



## Kansas District Board of Directors

May 9, 2025

President: Rev. Justin Panzer  
Vice-Presidents: Rev. Dr. Mark Schulz, Vice-President, Region 1  
Rev. Alan Stahlecker, Vice-President, Region 2  
Rev. Michael Schotte, Vice-President, Region 3  
Rev. Michael Hageman, Vice-President, Region 4  
Secretary: Rev. Joshua Woelmer  
Treasurer: Mr. Brad Brunkow  
Circuit Visitor Chair: Rev. Andy Keltner  
Commissioned Ministers: Mrs. Rachel Goodpasture  
Mr. Rick Hanebutt  
Mrs. Sue Kleber  
Laity: Hon. David Bruns  
Mr. Curt Engelbrecht  
Mr. Kevin Fredrickson  
Mr. Marvin Schulteis  
Mr. Bruce Schultz  
Mr. Dan Thalmann  
Mr. Mark Wolters  
Lead Staff: Rev. Daniel Grams, Assistant to the President for Congregational  
and School Services  
Mr. Jeff Maltz, LCEF Vice-President  
Ms. Jackie Schaefer, Communications Specialist  
Mrs. Heather Williams, Business Manager  
Excused: none

Hon. Dave Bruns called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Rev. Justin Panzer led our devotion based on Romans 12:9–12, reflecting on how this passage reflects the disposition of the group gathered today to work towards the benefit of Christ's kingdom. He emphasized the themes of love, honor, zeal, service, and prayer as they are lived out daily by Christians.

Mr. Marvin Schulteis addressed the board briefly via Zoom, thanking the group for the work that we have accomplished together.

The minutes from the previous regular meeting were approved. The minutes from the special Board meeting were approved.

One item was proposed for inclusion on the consent Agenda:

### **Resolution 25B-01-01 Acknowledgement of Quarterly Gifts**

Resolved that the Kansas District Board of Directors acknowledge the gifts received from January 16, 2025 to April 15, 2025 with the designation as follows:

West Africa	\$100.00
Undesignated/Unrestricted	\$12,515.54
Ash Wednesday	\$2,725.00
LERT/Disaster	\$300.00

Education Loan Repayment	\$15.00
Scholarship	\$40,015.00
KansaSEED Deaf Ministry	\$215.00
Planned Giving Endowment	\$20,000.00
Kansas Missions	\$40,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$115,885.54</b>

**Resolution 25B-06-01 – Calvary, Wellington**

Resolved, that the LCMS Kansas District Board of Directors approve the Calvary, Wellington Constitution and Bylaws.

**Resolution 25B-06-02 – Designation of the October 2025 Pastors & Educators Joint Church Worker Conference offering for the Worker Care Fund**

Resolved, that the LCMS Kansas District Board of Directors approve the designation of the October 2025 Pastors and Educators Joint Church Worker Conference offering for the Worker Care Fund.

**Action: Consent agenda adopted**

Staff and Board Reports

Rev. Justin Panzer, President, presented his report. He reported on the floor committee day on April 5. Convention preparations continue, and the team at the District office has been busy. We will hear back from President Harrison in July regarding our requests for circuit exceptions. Call Day has brought two candidates, two vicars, and two deaconesses to our District. We pray to the Lord of the Harvest to send workers to parishes and schools for the advancement of the Gospel. He reported on the calling congregations, ordinations and installations, and other changes with regards to called workers. He encouraged the Board of Directors members to attend the upcoming District Convention.

Mr. Rick Hanebutt, chair of the Board of Caring Ministry, presented the report of the board. He noted that the District-wide “Faith at Work” registration closed on April 1. Participation was slightly lower than last year. There will be an evaluation survey sent to congregation leaders this summer.

The Board entered into executive session for legal reasons relating to the Retreat Center. The Board exited executive session.

Rev. Daniel Grams, Assistant to the President for Congregational and School Services, presented his report. He has finished a year of visiting all the schools solo following Jim Bradshaw’s retirement. He reported that Faith Lutheran School in Derby is closing, but that Concordia Academy will explore possibly expanding into the building. The Lutheran Schools of Kansas Accreditation plan was submitted to KSDE, and it was returned to the District Leadership Team (DLT) for further enhancement and was accepted upon resubmission. The DLT will review the District-wide test scores in grades 1–8 Math. The Scholarship Foundation continues to receive money.

He presented a proposal to the Board of Directors to merge the Lutheran Schools Committee and District Leadership Team, and replace them with the Lutheran Schools of Kansas District Leadership Team. There were several redundancies in work between the two groups; several people serve on both, and they consider similar topics.

Mr. Dan Thalmann, chair of the Board of Education and Youth, presented the report of the board. He highlighted the increasing challenges to education in our current context, but also the opportunities that we as Lutherans have to provide quality education for those who are seeking alternatives to public education. This includes strengthening Lutheran identity in our own schools, as well as looking into classical education.

