

LASE

Spring 2013

connections



LASE Executive Director, Lori Christiansen

From the Executive Director

CONNECTIONS

Connections. The new name of our newsletter evokes a feeling of partnership and a unity of purpose. Lutheran Association for Special Education (LASE) is on a mission to connect students

with disabilities to educational experts who nurture the “whole child” in a Christ-centered environment.

Here’s how it works.

- ▶ We *connect* parents with relationships and resources to support them through their journey with their children with special needs.
- ▶ We *connect* teachers and administrators with innovative special educators who collaborate to ensure that every child, regardless of ability, is nurtured with an exceptional Christian education.
- ▶ We *connect* donors and volunteers with this unique mission to serve children with disabilities and special needs.

Thank you for your partnership in this important ministry!

Lori Christiansen and Bruce Kintz of Concordia Publishing House count down to the new logo reveal.

New Logo, New Beginnings

Exciting. Inspirational. Hopeful. These words describe the new Lutheran Association for Special Education (LASE) logo.

The new logo communicates the brand of the organization in a very simple way. This logo symbolizes the community and relationships within LASE. Each figure is shown growing and exhibiting joyful movement as they reach upward, forming a cross, emphasizing our unique Christ-centered mission.

LASE did not choose a new logo simply to create something novel or beautiful. The new LASE logo is a symbol of new beginnings and a revitalized impetus to change our community for Christ. A new logo speaks to the bigger impact that LASE wants to have on our students, teachers, principals, parents, donors and volunteers. Together, we are a part of the community of LASE, here to encourage and inspire the God-given potential of every child.



LASE MISSION STATEMENT

Lutheran Association for Special Education will assist and support schools to address the cognitive, social and spiritual development of children with special needs, so they may fully enjoy their God-given potential.

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Lori Christiansen, LASE Executive Director, with Jeremiah Award Recipient, Kathy Brown from Salem Lutheran, Affton, MO.



Jeremiah Award Honors Teaching Excellence

ACKNOWLEDGING TEACHERS WHO GIVE STUDENTS A "HOPE AND A FUTURE"

A great teacher is crucial in the lives of students with disabilities. Lutheran Association for Special Education (LASE) has established an annual award to honor a general education teacher who makes a significant difference in the lives of children with special needs.

The Jeremiah Award will be presented annually to a general education teacher who exemplifies the spirit of the Bible verse, Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord, "Plans to prosper you and not to harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future."

Kathy Brown, fourth grade teacher at Salem Lutheran School, Affton, Mo., received the first Jeremiah Award from LASE on April 17, in a surprise ceremony in front of the entire student body.

Kathy goes above and beyond to meet the unique educational needs of students in her classroom, especially students with disabilities and special needs.

She was nominated by LASE staff and Salem Principal, Rob Kellar, because she displays excellence in teaching and is a dedicated leader.

Kathy credited her fellow teachers at Salem for helping her do her job well. When asked what she does differently for children with special needs, Kathy said, "I don't think I do anything special, I just do what I think I am supposed to do to help all kids learn."

Kathy has been in education for 41 years. She is retiring at the end of this year and has impacted the lives of many children. Thanks, Mrs. Brown, for being a shining example of reaching and teaching all children.

A Day on the Golf Course for a Lifetime of Learning

Let's tee it up for the kids on Monday, June 24!

Don't miss Lutheran Association for Special Education's 31st Annual Golf Tournament. Join us for golf, prizes, silent and oral auctions, and a cocktail hors d'oeuvres reception on the patio at Sunset Country Club on Geyer Road. Sponsors, volunteers and donors partner with LASE for this entertaining event that helps LASE touch the lives of over 900 students every year through the work of expert special educators and therapists in Lutheran schools.

Early Childhood Project Boosts Reading Skills

Research shows that students who have difficulty learning to read usually remain poor readers unless they receive appropriate reading intervention and instruction. Taking a proactive approach, Lutheran Association for Special Education (LASE) initiated the Early Childhood Special Education Project to identify students with specific reading skills deficits and develop interventions to teach those specific skills.

