

Views & Vision

The Newsletter of the Evangelical Lutheran Education Association



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Mighty River—Deep and Wide

Join Us in Minneapolis! ~ Gayle Denny, ELEA Director

"I attend several conferences a year, including the state AEYC Conferences. I have found that the ELEA Administrator Conference is one of my 'must attend' events. Workshops relating to church/school partnerships, staffing and leadership growth, as well as curriculum development, are just a part of why I try not to miss this conference.

Making connections, friendships and partnerships with principals and directors from around the country has proven to be the most valuable part of the ELEA Administrator Conference. We share our problems and concerns, and invariably, someone there has been through the same issues and has solutions to share. The ELEA Yahoo Group does this as well, but in person and face to face, you can ask further questions and get involved in brainstorming solutions.

I strongly recommend finding the funds and making the commitment to attend MIGHTY RIVER—DEEP AND WIDE. You won't regret it! (and there are scholarships still available)!"

~ A Happy ELEA member, Early Childhood Director and frequent ELEA conference attendee

Partnering with ALDE, the Association of Lutheran Development Executives, has opened a new world of possibilities for the ELEA National Administrator & Pastor event. I have been an ALDE member for 12 years and have only missed two of their annual conferences—both due to scheduling conflicts. It is, and has been, the single best piece of continuing education in which I have participated over those years.

So, I am extremely excited about introducing all of you, our ELEA members (and potential members!) to ALDE and what they have to offer. Scheduling our National Administrator & Pastor event as part of ALDE's "Conference Within a Conference" which is always designed specifically for schools and congregations, is going to be a great way to maintain our own ELEA identity, but yet have access to the world-class speakers, worship, accommodations, and mentoring from ALDE. The first day of our event,

February 6, will start with a welcome and keynote address from Marlene Lund, Executive Director of Wheat Ridge Ministries' Center for Urban Education Ministries. Her speech is entitled "Follow the Yellow Brick Road: Leading with Vision" - what a great topic for school and early childhood leaders!

There will be two workshop sessions on Monday, both with three different breakout choices on topics including Marketing Your School, Empowering and Inspiring Teachers as Ministry Partners, The Flow of Wellness in Educational Settings, Come Outside: Experience Play that is Deep and Wide, Make Your Vision Their Vision through the Power of Staff Meetings, and Reducing the Risk: Managing the Ministry.

Monday evening we join with ALDE members (by the way, these folks are experts in fundraising, marketing and communications for a variety of Christian organizations—colleges and universities, social service organizations, outdoor camping ministries, and the like) for opening worship at Christ Lutheran, the largest traditional Lutheran worship space in the Western Hemisphere. Learn more about Central Lutheran and its architecture at http://www.centralmpls.org/our-church/hist_arch.php

Following worship we will board buses for an evening of great food and entertainment at the Historic Depot (<http://www.thedepotminneapolis.com/>) including a band, ice skating, Scotch tasting, and more!

There's not enough room here to tell you all about Tuesday, but let's just say—it gets even better! (and it includes a celebration of ELEA's 50th birthday and recognition of award recipients. Learn all about it, register, and apply for one of the remaining scholarships (when they're gone, they're gone) at <http://www.alde.org/Education/Conference/Conference/ConferenceWithinConference/tabid/318/Default.aspx>



National Distinguished Principal Program

A Program to Recognize Excellence in School Leadership

October 20-21, 2011 was an exciting time for Christi Lines, Principal of St. Paul's Lutheran School in Waverly, Iowa, an ELEA member school, along with her husband, Paul, and ELEA Executive Director Gayle Denny and her husband Mike.

Christi was honored at the National Distinguished Principal ceremonies in Washington, DC. The NDP program is sponsored by the National Association of Elementary School Principals. One elementary principal from the public school arena is chosen from each of the 50 states, along with U. S. territories and overseas schools. A limited number of private school elementary principals are chosen as well, with only one from the ELCA church body. This year, in addition to Christi as the ELCA recipient, one principal from the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod was honored, and three from the Catholic schools nationwide.