Rev. Grams continued with his report on missions. He highlighted the church planting efforts around the district, especially in De Soto, Concordia, and Spring Hill. He noted some changes to Hispanic Ministry Outreach in Kansas. He provided an update on West Africa missions. The LCMS OIM is not prioritizing placing missionary personnel in West Africa due to security concerns, but the money from the Pentecost Offerings will continue to go towards the seminary there to support the education of local pastors. District and local leaders met jointly to tour the Urban KCK churches. They discussed the facilities and locations and future for each of the congregations. The Mission Grant Cycle begins again in September.

He continued with his report on Stewardship work. He attended the Steward Leaders Conference at Messiah in Plano, TX. He has several Stewardship Workshops coming up this year.

Mrs. Sue Kleber, member of the Board of Missions, presented the report of the board. She reported on the results from the first-quarter mission grant reports. She noted the board's suggestion to remove the West Africa Mission Committee from the District Operations Manual. The board plans to reach out to rural churches to apply for mission grants, since they are typically underrepresented in the application phase.

Mr. Mark Wolters, chair of the Board of Stewardship, presented the report of the board. One topic of the board's conversation was combining the Board of Stewardship and Board of Administration, because these boards have many overlapping duties and Heather is heavily involved in both boards and presents the same information multiple times. The combined board's workload would be bigger but would also save time overall.

Mr. Jeff Maltz, LCEF Vice-President, gave his report. Kansas Loans and Investment dollars are both up from previous years. One loan was approved this past quarter by the BOD. No loans were paid off. LCEF has completed their rebranding project, which includes an updated LCEF app. Interest rates for fixed-rate term notes are currently at 4% across all available terms.

Mrs. Heather Williams, Business Manager, presented her report. She reviewed financial compensation for 14 call documents this quarter. She gave an update on the property. She reported on a Planned Giving presentation and the Congregational Treasurer Workshops that will happen along with the Nebraska District Business Manager this year. She provided an update on the estates; the District received the disbursement of \$100,000 from the Haubein estate while the rest is tied up with the IRS and tax attorneys. She has also been appointed to an Alliance for

Defending Freedom District Council along with representatives from other districts. There is no reply yet from our grant application to the Bolick Foundation for \$20,000 to match our Reformation Offering.

Mr. Brad Brunkow, Treasurer, presented the Financial Dashboard, Balance Sheet, Statement of Activities, and the Budget-to-Actual Tables. He presented a new strategic flowsheet for District finances titled “Kansas District General Strategy of Financial Flows.” This helps the BOD visualize how money comes into the District from various sources and is used for different operations and projects. He discussed the Kansas District Financial Asset Planning sheet and where our Endowments, Temporarily Restricted Funds, Board-Designated Funds, and other Financial Assets currently stand.

Hon. Dave Bruns, chair of the Board of Administration, presented the report of the board as included in the Agenda.

Ms. Jackie Schaefer, Communications Specialist, presented her report. Her primary activity has been with the website and the upcoming convention. She is preparing for the flurry of publicity during and after the Convention, including uploading the election and resolution results to the website and Facebook page, updating webpages with new officer names and photos, and preparing a report for the *LCMS Reporter*. She will begin working on webpages for the Fall Church Worker Conferences.

Rev. Joshua Woelmer, Secretary, gave his report. He began by summarizing the work of the Nominations Committee. There were fewer nominations received than in previous years, perhaps due to the move towards online/mailed nominations. It will be a topic to consider leading up to the next District Convention, whether to reintroduce physical nomination forms as a way of increasing the numbers of nominations. The Elections, Credentials, and Excuses Committee will meet prior to the Convention. The Constitution and Bylaws Committee met in April and reviewed four documents; it will meet again in May to discuss two more. Registration for delegates to the 2026 Synod Convention will begin soon; Circuit Visitors will be made aware of the changes to this procedure in the Circuit Forums.

#### Unfinished Business

None.

#### New Business

##### **Resolutions 25B-03-01 – To Replace the Lutheran Schools Committee with the Lutheran Schools of Kansas District Leadership Team**

Whereas, under the provisions of the new accreditation model adopted by the Kansas State Board of Education, the Lutheran Schools of Kansas will be accredited as a single school district; and

Whereas, the new accreditation model (also known as KESA 2.0), requires the Lutheran Schools of Kansas to form a District Leadership Team for purposes of accreditation; and

Whereas, the membership of the District Leadership Team is to include the Superintendent of Schools as well as principals and teachers representing a cross-section of Lutheran schools in Kansas; and

Whereas, a Lutheran Schools Committee already exists with a membership that overlaps that of the District Leadership Team; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Lutheran Schools Committee be replaced by the Lutheran Schools of Kansas District Leadership Team; and be it further

