



ABOVE: Students at Iowa Great Lakes Lutheran School, Spencer, sing during chapel.

LEFT: First-grade students at Trinity Lutheran School, Boone, conduct a science experiment.

A WIN-WIN for DONORS and STUDENTS

In an effort to keep you informed and updated, I asked Dewey Torkelson, program manager for Iowa Lutheran School Tuition Organization (ILSTO), to share some important facts with our *Lutheran Witness* readers:

- ▶ Private school tuition organizations began after the 2006 legislative session put in place a new program to help parents who desire a nonpublic education for their children but were unable to afford it.
- ▶ The Iowa Lutheran School Tuition Organization was formed and set a goal to raise \$346,000 in its first year.
- ▶ This year ILSTO will have \$553,416 in tax credits to distribute to donors and has set a goal to raise \$1,778,134.
- ▶ We need your help to reach our goal. This past year we were about \$150,000 short of our goal.

I am a single father of two children and this program has helped my children to have a faith-based education. This program has helped a great deal financially!

- ▶ In the 17 years of the program, over \$10 million has been raised to help over 8,000 Lutheran students with tuition funding.

Those who donate to ILSTO will receive a 75% state tax credit. The current federal tax law allows a 25% charitable deduction as well. C corporations and S corporations have even greater tax benefits. Please consult your tax preparer for the impact on your tax situation.

This is a win-win situation for taxpayers and families attending a Lutheran elementary or secondary school in Iowa District West or Iowa District East. There is no limit on donations and all tax credits have a five-year carryover.

From the \$902,000 in donations for tax year 2022, tuition assistance will be awarded in May to families attending a Lutheran school for the 2023–24 school

year. Without these awards, many families could not send their children to a Lutheran school.

Here are some of their comments:

- ▶ “Without this program, my family would not be able to attend our Lutheran school. I’m a single mother of two and I also care for my elderly parents and support them financially. I can’t imagine being in another school system where our values would not be supported.”
- ▶ “I am a single father of two children and this program has helped my children to have a faith-based education. This program has helped a great deal financially!”

How you can help

To award this assistance, the money must be donated by Iowa taxpayers like you. Wouldn’t you rather direct your tax dollars to students who attend a Lutheran school?

If you have any questions about this funding opportunity to help Lutheran school students, please give Torkelson a call at 712-260-2991.

Rhonda J. Mohr

Assistant to the President for Education, Youth and Family Life



- ▶ 515-576-7666
- ▶ rhonda@iowadistrictwest.org