

GREAT PLAINS LUTHERAN

THE GRAINS

SPRING 2025



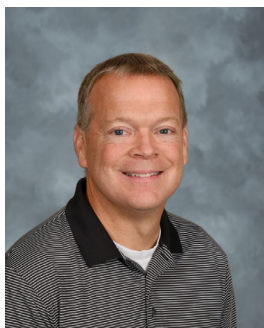
Principal's Message

Teacher Perspective

Student Perspective

Gifts and Donors





MR. KYLE BENDER
PRINCIPAL

Fundamental Framework

There is always important work to do. No matter what occupation you serve in, there is important work to do. GPL is no exception to that. First and foremost, spiritual education is the most important work that we do here at GPL. Whether through religion classes, academic classes, chapel, extra-curriculars, or one on one conversations, the teachers look for opportunities to encourage children in their walk with their Savior. Another area of important work is academic education. These two areas of education are the fundamental reason GPL exists. We recognize the importance of putting time and energy into it.

Starting this month, our faculty will be working through a curriculum process that will involve studying state educational standards along with our WELS religion standards. This is important work for us to do as it will not only help us identify areas of gaps in our content and instruction, but will help strengthen what we do by identifying effective strategies and skills necessary to best help students learn.

Through this process we will be reviewing our **mission, vision, and objectives (MVO)**, **unwrapping state educational standards** to determine knowledge, skills, and learning goals to meet that standard, and **vertically aligning the content area standards** to identify any gaps or missing standards in our current instruction. After that part of the curriculum work is completed, then we will **refine/develop course outcomes**. This will then allow us to **evaluate textbook series**, both current and new updated ones, to determine what best matches what we want to achieve in student learning.

Once all the above has happened, we are ready to **write our curriculum and instructional plan**. These plans will be based upon the work mentioned above and will serve as a framework for the instruction and learning that will take place in the classroom.

It will be a lot of work that will take time, but it is very important work that keeps students' learning in focus. We pray that God bless our efforts as we work towards strengthening our curriculum and instruction.



Administration

Rev. David Maertz

President

Mr. Kyle Bender

Principal

Rev. Karl Schauland

Campus Pastor

Mr. Jeff Roloff

Director of Mission Advancement

Mr. Matt Bauer

Athletic Director

Mr. Christian Weseloh

Board Chairman

2024-2025 School Theme

Get Wisdom

Our Mission

Great Plains Lutheran High School provides a Christ-centered education to assist families in nurturing students as lifelong disciples of Christ.

Teachers

Mrs. Emily Cantwell
Mrs. Linda Guthmiller
Mr. Mike Haugly
Mrs. Jayne Jaeger
Mr. Sam Kleinke
Mr. Eric Martens
Mr. Alex Mielke
Mr. Joseph Nash
Miss Nicole Porter
Mr. Ryan Rosenthal
Mr. Aaron Schleusener

On the cover:

Ribbon cutting of the classroom addition and offices

Photo credit: Sarah Roloff

Faculty Perspective - Aaron Schleusener

Why I Teach and Coach These Courses



Mr. Aaron Schleusener

I have had the privilege to serve as an instructor and coach at GPL for the past 9 years. With my wife, Rachel, and our five children, we are blessed to be a part of the GPL family. I teach a variety of classes including Health (9th), Physical Education (10th), American History (11th), and U.S. Government

(12th). The grade levels covered with these classes let me teach almost every student by the end of each year, allowing me to build on things we've learned and strategies I've used with them in the past.

The curriculum of these four courses covers a wide range of material and areas of focus. Health and Physical Education emphasizes how to make healthy lifestyle choices and behaviors while giving glory to God with the bodies he has given us. American



Teaching archery in PhyED

History and the United States Government are a constant reminder that no matter what, God is completely in control as we look at how God has blessed this country even through the extremely difficult times. In addition to teaching, I also serve as the football coach and JV girls basketball coach helping the student athletes of GPL improve in their God-given talents.