Resolved, that the Lutheran Schools of Kansas District Leadership Team shall consist of seven members and three advisory members, as well as representatives from District staff:

1. Four individuals appointed by the District President:
    - a. National Lutheran Schools Accreditation (NLSA) Commissioner
    - b. State Board of Education Accreditation Coordinator
    - c. Professional Development Coordinator (PDC)
    - d. The District Early Childhood Consultant
  2. Three principals serving the Lutheran schools of the District, one from each region, elected annually by the business meeting at the District Educators Conference.
    - a. NE Region (Atchison, Leavenworth, Overland Park)
    - b. North-Central (Alma, Linn, Marysville, Topeka)
    - c. Wichita-area (Cheney, Derby, Independence, Wichita, Winfield).
  3. Advisory: three teachers serving in a Lutheran school of the District, one from each region (as defined above), who shall be elected annually by the business meeting at the District Educators Conference to serve as advisory members of the District Leadership Team for the purposes of State Board of Education accreditation only.
  4. District staff: Superintendent of Schools and School Ministry Coordinator.
- and be it finally

Resolved, that the District Operations Manual be updated as necessary to reflect these changes and presented to the Board of Directors for approval at a future meeting.

**Action: Approved**

#### **Resolution 25B-04-01 – District Operations Manual: Eliminate Committees**

Resolved, that the Board of Missions recommend the West Africa Committee and Church Planting Committee be dissolved and removed from the District Operations Manual.

**Action: Approved**

#### **Resolution 25B-05-01 – To Sell the District Retreat Center**

Whereas, the Kansas District Retreat Center was established as a place to provide rest, renewal, and retreat for church workers of the Kansas District; and

Whereas, the Retreat Center Task Force, appointed by President Rev. Justin Panzer, conducted a comprehensive review of the Retreat Center's history, financial performance, operational challenges, and future options, as detailed in the confidential April 2025 Task Force Report; and  
Whereas, previous Boards of Directors have been informed by prior task forces and reviews that the Retreat Center has not met its original goals nor operated in a sustainable manner, and that from its inception, the Retreat Center has faced persistent challenges including:

- Low utilization rates by church workers.
- Revenue from use is not sufficient to cover operating expenses.
- Ongoing reliance on District staff for management and oversight from afar; and

Whereas, the current Task Force evaluated options to maintain, improve, or sell the Retreat Center and concluded that selling the property is the most prudent course of action; and

Whereas, funds from the sale could be contributed to the church worker care fund and provide support for church worker groups that presently utilize the Retreat Center (Pastors' wives, DCE's, etc.), thus honoring the original intent of donors to the Retreat Center; therefore be it Resolved, that the Board of Directors of the LCMS Kansas District authorizes District staff to pursue the sale of the District Retreat Center property at 475 Trail Road, Herington, Kansas; and be it further

Resolved, that the District President and appropriate District staff are authorized to engage a qualified real estate agent to represent the District in this transaction and take all necessary actions to complete the sale, subject to the approval of the Board; and be it further

Resolved, that the Board directs the District President to present, for the Board's approval, a plan for the allocation of sale proceeds, including a significant contribution to the church worker care fund; and be it finally

Resolved, that the Board expresses its gratitude for all who supported the Retreat Center over the years and remains dedicated to promoting church worker wellness and care through strategic and faithful stewardship of District resources.

**Action: Approved**

#### Announcements

- 2025 Kansas District Convention in Salina – June 5–6
- Future BOD meetings, 2025–2028:
  - August 7–8, 2025 (2-day in person meeting; Board orientation – tentative)
  - November 7, 2025 (*Zoom service boards; Friday in-person meeting dates*) – *Synod Visitation postponed*
  - February 6, 2026 (*Zoom service boards; Zoom BOD*)
  - May 8, 2026 (*Zoom service boards; Friday in-person meeting dates*)
  - August 7, 2026 (*Zoom service boards; Friday in-person meeting dates*)
  - November 6, 2026 (*Zoom service boards; Friday in-person meeting dates*)
  - February 5, 2027 (*Zoom service boards; Zoom BOD*)
  - May 7, 2027 (*Zoom service boards; Friday in-person meeting dates*)
  - August 6, 2027 (*Zoom service boards; Friday in-person meeting dates*)
  - November 5, 2027 (*Zoom service boards; Friday in-person meeting dates*)
  - February 4, 2028 (*Zoom service boards; Zoom BOD*)
  - May 5, 2028 – BOD in person, District Office, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
    - Thursday, May 4, 2028 (BOD farewell dinner)

The board adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Closing prayer was led by Rev. Justin Panzer.

Respectfully,  
Rev. Joshua J. Woelmer, Secretary