The Tilles Fund generously granted \$10,000 to initiate this project at Our Savior Lutheran School, Fenton, Mo., Salem Lutheran School, Florissant,

Mo., and Word of Life Lutheran School, St. Louis, Mo. The Tilles Fund provides grants to agencies whose mission is to serve children with disabilities.



Students from Word of Life hone their reading skills.

The Early Childhood Special Education Project identified 25

students in pre-kindergarten through third grade who struggle with basic reading skills. LASE Educational Consultants Janey Menner and Karen Wittmayer work with classroom teachers to develop strategies to help them.

At Our Savior Lutheran School in Fenton, the Tilles Grant has allowed extra, focused time to be spent in the K-3 classrooms and with small groups of students. Just recently, a first-grade student was overheard saying, "I can figure that word out!" Three months ago, this student wouldn't even attempt to read unknown words.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 24 (Monday)

Thirty-First Annual Golf Tournament – Sunset Country Club, St. Louis, Mo.

Four-person scramble, lunch, silent and oral auction, cocktail and hors d'oeuvres reception
Registration: \$225 per person. Sponsorship, volunteer and donation opportunities available.

August 2 (Friday)

LASE Special Education Insight Series Workshop

Registration at 7:45 a.m., Workshop from 8:15 to noon
"Insights into Autism in Children in Lutheran Schools"
Free and open to all Lutheran school educators.

November 2 (Saturday)

Herald the Holidays—Frontenac Hilton

"Light up the Night" luncheon, fashion presentation, boutique and silent auction
Registration: \$50 per person, tables of 10 for reserved seating

February 2014

Date and location to be announced

Let's Get Purse-onal

Appetizer/dessert buffet
Silent auction of new and gently used purses
Registration: \$25 per person

For information regarding events, contact us at (314) 268.1234.

GRANT SUPPORT

THANK YOU to the following LASE Supporters:

- ▶ Cardinals Care
- ▶ Missouri District Lutheran Women's Missionary League
- ▶ St. Louis Christmas Carols
- ▶ The Webb Foundation
- ▶ The Tilles Fund
- ▶ Variety – The Children's Charity of St. Louis



NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Lutheran Association for Special Education admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.

Sensory Processing Disorder

BY CARLYN REED, MA, LASE RESOURCE TEACHER AT ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN, EUREKA, MO.

Have you ever been distracted by flickering fluorescent lights or the smell of yesterday's chicken in the trash? Our senses are alerted to pick up unusual things in our environment. In response, many people ignore that fluorescent tube, or we take the trash out to the bin. Some people, however, find it impossible to ignore the feel of a clothing tag against their neck or the sound of a fan humming. These all involve sensory processing.

Sensory processing concerns the way the nervous system receives messages from the senses, prompting appropriate motor and behavioral responses. When this doesn't happen, there could be a Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD). An SPD may cause challenges for a person trying to perform numerous daily tasks.

Seven senses can be affected: sight, hearing, taste, smell, touch, proprioceptive, and vestibular. The proprioceptive

sense includes the information from our muscles, tendons and joints regarding the physical positions of our body. Information of the vestibular sense comes from the inner ear and provides information about our movement and position. A discrepancy in the processing of any of the senses can affect the alertness, learning and self-regulation of a person's behavior.



Owen McMurry, first grader at Green Park Lutheran, uses the stability ball when working on the computer.

Are you wondering about a child in your life? An occupational therapist (OT) will be able to evaluate your concerns, looking for signs of a child's efficient processing of sensory information. SPDs can affect daily activities, but therapy is available. More information is available through Leaps and Bounds in St. Peters, Mo., at <http://www.leapsandboundskids.com/> and through the SPD Foundation at <http://www.spdfoundation.net/>.

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