The teaching of the curriculum in the classroom and

coaching the X's and O's on the field and court are a big part of helping the students of GPL be ready for life after high school. Just as important and crucial as the material are the lessons learned and guidance given during all of it. As an instructor and coach I make sure that every student and athlete understands that "it's more than _____." There are lessons to be learned in everything

that we do.

It's more than football, it's more than basketball, it's more than the class that you are taking. It's learning how to handle the emotions of every experience.



Teaching Health class

It's understanding how to work with classmates and teammates in difficult situations. It's learning how to win and lose with class. It's learning how to pick yourself back up after failures or not become complacent after successes. It's learning how to show Christian character and give glory to God in all that we do.

As teachers and coaches at GPL we know that it won't always be pretty. But we will be there right alongside the students helping them excel and learn in everything that they do.

Ultimately, we are working toward the mission of GPL in assisting families in nurturing students as lifelong disciples of Christ.

Giving the Quarterback the next play



A Student's Perspective: How GPLHS Prepared Me for Life after Graduation



KAITLYN RAWERTS
SENIOR

I am Kaitlyn Rawerts, a senior from Aberdeen, South Dakota. I went to school at Trinity Lutheran in Aberdeen from Preschool through 8th grade, and currently go to high school at Great Plains Lutheran High School in Watertown, South Dakota.

Because I am from Aberdeen but go to school in Watertown, I stay in the

dorms that are on campus. The smaller size of the school makes it really easy to connect with students and faculty in my classes. Another opportunity where I can connect with others is through extra curricular activities. I love being a part of groups and teams that meet outside of school. I participate in sports which allows me to learn how to work on a team. I am also the president of Honor Society and Yearbook, as well as a Student Council representative. Having these roles teaches me how to act as a leader.

At Great Plains students are able to attend classes at NTHS and Lake Area Technical College that are focused on specific careers. During my Junior year, I took the Health Science Class and Medical Terminology Dual Credit course. From the classes at NTHS and my anatomy class here at GPL, I developed my desire to work in the medical

field, specifically in surgical technology. At the beginning of my senior year, I did an internship in the operating room at Prairie Lakes Hospital. This internship gave me full confidence that surgical technology is what I want to pursue.

Next year I will attend Southeast Technical College in Sioux Falls, pursuing a degree in surgical technology. I will graduate after two years, and then work for

Prairie Lakes Hospital in Watertown for a minimum of three years, in agreement with my Build Dakota Scholarship.

I am thankful for the opportunities Great Plains has offered me that helped prepare me to attend Southeast Tech next year, and for giving me the opportunity to discover what it is that I am truly passionate about. Most importantly, Great Plains

Lutheran has built me up in my faith. Going into my future with a strong faith will give me confidence to persevere.



Kaitlyn singing a solo at the Spring Concert



Kaitlyn leading an Honor Society Meeting



Kaitlyn dissecting in Anatomy Class

Building relationships with new people, having dorm-life experience, being a part of many extra curricular activities with leadership roles, taking career focused classes, and having a strong faith will help prepare me for my next chapter in life at Southeast Technical College.



Spring Concert

The 77 member band played *Encanto*, *Beautiful Savior*, and *Crowns of Glory*



Cheerleading

13 basketball cheerleaders performed at halftime during a varsity game

GPLHS students
letting their light
shine by using their
God-given talents



Spring Concert

The Celebration Choir sang *Moses, Dies Irae, Come Find His Rest* and *All Glory, Laud, and Honor*; there are 130 students involved in the 3 choirs at GPLHS



Girls Basketball Conference Champions

We had 59 students participating in boys and girls basketball including players and managers



One Act Play

22 students competed in the One Act play *Honor Bright*

Mission Advancement - God is GOOD



JEFF ROLOFF
MISSION ADV. DIRECTOR

Wow how things have changed! I think of GPLHS when Sarah and I moved to Wisconsin in 2016 and remember what a blessing GPLHS was at that time. Then when we returned in 2021, we saw a changed campus in so many ways: new additions, new and larger number of students, and blessings beyond measure. I am reminded of 1

Timothy 2:3-4, *This is good and pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.* Then I think of what it took to make these changes a reality. It was God working through you, our donors, our families, our students, our faculty and staff, our alumni and everyone who cares for this school. God has blessed GPLHS with all these blessings in order that the one true wisdom can be shared every day with young people who need it. God is GOOD!