The whirlwind schedule for the NDP's and their guests included a tour of the Capitol, a tour of the White House, a reception at the State Department, times of sharing with other principals, and a gala event at the Capitol Hilton Hotel where awards were received.



Each Principal Receives a Beautiful Bell



Christi Lines Receiving Award

Participants were treated to wonderful words from Arne Duncan, U. S. Secretary of Education, along with other dignitaries.

A truly exemplary leader in her field, Christi encourages all staff members to visit other schools to observe ways they can strengthen their school. She has cultivated relationships with parents and the community to

overcome barriers to student learning. In fostering a welcoming school culture for students' families, she has provided opportunities for parents and others to visit classrooms, volunteer daily in the building, lead activities in the parent-teacher organization, serve on school committees, and participate in other ways. The school has partnered with a local retirement community, hospital, churches, businesses, law enforcement and community organizations, and a college to provide children with enriching experiences. Says Christi, "It is a blessing to love my calling." She has a B.A. and an M.A. from the University of Northern Iowa.

As ELEA's 2011 Principal of the Year and NDP recipient, Christi, along with the 2011 Early Childhood Director of the Year, Karen Freeman, and the 2011 Donald A. Vetter Educational Service Award recipient, Carol Zwernik, will be recognized and honored at a special reception at the February 6-7, 2012 National Administrator & Pastor Conference in Minneapolis.

ELEA is proud to have Christi represent our Lutheran schools in this way. In the words of a Lutheran colleague, "you can be a good principal, you can be a great principal, but only a few are truly distinguished principals". Congratulations, Christi!!

Learn more about how to nominate a colleague or yourself for the 2012 National Distinguished Principal Program in the article on Page 3.



Christi's husband, Paul Lines, Christi, ELEA Director Gayle Denny and husband Mike at a Reception at the State Department honoring the NDP's

Making a significant gift to ministry can increase your bottom line!

By making a gift for a charitable gift annuity, for instance to ELEA, you receive an income tax deduction and annuity payment for life. Plus, part of each payment is tax free.

Call your ELCA Foundation Regional Gift Planner or the ELCA Foundation at 800-638-3522, ext. 2970.

2012 Principal and Director of the Year Awards Nominations Now Open—Deadline is March 15

The ELEA Principal of the Year program is designed to honor one exemplary elementary or middle school principal who sets high standards for the quality of education children receive during their early school years.

The ELEA principal honored each year is then recommended for the National Distinguished Principals Program (NDP). This program is sponsored by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), in corporate partnership with VALIC. If selected as an NDP they will attend a two-day event that highlights the fundamental importance of the school principal in achieving educational excellence for pre-kindergarten through eighth grade students. The recognition afforded by the NDP designation instills pride in principals' accomplishments and reinforces their continued leadership in helping children develop a lifelong love of learning.

If you would like to nominate a principal (including yourself) for this honor please contact Gayle Denny, ELEA Executive Director at eleanational@cs.com or 800-500-7644. You may also download materials from our website at www.eleanational.org. DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS IS: March 15, 2012.

Criteria for Selection of ELCA Principal of the Year
Nominees must meet all criteria for selection. The selected principal:

- ★ is an active principal of a ELEA member school in which a commitment is clearly evident through programs designed to meet the academic and social needs of all students, and through firmly established community ties with parents and local business organizations;
- ★ has been an active principal for at least **five** years;
- ★ will be an active principal during the year in which he/she will **receive** the award;
- ★ shows a strong commitment to the principalship through active membership in professional associations;
- ★ is respected by students, colleagues, parents, and the community at large;
- ★ assumes an active role in his/her community, distinguishing himself/herself as a leader in civic, religious, or humanitarian activities;
- ★ shows strong educational leadership by setting high expectations for school staff and students;
- ★ maintains an orderly, purposeful learning environment.

The ELEA Early Childhood Director of the Year program is designed to honor one exemplary early childhood center director who sets high standards for the quality of education and nurture children receive during their early years.

If you would like to nominate a director (including yourself) for this honor please contact Gayle Denny, ELEA Executive Director at eleanational@cs.com or 800-500-7644. You may also download materials from our website at www.eleanational.org. DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS IS: March 15, 2012.

