

West Lutheran High School Report  
MN District Convention  
June 9-10, 2026

West Lutheran High School experienced many blessings this year and finished the year strong. Our athletic programs had great seasons. At the writing of this report, the girls softball team won their first two games at State in Mankato and advanced to play in the Championship game at the U of M on Friday. This is their second appearance at state in 3 years. Boys are playing for the section championship this week and track continues to break West School records for boys and girls.

God has provided many opportunities for growth in academics, fine arts, athletics, leadership, and ministry as the school year concluded and he keeps doing more during the summer. One group of 16 students and two chaperones went to Idaho (Truth In Love Ministries-TILM) to witness door to door to the Mormons while another group of 3 students and one chaperone will be canvassing and witnessing in New Orleans. These students really have an amazing opportunity to share and grow in their faith on the front lines.

## **Enrollment & Recruitment**

West finished the year at 205 students. We remain optimistic about welcoming approximately 43-45 freshmen for the 2026–2027 school year, projecting an enrollment of 193-195 students next year.

Recruitment efforts throughout the year have continued to build strong relationships with our association congregations and schools. Highlights have included:

- Warrior for a Day visits
- West Lutheran Day
- Grade school theater matinee performances
- Pizza and Ice Cream Social events
- Future Warrior athletic nights
- Student section outreach events such as Dig Pink and Coaches vs. Cancer

These events continue to generate excitement about Christian education and the ministry opportunities available at West Lutheran.

## **Staffing**

We thank God that 5 West Lutheran called workers received divine calls this year, but also thankful that they were led to stay at West. West Lutheran will have no vacancies at the start of next year and so we praise the Lord for filling our open positions.

## **Academics & Curriculum**

Student scheduling for next year is nearing completion as co-registrars continue working with families and students.

West Lutheran will offer 11 AP courses next year, including the addition of: AP Precalculus and AP Psychology

The continued expansion of advanced academic opportunities reflects our commitment to preparing students for future academic and vocational pursuits while maintaining a Christ-centered focus.

## **Student Life & Events**

West recently hosted several successful spring activities and continues preparing for major end-of-year events. One main event was our Senior Decision Day which was once again very successful and coordinated by Guidance Counselor/Career Readiness Coordinator, Heather Kattner.

This year, West Lutheran High School had the pleasure of hosting the West Regional Bandfest for our WELS high schools from March 19-22. 85 high school band students and their directors came on campus and presented an amazing concert on Sunday afternoon. Bandfest was led by clinician Dan Hubert from Wisconsin Lutheran College. Caleb Dobberstein from Bloomington Lutheran, Bloomington, MN (an association school of West Lutheran HS) was the percussionist clinician.

Our Showcase Concert & Art Show on May 17 was a huge success. The day started with the small gym filled with Art from our art students and our AP Art students. The talent that was showcased in that room was phenomenal. Then the day concluded with a Showcase concert where so many musical talents were evident to all.

The year concluded with Graduation Commencement on May 23 at 2:00 PM. West had 52 graduates cross the stage that we will miss as leaders for the school.

Our students, faculty, and families continue to demonstrate strong involvement and support for these activities, creating meaningful experiences for our school community.

## **Fine Arts**

We thank God for the successful musical this year of Newsies. The cast and crew did a fabulous job of representing West and using their gifts. All three shows were very well attended.

## **Professional Development**

The faculty and staff have been spending every other Tuesday morning getting ready for our Minnesota Nonpublic Schools Accrediting Association(MNSAA) visit coming up in the 2027-2028 school year. These visits come every seven years helping West challenge ourselves

to always being the best we can be while also keeping our WELS Christian values and high standards in the forefront. We have also been updating our class Curriculum Maps and syllabuses. Departments have been meeting to discuss how they want their department to move into the future while also keeping similar policies and procedures within the department.

## **Development & Facilities**

The annual West Lutheran Gala, "The Future is Bright," was a tremendous blessing. The \$217,000 raised supported our Exterior building repair, waterproofing projects and tuition assistance for students and families. This exterior project will begin the second week of June. These improvements will strengthen both our interior and exterior facility.

## **Legislative Update**

It is probably 99.9% certain that Minnesota (Governor) will not opt into the Scholarship Granting Organization (SGO) program. If by chance something would change, our administration along with the administration of other 501(c)(3) organizations would get together to discuss how to properly implement this program.

## **Closing**

As graduation has been completed, and our faculty and staff and students are on summer break, we thank God for His continued blessings on the ministry of West Lutheran High School. Please continue to keep our students, families, faculty, and staff in your prayers.

In Christ,

Dave Gartner

Principal, West Lutheran High School