



PRINCIPAL SWAP

The Lutheran High School Association of Greater Milwaukee (LHSAGM) has a storied history of strong leadership from the role of the principal. Many principals have served for the majority of their careers in service to their particular schools. Further, many principals from the LHSAGM who accept calls to other Lutheran high school associations across the country use their God-given talents to lead those organizations from the roles of Executive Director, Superintendent, or even CEO. Still, in the 120-year history of the LHSAGM, never have two principals within the association switched places. However, that is no longer true once this upcoming school year begins!

Starting in the 2024-2025 school year, Dr. Wayne Jensen will serve as principal of his alma mater, Milwaukee Lutheran High School, as he departs his 15-year career as principal of Martin Luther High School. In January of 2024, the Board of Directors for the LHSAGM approved the call for Dr. Jensen to continue his ministry as principal within the high school association at Milwaukee Lutheran. After prayerful consideration, Dr. Jensen accepted that position to serve the students of MLHS in this next phase of his career. “Martin Luther became a second home for me for the past 15 years. My children graduated from the school, and [Martin Luther] will always hold a special place in my heart,” stated Dr. Jensen. “I’m humbled that Cole Braun (CEO) and Mike Waugh (Head of Schools) believed I was the right person to lead Milwaukee Lutheran, and I thank God for the students and families in the Red Knight community which I will get the chance to serve.”

That change left an opening in the principal’s chair for Martin Luther High School. After conducting a national search for a principal, the Board of Directors approved a call in March of 2024 for the next principal of Martin Luther. However, after prayerful consideration, the candidate declined the call to the LHSAGM. The LHSAGM then quickly transitioned its approach to hiring an interim principal, given the timing at the end of the school year. An interim principal candidate list was produced, and it was quickly determined that a known quantity was at the top of that list.

Just before the end of the school year, John Buetow accepted the position of Interim Principal at Martin Luther High School for the 2024-2025 school year. As evidenced by his work throughout his career of service to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and

most recently as Interim Principal at Milwaukee Lutheran, Mr. Buetow will provide stable leadership while at the same time moving the ministry forward to the benefit of the students at Martin Luther. “At this stage in my career, it is my great privilege to serve Lutheran schools as they transition from one leader to another. I’m thankful for the opportunity to continue to serve in the LHSAGM at Martin Luther this coming fall,” said Mr. Buetow. When asked about the interim role, Mr. Waugh stated, “I think Mr. Buetow has proven that the interim role can be vital for the growth and trajectory of a school. A school is a living, breathing mission field, filled with twists and turns, and yet I believe we have redefined what it means to be a highly motivated interim principal within the association.” Mr. Waugh continued, “As Lutheran schools in our synod will all eventually face leadership transitions, I think what we are modeling here in the LHSAGM can be standard practice as schools look for long-term leaders.”

Milwaukee Lutheran will open the 2024-2025 school year with over 800 students in the building and over 150 students online in grades 9-12. The school will continue pursuing strategic initiatives that Mr. Buetow and the MLHS administrative team started. Knowing this, Dr. Jensen is tasked with executing the vision to provide exceptional experiences with the school as he brings his brand of leadership to the school community. On the Martin Luther side, the school will open with almost 700 students after Dr. Jensen leaves the school by providing 15 years of stability, growth, and educational excellence. Mr. Buetow will continue this work as the programs expand to meet the needs of students in the 21st century. Thanks be to God for Dr. Jensen and Mr. Buetow as they lead Milwaukee Lutheran and Martin Luther for the 2024-2025 school year!