This award program is based on three key ideas:

1. It is important that the dedication and enthusiasm of ECE directors who shape and guide children's earliest learning experiences be acknowledged. Recognition is a powerful way of building pride in ones accomplishments and renewing a determination to pursue excellence.
2. The scope and quality of the children's learning experiences are determined primarily by the director, who establishes, through the important work of teachers and support of caring parents, the character of a particular center's program.
3. Children's attitudes toward learning and how they view themselves as lifelong learners are set during their early childhood education and elementary school years. By high school or college, patterns are formed and interventions may be too late.

Criteria for Selection of ELEA Director of the Year
Nominees must meet all criteria for selection. The selected director:

- ★ Is an active director of an ELEA member early childhood education center in which a commitment to excellence is clearly evident through programs which are age appropriate and designed to meet the academic, social and spiritual needs of all children, and through ties firmly established with parents, the sponsoring congregation, and the local community
- ★ Has been an active director for 3 years or more
- ★ Shows strong educational leadership by setting high expectations for center staff and children
- ★ Maintains an orderly, purposefully learning environment
- ★ Is respected by children, colleagues, pastor, parents and the congregation
- ★ Assumes an active role in the center, congregation and community to which the school relates

ELEA's Purpose Statement

The Evangelical Lutheran Education Association promotes and supports quality, Christ-centered schools and early childhood programs of the ELCA and its full communion partners.

Notes from National . . .

Gayle Denny, ELEA Executive Director



There are lots of things going on at ELEA and lots for you as members to get engaged in!

ELEA National Board Service

Service on the ELEA National Board is an excellent way to not only represent your Region, but to gain knowledge about how the organization operates and be instrumental in developing policy and in program planning.

Position openings that will begin in July of 2012 are for Regions 2, 3, 7, and the pastoral position. Current board members from those regions, along with the pastoral position, are eligible for reelection, and the incumbents in those positions have agreed to serve again, but new applicants are welcomed as well. If you are from one of those Regions, we encourage you to prayerfully consider applying for service to the organization and to our schools and centers in this way. Board application materials are found on our website—www.eleanational.org or by contacting the ELEA national office at 800-500-7644.

Board service is voluntary; however, expenses related to attendance at board meetings (airfare, accommodations, meals) are covered. The National Board meets face-to-face two times per year - generally in April and in October - and two times by conference call as needed - in June and January.

Certificate in Early Learning Program

ELEA's partnership with Trinity Lutheran College in Everett, Washington, provides a great way for early childhood teachers and directors to obtain a 20-credit Certificate in Early Learning through online courses. This program consists of four 4-credit classes and two 2-credit classes, done over a period of time at your pace.

Advantages? It's faith-based, is done online, and the price is right! Trinity's arrangement with ELEA members is that you pay only \$135 per credit, the same cost as most community colleges, rather than their regular \$415 per credit price for non-matriculated students.

Visit http://tlc.edu/academics/cert_earlylearning.html for more information.

ELEA's National Board Strategic Planning

ELEA's National Board of Directors is meeting February 4 & 5, just prior to the National Administrator & Pastor Conference in Minneapolis, to do some goal setting and strategic planning. We need you, our members, to help us with this task by contributing your thoughts on:

- ★ Types of membership—should we keep our membership one institutional rate which covers the

whole school or center or should we look a base fee with additional fees per person or per student?

- ★ What membership benefits do we currently have that you really like? What benefits should be changed or added?
- ★ Other thoughts about ELEA?

Email your responses to eleanational@cs.com or if you'd like to call and chat about them, feel free—800-500-7644.

Christmas Classroom Ideas

Looking for some fun new Christmas curriculum ideas? Every month, ELEA members can access pages of great ideas on the "Members only" section of our website. Visit www.eleanational.org, click the little "Login" button, and use your email address (the one we have on file for your school) as the User Name and the Password this year is still "elea2011". You will find testing material order information, the Membership Directory, and the curriculum ideas—Happy Reading!

Thank You For Your Gifts!

