulsory in Lutheran Schools, care must be taken to ensure that no one is asked to act against their conscience.

- Leaders should seek to make worship accessible to students in its language and style, so that it can positively communicate both the relevance and the mystery of the Christian faith.

- Since God works differently in different people, a variety of worship styles should be offered.

- Leaders of worship in Lutheran Schools need to understand the difference between teaching and worship. Appropriate professional development may be useful.
• Where there is compulsory attendance at worship in a Lutheran school, God’s loving action should be emphasised rather than the demand for faith responses from participants. (see table 1 and table 3)

• Baptism and Holy Communion are to be practised with pastoral discretion, bearing in mind the issues outlined above.

• Schools should explore and develop strategic partnerships with those LCA congregations which are well placed to care for the spiritual needs of students and their families.

Footnotes
1 Matthew 18:20: “[Jesus said] where two or three come together in my name, I am there with them.” (NRSV)
2 Ephesians 2:18: “through him [Jesus] we both (Gentiles and Israelites) have access to the Father by one Spirit” (NIV)
3 Ephesians 2:8-10: “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves; it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do;” and 1 Corinthians 12:3: “Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit. (NIV)
4 For a full discussion, see A Lutheran Approach to the Theology of Worship, (LCA Commission on Worship, Statement 24, 1990).
6 See John 1:14: “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth” (NIV); and 1 John 1:1-3: “We declare to you what we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life - this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us - we declare to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.” (NRSV)
7 Note the earlier definition of congregation in The School as the Context for Worship: “The congregation is defined in this document as a community of baptised believers who together share a common confession of faith, hear the word of God, celebrate Baptism and the Lord’s Supper and are led by a called and ordained pastor.”
Lutheran Church of Australia

THE LUTHERAN SCHOOL
AS A PLACE OF MINISTRY AND MISSION

Statement of principles

1. The Lutheran school is a place of education. It is registered by the state to carry out this task. The LCA expects that each school will carry out its educational charter to the best of its ability. To that end the school appoints staff (Lutheran and other Christians) to enable it to fulfil its responsibility of providing quality education. The Lutheran school as school, therefore, works in the Kingdom of the Left.  

2. The Australian government allows churches to own and run schools. The Lutheran school is a school; at the same time, it is a school of the LCA. As such the LCA expects the Word of God with the gospel of Christ at its heart to inform all learning and teaching, all human relationships, and all activities of the school. It is expected that the principal of a Lutheran school is a practising member of the LCA and is the ‘spiritual’ head of the school. The LCA expects that pastors will be called to exercise a ministry of Word and sacrament within the school. Therefore, according to LCA teaching, the church is also in the school (Augsburg Confession, Article VII).

3. The LCA is a church in mission. Thus the Lutheran school at the same time as it works in the Kingdom of the Left is also working in the Kingdom of the Right. Young men and women and staff are challenged regularly with the gospel and the Spirit does his work, as some are encouraged in their faith and others are brought to faith.

4. When the LCA came into being, the situation within which Lutheran schools now operate was never envisaged and the extensive development of Lutheran schools was not foreseen. The Lutheran school was seen as an auxiliary of the congregation and this view is embedded within the constitution. However, many Lutheran schools have limited connection to a congregation and, vice versa, many congregations have little or no connection to Lutheran schools in their midst. There is no longer a close connection in some congregation-school relationships. In that light, how do we address the reality that the Word is doing its work, young men and women are coming to faith within the school but feel little or no connection to a congregation of the LCA. There is a need not only to introduce young people to Christ but also to a local congregation.

The LCA Statement The LCA and Its Schools describes schools ‘as an integral part of the mission of the church’. The school’s mission field is ‘the world of the school’. For mission to occur, the gospel must be proclaimed with a view to conversion (evangelistic preaching); baptism must be administered; and the Lord’s Supper will be available for the health of the baptised. Hence the College of Presidents took the decision in the mid 1990s that pastors in the school may administer the sacrament of Baptism and may provide the sacrament of Holy Communion responsibly within the school.

Worship involving Word and sacrament should be distinguished from daily school devotions. The former is voluntary, a gospel invitation; the latter might well be compulsory. This distinction is in turn linked to a changing role for school pastors. They are increasingly called to minister to the families of students especially in sickness and tragedy. They are increasingly asked to preside at weddings of old scholars and then baptisms. Therefore, many school pastors no longer have a significant teaching load within the curriculum of the
school. Rather they function as a pastor to the ‘world of the school’ – to principal and staff, to students and their families and to old scholars and their families.

5. *The LCA and Its Schools* statement notes the ‘spiritual task of the principal’ and the importance of the school pastor functioning as a ‘pastor’ within the school and as such exercising a ministry of Word and sacrament. We rightly have some difficulty with the idea of the school as a ‘faith community’ but our difficulty with that terminology dare not be the means of avoiding the reality that in many instances there is a worshipping community within the Lutheran school.

Pastors in the LCA continue to serve worshipping communities where a group of people in a locality are gathered from time to time to hear the Word and to receive the sacraments. This grouping of people is not ready to organise itself into a constituted congregation of the LCA. Nonetheless, such groups are part of the people of God, they hear the Word and receive the sacraments, they grow in their faith and they serve as Christians in the world. They are recognised by the Church as part of the Church. They may be ‘on the way towards constitutional membership’. Worshipping communities within school communities fit into this situation.

6. The current context of the Lutheran school requires us to find ways to keep contact with those within school worshipping communities when their connection to the school is no longer relevant. We also need to provide support and supervision for those who lead these communities (particularly in the areas of worship and communion practice, pastoral decision making, hymnody).

**Implications for practice**

A number of implications and responsibilities result from the principles stated above and the following are highlighted:

1. **LCA**
   - affirms the fact that its work is undertaken in and through schools by appropriate constitutional and pastoral/doctrinal statements and rites,
   - ensures that there is an intentional program of spiritual formation for all staff and principals,
   - provides support and oversight for school pastors.

2. **Congregations**
   - support neighbouring schools,
   - are involved in and committed to ministry which enables transition from a worshipping school community to a local worshipping community

3. **ALC**
   - prepares pastors who can minister in the mission field that is the school,
   - provides resources and courses in support of spiritual and vocational formation of principals and school staff.

4. **School governance**
   - ensures that the school operates in accordance with LCA policies, including *The LCA and Its Schools, The role of the pastor in the Lutheran school,* and *Statement on school worship*,
   - is required to have a membership that is overwhelmingly Lutheran so that there is total commitment to the LCA’s aims for its schools.

*Adopted by LCA General Synod*

*October 2006*
5. **Principals**
   - act as spiritual leaders of the school,
   - understand the LCA’s expectations of its schools through an intentional formation program,
   - must be active members of the LCA
   - ensure that there is a core of Lutheran and other Christian staff in the school for the sake of Christian witness.

6. **School pastors**
   - focus on supporting the Christian witness of staff and students in the school,
   - equip principal, staff and Christian students for their witness and ministry through prayer, Word and sacraments,
   - are involved in the discipling and baptism of those who come to faith,
   - shepherd the disciples into permanent faith communities.

7. **Staff**
   - are affirmed by the LCA as being involved in important ministry,
   - understand the ethos and identity of Lutheran schools,
   - are sustained for their Christian witness in the school by a ministry of Word and sacrament.

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¹ In Lutheran theology, the way in which God operates in the world is described through the doctrine of the Two Kingdoms. He works through either the Left Kingdom (through law, reason, order, human institutions), or the Right Kingdom (through gospel, sacraments, forgiveness, church as a worshipping and witnessing community).