



# The New Christian Studies Curriculum

[www.lutheranschoolsonline.com](http://www.lutheranschoolsonline.com)

## Why a New Curriculum?

### THE CONTEXT HAS CHANGED

Our schools have changed. Where at one time Lutheran schools were mostly populated by little Lutherans, with a few others from other Christian churches, our schools now are filled with students from various denominational and ethnic backgrounds, and many come from other religious contexts or no faith background whatsoever. This change requires us to rethink the approach we take when teaching Biblical truth. Our approach must fit our context.



## It's About Impacting the Journey...

### ...with GOD'S WORD

Every child in Lutheran Schools is on a journey of faith. This is true whether they come from the sponsoring congregation, from other Christian families, or from non-Christian backgrounds.



This new curriculum recognizes this diversity and respects where students are on their journey. The goal of this curriculum is to have the personal journeys of students intersect with God's Word in meaningful ways, providing the Holy Spirit the opportunity to initiate and grow Christian faith in the lives of the students.

## The Educational Approach

In decades past, some have considered education successful when students were taught important information and those students were able to repeat that information back when asked. This curriculum defines success differently.



The new curriculum is based on the following beliefs about learning:

**inquiry**

Students engage in learning about God's Word when they are guided by deep, open-ended, important questions that require research (God's Word and other sources) and reflection to answer.

**relevance**

Students thrive when they understand the purpose and relevance for what they are learning.

**acquisition & authenticity**

Students thrive when they acquire the Biblical knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in their studies, and they learn these best through authentic learning experiences (interactions with real world experts and contexts).

**meaning making**

Students thrive when they are allowed to explore Biblical content, discover insights, and work to make meaning of what they are learning. Meaning making occurs when the students' experiences and background knowledge collide with the truth of God's Word.

**transfer**

True understanding is revealed when students are able to transfer what they have learned about God and His Word into new, real life situations and problem solving.

# The Four Strands of the Curriculum

Addressed in all grades from Preschool through Grade 12

## Strand 1: Biblical Teachings

As the Holy Spirit works through the Word, students will develop a comprehensive understanding of God's Word (the Bible) so that students will be able to:

FOUNDATIONS



- navigate confidently through the Bible;
- analyze and explain the origins, content and narrative of the Bible;
- apply principles of Biblical interpretation;
- retell what has been committed to memory;
- apply Biblical truths in daily life; and
- identify and explain the basic teachings of the Christian faith, as based in the Bible and summarized in Luther's Small Catechism, and apply them to life.

## Strand 3: Christian Witness & Living

As the Holy Spirit works through the Word, students will:

- develop knowledge of right and wrong based on Biblical truth;
- for those moved by the Holy Spirit, desire to do what is right;
- for those moved by the Holy Spirit, courageously demonstrate Christ-like character in daily decisions and in relationship with others;
- express confidently and respectfully what Christians believe, and, for those moved by the Holy Spirit, develop their passion to share Jesus with others; and
- use their God-given gifts for the benefit of others and the world through acts of compassionate, loving service.

APPLICATION



## Strand 2: Faith & Community

UNDERSTANDING



As the Holy Spirit works through the Word, students will explore and express the personal significance of the Biblical truths that:

- all are in need of salvation because of sin;
- this salvation comes only through faith in Jesus; and
- salvation is a gift from a loving God for all people.

As the Holy Spirit works through the Word, students will explore and examine how the Christian faith, a gift from God, grows through a lifelong relationship with God through study of the Bible, sacraments, prayer, worship and devotional reflection.

As the Holy Spirit works through the Word, students will explore a personal, meaningful connection to the Christian Church by examining the impact of the history, traditions and visual symbols of Christianity.

## Strand 4: Worldview

As the Holy Spirit works through the Word, students will:

- recognize and discern between a variety of conflicting worldviews, both secular and religious;
- identify or explain the Christian worldview; and
- explain and for those moved by the Holy Spirit, apply the Christian worldview in an intentional way when faced with a variety of real-world issues (i.e. current events, creation/evolution, popular culture, ethical issues).

INTEGRATION



# Questions and Answers

## What will the curriculum contain?

- foundational background information that supports the instructional approach and theological foundations for the curriculum
- the four strands which are included in this brochure
- “Big Ideas” for each level, from preschool to grade 12
- suggestions for the knowledge and skills required at each level. It will provide suggestions for memory work for each level
- theological and educational support documents
- a plan to integrate the Christian faith into all subjects at school
- a framework for designing instructional units of study
- a collection of teacher-created resources (lessons, unit plans and other resources) which can serve as models for others implementing the curriculum

The curriculum does NOT provide workbooks for each level.

## What are Big Ideas?

Big Ideas are the important, overarching concepts that we want students to deeply understand and remember long after they leave school, even for their entire lives.

## Where do I find out the details of the curriculum?

All work, which is ongoing, is housed online at:  
[www.lutheranschoolsonline.com](http://www.lutheranschoolsonline.com).

## Who has helped develop this curriculum?

This is a joint project of the Lutheran Teacher’s Association and the Alberta-British Columbia District of Lutheran Church-Canada. Lutheran teachers, pastors, church workers, and university professors from across the country have been involved. Input has also been provided by Lutheran educators in the USA and Australia.

## When did this work start?

In the spring of 2011.

## How can I become involved?

Contact the project lead,  
Todd Hennig, at  
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