THANK YOU to those who have contributed to our Annual Fund and/or the School Extension Fund of ELEA. Donations to our Annual Fund go to ELEA's operating budget, and donations to the School Extension Fund go to provide up to three grants per year to schools and centers who are expanding their programs. We have had a great response to our 50th Birthday Appeal. ELEA is 50 years old this year! Thank you to those who have contributed in the last fiscal quarter:

- ★ Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Marysville, WA
- ★ Trinity Lutheran School, Marysville, Ohio
- ★ Christine Hauge, Brooklyn, NY
- ★ Prince of Peace Lutheran Preschool, Everett, WA
- ★ St. John's Child Development Center, Salisbury, NC
- ★ Jean Hanson, Tuttle, OK

In addition, a gift has been received that is designated for ELEA's Centers of Wellness Project:

- ★ Thomas and Laurel Miller, Anacortes, WA

The following supporters of ELEA have designated their ThriventChoice dollars to ELEA:

- ★ Mike and Gayle Denny

Your gifts are SO important for ELEA to maintain its current level of programming and not have to increase dues. Thank you!!!

The Van Lunen Fellows Program for Heads of School

The Van Lunen Center
EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT IN CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

A CENTER OF
CALVIN
College

To be effective, 21st century Christian school administrators must be creative and innovative, develop excellent skills that cross management disciplines, see patterns where many see only chaos, build teams across constituencies, and be prime examples of their Christian tradition as they manage increasingly complex school operations.

The Van Lunen Fellows Program for Heads of School is now accepting applications for their 2012 class. Several of our ELEA member elementary principals have been through the institute and they have commented that it was “the most powerful learning experience” they’ve had since becoming a school administrator.

Three residential sessions occur: July 15—20, 2012; January 13-18, 2013; and July 16-19, 2013. July sessions are held in Grand Rapids, MI; the January session will be in Scottsdale, AZ. Academic credit for 4 graduate credit hours is available at your option with payment of a processing fee.

Topics addressed include:

- ★ Christian visions for education
- ★ Church/school/parent relationship
- ★ Linking vision to strategic planning
- ★ Funding Christian education
- ★ Budgeting for sustainability
- ★ Planning for facilities
- ★ Mission-driven fund-raising
- ★ School climate and culture
- ★ Marketing your school
- ★ Spiritual formation and leadership
- ★ Developing faculty and staff

The program encourages heads of school with 2—10 years of experience to apply. The “scholarship” price for the program is \$1,800 if you apply early—by January 9, 2012. After that, an increased price of \$2100 is accepted until February 17, 2012. This price includes the cost of instruction, airfare or car rental, lodging, meals during the conference, coaching and access to topic experts throughout the Fellows year. The real cost of the program is valued at \$7,900. Visit www.vanlunencenter.org for all of the details.

The following schools and early childhood centers have achieved ELEA accreditation in 2011:

- ★ San Marcos Lutheran Church Children’s Center, San Marcos, CA
- ★ Peace Lutheran Preschool, Peoria, Arizona
- ★ Immanuel Lutheran School, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- ★ The Ark Preschool, Plano, Texas
- ★ Gloria Dei Preschool, Lynnwood, Washington

For a complete list of all ELEA accredited schools and centers, and a list of those currently in process, visit our website and click on “Accreditation”.

Want to Learn More About ELEA Accreditation?
Visit www.eleanational.org—click on “Accreditation” on the left-hand column, and view a Power Point Presentation that will answer many of your questions!



50
years of supporting
Lutheran educators

We are celebrating ELEA’s 50th Birthday all year long—if you haven’t made a gift, it’s not too late, and it’s tax deductible! Mail your check or contribute online with your credit card by clicking the link on the home page—www.eleanational.org.

