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# Concordia University System

## Lutheran Teacher Education Program Standards

*Approved June, 2026*

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### **Prologue:**

A Lutheran teacher is a Synodically certified, called, and commissioned educator prepared to teach in a Lutheran early childhood center, elementary school, middle school, or high school of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. Programs prepare candidates within specific age-level or subject-area concentrations as determined by each institution. The Concordia University System Lutheran Teacher Education Program Standards specify the instructional, formational, and experiential expectations that prepare students for commissioned ministry as Lutheran school teachers.

These standards supplement the general CUS Church Work Program Standards and ensure that Lutheran teacher candidates are equipped as faithful theologians, competent educators, and collaborative servants in the ministry of the Lutheran school. Requirements for state teaching licensure or certification vary by state and institution and are not addressed in these standards. Formation of a Lutheran teacher includes the development of Christian character, pedagogical skill, and a lifelong commitment to the vocation of teaching in the Church. Institutions may structure curricula and their outcomes differently while demonstrating alignment with these standards.

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### **Standard 1: Foundations of the Lutheran Teaching Vocation**

The program develops students' understanding of the theological, historical, and vocational foundations of the called teaching ministry in the Lutheran school.

### **Standard 2: Teaching the Christian Faith in the Lutheran School**

The program prepares students to plan, deliver, and assess instruction in the Christian faith, including the catechetical heritage of the Lutheran Church, and to faithfully apply Law and Gospel in classroom teaching in their area of preparation.

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### **Standard 3: Youth, Family, and Adult Ministry Leadership**

The program equips students to integrate the Christian faith, grounded in the Word of God, authentically and intentionally throughout all curricular areas and the daily life of the school.

### **Standard 4: The Lutheran School as Ministry Context**

The program prepares students to understand and contribute to the Lutheran school as an expression of the Church's educational ministry, serving in support of the pastoral office and in partnership with congregations, fellow educators, families, and the broader community.

### **Standard 5: Learner Development and Whole Child Formation**

The program develops students' capacity to recognize each learner as created and loved by God and to apply knowledge of human development in fostering their spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth.

### **Standard 6: Effective Teaching Practice**

The program prepares students to appreciate and engage cultural contexts for ministry and witness, with the overall goal of sharing the love of God through Jesus Christ, wherever God chooses to place them.

### **Standard 7: Dual Professional Identity and Ongoing Formation**

The program fosters the student's identity as both a credentialed educator and a commissioned minister of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, cultivating habits of continued growth in pedagogical practice, theological understanding, and personal faith.

### **Standard 8: Student Teaching in the Lutheran School**

The program provides supervised clinical teaching experience—including a placement in a Lutheran school—to integrate theological knowledge, pedagogical skill, and vocational formation for service as a Lutheran teacher.