



To Support the Quality and Sustainability of
Lutheran Schools through the Work of the
Blue Ribbon Committee on Lutheran Schools

RESOLUTION 8-03A

**REPORT R1.2 (CW, PP. 12-16);
OVERTURES 8-02-03 (CW, PP. 377-378);
RES. 3-04 (2016 PROCEEDINGS, P. 117)**

WHEREAS, Lutheran schools provide a strong witness to their communities by proclaiming the pure Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ as taught in the Scriptures in addition to rigorous academics, competitive athletics, and a passion for the arts; and

WHEREAS, In Lutheran schools, families outside the church are often drawn to life together with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) families, thus facilitating a Gospel witness; and

WHEREAS, LCMS schools (early childhood, elementary, and high schools) are the second-largest parochial educational system in the United States, operating 1,173 early childhood centers and preschools, 804 elementary schools, and 91 domestic and 3 international high schools (Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Hanoi), serving students and their families; and

WHEREAS, LCMS congregations have closed 458 schools since 2005, and enrollment has dropped by 99,113 students during the same period (from 290,453 in 2005 to 191,340 in 2015); and

WHEREAS, Sixty-one percent of LCMS schools serve 100 or fewer children; and

WHEREAS, The 2013 LCMS national convention established a Blue Ribbon Committee with the following purpose: “to assist our congregations to embrace Lutheran schools as a critical ministry in congregational life and to support our schools as they serve in the 21st century” (Res. 3-04); and

WHEREAS, The Blue Ribbon Committee on Lutheran Schools will continue its work during the 2016–2019 triennium; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention direct the Office of National Mission to fund the continued work of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Lutheran Schools; and be it further

Resolved, That the work of the Blue Ribbon Committee on Lutheran Schools include but not be limited to the following:

1. Identify the reasons for the decline in the number of schools and in total student enrollment;

BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE ON LUTHERAN SCHOOLS

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***Chairman**

2. Assess the current compensation of pastors and teachers in congregations with Lutheran schools and its effect on Lutheran schools and workers;
3. Suggest pilot projects that may produce creative solutions related to the challenges currently faced by our Lutheran schools;
4. Explore and communicate creative options for enhancing the quality of our schools, such as classical education, online education, flexible scheduling, hybrid homeschooling, consolidated efforts among congregations with schools, and ministry among international students;
5. Identify alternative models for funding Lutheran schools with an emphasis on making schools affordable for all families;
6. Recommend strategies for our Lutheran schools to serve their immigrant neighbors;
7. Identify, celebrate, and share examples of Lutheran schools actively engaged in the mission of Christ in their respective communities;

8. Explore the role of Lutheran schools in planting new churches and revitalizing existing churches;
9. Address the significant need for a new generation of Lutheran educators;

and be it finally

Resolved, That the Blue Ribbon Committee complete its work by mid-2018 so that it can report to the LCMS national convention in 2019.

Action: Adopted (7)

(Without objection from the assembly to proceeding to vote immediately, Res. 8-03A was adopted as presented by voice vote.)