Spring 2012
SAT and OLSAT
Testing Dates

Grades K-12

March 26 - April 26

**Mark Your
Calendars Now!!**

The Road to Hong Kong

Dr. Richard Herman, Wheat Ridge Ministries, Itasca, Illinois



With apologies to Bob Hope and Bing Crosby, this title seems like a fitting description for my recent journey to Hong Kong and China. The “road” included direct flights between Chicago and Hong Kong – 15 hours to travel to the other side of the world – another miracle of God’s creation! The long and winding roads of Hong Kong weave around bodies of water, up hills, through tunnels, and on crowded streets. If you haven’t been there, imagine New York on



steroids, with awesome hills and mountains on all sides. What a place! One of the great financial centers in the world, Hong Kong has beautiful high-rise office buildings and apartments and masses of people

everywhere. The energy level of the city is off the charts. A state-of-the-art mass transit system is particularly impressive. I was able to check my bag and check-in for my return flight at a train station in the heart of the city before hopping on a train to the airport. I hope someone in authority at O’Hare airport is reading this!

The road that brought me to Hong Kong from my office at Wheat Ridge Ministries was our Center for Urban Education Ministries (www.wheatridge.org/cuem), a part of our program services dedicated to encouraging new models of health and healing through Christian education in our cities. The Center’s work includes a lecture series named in honor of Dr. Mel Kieschnick, a leading Christian educator who is well known to those who are members of the ELEA. Mel has served as a visionary leader for Christian education in the Lutheran church for over 60 years and is a man with a special heart for ministry in the city. Early in his career, Mel served as a missionary in Hong Kong and he remains highly respected among the Christian community there. They invited him to return to Hong Kong to serve as the speaker of the lecture series that bears his name.

The road in Hong Kong led us to Hong Kong International School, one of the premier American schools in the world, and owned by the Lutheran Church. With over 2,400 students from countries around the world in grades K-12 on three campuses, this school is a model of excellence in education in the Lutheran Christian tradition. Dr. Kieschnick was the founding board chair for HKIS and

his lecture to the faculty was

Be inspired—Make an impact

a powerful reminder of what God has caused to happen over the years, as the school overcame tremendous obstacles to become the great institution it is today.

Our road trip continued as Mel also delivered a lecture at Concordia Lutheran School in Kowloon, where he served as principal for many years. Concordia is another school of distinction, serving over 1,000 local students in a beautiful new facility. It is one of 34 Lutheran schools operated under the banner of the Hong Kong Synod of the Lutheran Church. I met principals and teachers from several of these schools. As is the case in the U.S., these teachers are filled with a passion for sharing God’s love with children as they provide an excellent academic environment. And, as in the U.S., these urban schools are much more than academic institutions. They are ministries of human care that serve the needs of students, families and the larger community. I’ve known and respected Mel for many years, but I was still overwhelmed by the outpouring of love for him and his wife, Jane, by people in the Lutheran community in Hong Kong. A beautiful garden was dedicated in their name at Concordia Lutheran School while we were there. And a

large number of school alumni, many of whom knew Mel as their teacher and principal, gathered for a great party one evening to honor them. Among the reasons these people praise God for Mel and Jane is that many of them came to know Jesus through their witness.

The road through Hong Kong next led me to another unique and exciting experience: 250 Lutheran educators from a variety of Asian countries were gathered for a conference sponsored by the Asia

Lutheran Education Association (ALEA). Did you know that there are over 150 Lutheran schools in Asia? I was thrilled to see that the focus of this conference was on “service learning,” a curriculum designed to help students become aware of the needs of underserved people and become involved in acts of service. I learned that virtually all of the Lutheran schools in Asia include service learning as a significant part of their curriculum ... a wonderful way that these schools are helping students share God’s love with others. Speaking of service learning, a real mind bender for me was that one of the schools in Hong Kong sent a class of students to Nebraska last year to teach Vacation Bible School ... a reminder that the U.S. has become a mission field for Christians from other countries!

I returned to the states reminded once again that the more I learn, the less I know and with much to ponder and celebrate, including: 150 Lutheran schools in Asia? 34 in Hong Kong alone? Wow! Successful urban education in



The Road to Hong Kong, continued

Asia. What can our schools in the U.S. learn from these schools and their leaders?

How can we share models, such as models for service learning, which can benefit students wherever they might be?

In this age of "Skype," are there ways that students, faculties and church leaders can engage in regular dialog about our cultures, how we nurture our faith, and how we serve others?

How can we expand exchange programs of students and faculty, or teacher training in the Lutheran tradition based in Asia?

The road to Hong Kong, and mainland China and Asia and North America and Africa and Europe ... there are no borders to hold the beauty of God's creation, the love of Christ, or the impact of Christian congregations and schools as their leaders are inspired by God's spirit. Thanks for taking time each day to walk this road of Good News with your students and their families!

Dr. Richard Herman serves as President of Wheat Ridge Ministries, and is a former Lutheran school teacher. He can be reached at wrmhermanre@wheatridge.org.



Upcoming Events—Mark Your Calendars!

- ★ **December 8, 2011** - ELEA Arizona School Director Appreciation Luncheon at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, Phoenix, Arizona. For more info or to RSVP, contact eleanational@cs.com or call 800-500-7644.
- ★ **January 27-28, 2012** - ELEA Region 3 Early Childhood Conference at Westwood Lutheran Church, St. Louis Park, Minnesota. For more information, click on the Region 3 link from the home page of our website.
- ★ **February 6 - 7, 2012** - ELEA National Administrator & Pastor Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota
- ★ **March 4—11, 2012**—Lutheran Schools Week
- ★ **March 7, 2012** - ELEA Region 3 Director's Session at Karing Kids Kingdom in Maple Grove, Minnesota. Topic: "How Directors Can Support Teachers With Their Students That Have Challenging Behaviors".
- ★ **April 3, 2012** - ELEA Region 3 Director's Session at Shepherd of the Flock in Prior Lake, Minnesota. Topic: "Keeping Kids Safe"
- ★ **April 28, 2012**—ELEA Region 3 Teacher & Administrator Conference at Mountain View Lutheran Church, Phoenix, AZ. Watch for more information or call 800-500-7644.
- ★ **May 2, 2012** - ELEA Region 3 Director's Session at Nativity Child & Family in St. Anthony, Minnesota. Topic: "Code of Ethics"

Evangelical Lutheran Education Association

500 North Estrella Parkway
Suite B2, Box 601
Goodyear, AZ 85338

Phone: 800-500-7644
Fax: 623-882-8770
Email: eleanational@cs.com
Web Site: www.eleanational.org

Please read, check, and pass on:

- Pastor
- Superintendent or Exec. Dir.
- Principal
- ECE Director
- School Board Chair
- Teachers

Views & Vision

Editor: Gayle Denny

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500 North Estrella Parkway
Suite B2, Box 601
Goodyear, AZ 85338
Phone: 800-500-7644
E-mail: ELEANational@cs.com

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Accreditation . . .the Path to Excellence!

Shirley Becker, ELEA National Board President & Team Chairperson

Since the new and revised ELEA Accreditation Self Studies for Elementary Schools and Early Childhood Centers were made available in 2006, many schools/centers have found it to be an excellent process to use as a tool for improving their program and their relationship with their sponsoring church. As more and more schools begin the process, it has become apparent that there are not enough Accreditation Site Visit Chairpersons around the country to mentor, guide, and lead the visitation team at the time of their site visit.

With the goal of building up our group of Team Chairs, the ELEA has begun a process of training administrators to lead Accreditation Teams. On October 3-4, during a site visit at Gethsemane Lutheran Children's Ministry in Austin, Texas, our first training seminar took place. Twelve administrators participated, with most coming from the state of Texas.



Connecting the training with an actual site visit turned out to be a very effective way to train, as the volunteers were able to observe the official Team in action. By listening, observing, discussing what they saw, and reading the completed report at the end of the visit, the trainees had a better grasp of the whole process, including what to look for on a visit, and how to document it.

The training covered what the responsibilities of the Team Chair are, including what must be done before, during, and after the visit. The trainees all reported at the end of the two days that they felt much more competent and capable of leading a Site Visit Team.

Future trainings will be planned around the country in the next couple of years, pairing the trainings with actual accreditation visits. If you are interested in training to be an Accreditation Team Chair, contact Hugh Kress, ELEA's Accreditation Coordinator, at 920-636-6112 or hugh@eleanational.org.