As we look at the results of our *United in Praise* and *Praises Continued* campaigns, our first response is to acknowledge that God is Good. People responded to *United in Praise* so lovingly that we finished the initial phases of our expansion project with a much smaller debt than when we went into it. To God be the glory for doing this through all of you. We were blessed through *Praises Continued* which allowed us to complete the final phases of our facility expansion without borrowing. God blessed *Praises Continued* in so many ways. After year one of a three year campaign we are blessed to have already received over \$1.3 million in gifts and pledges towards our goal of \$1.8 million. We are enjoying and utilizing these new spaces that God has blessed us with through your gifts, prayers and support. We rejoice in using them to share the grace and truth of God's Word. God is GOOD!

God also blessed GPLHS during this time by working in your hearts and moving you to faithfully and thankfully support our Active Ministry (the day to day work of GPLHS). The past five fiscal years we have been blessed to be financially stable. We couldn't have done this without each and every one of you! Your gifts, prayers and support have allowed us to

help our students to grow spiritually, physically and academically. We are able to meet the academic needs of our students by having classes and programs that are needed in today's changing world. Through your efforts and support our students have the facilities, resources and opportunities to grow in their physical talents. God blessing us through you allows our young Christians to have numerous opportunities to grow in their artistic talents. Most importantly your support allows GPLHS to focus on what is truly most important. Every day GPLHS gets to share the one wisdom that lasts not only a lifetime but lasts for all eternity. God is GOOD!

God continues to bless us with opportunities. We have more students out there that could be blessed by being here and growing in their faith. We have opportunities to prepare our students to be "lights" for a world that seems to be growing darker and darker. GPLHS gets to help our students become Christian servant leaders in their congregations, at their workplaces, at their schools, in their homes and in their communities. God is GOOD!

I started off by noting how things have changed, but it is also so amazing to see how much is still the same. Our students grow and sometimes struggle. They do great things and they do not so good things. God continues to bless us and give us amazing opportunities so that we can share his wonderful Gospel. We continue to step up and meet the many opportunities he places before us and we will continue to have opportunities that we get to step up and meet to God's glory. GPLHS is still blessed by each and every one of you. We still need you to lovingly push and encourage us. We also know that we still get to thankfully, joyfully and prayerfully take opportunities to support the ministry of GPLHS with our gifts, prayers and encouragement. GPLHS is still blessed by God in so many ways and we know that will never change! God is GOOD!



Alumni News

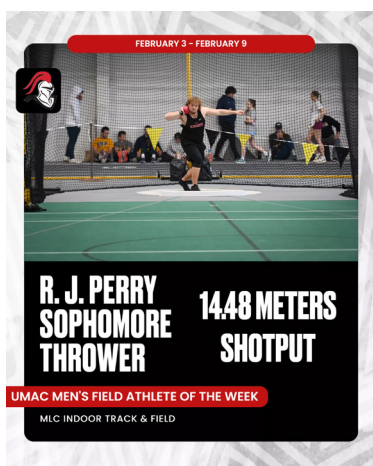
We have some alumni making news at our ministry training college, Martin Luther College in New Ulm, MN. They are.....



Anna Busch (Class of 2021) won a handmade blanket at Bingo Night hosted by the MLC Ladies' Auxiliary. For the past 15 years, this fun-filled event shows the students the support they receive from the Ladies' Auxiliary members from around the country. Each year it gets bigger with student attendance and the donations they receive from the Ladies' Auxiliary.



David Fenske (Class of 2021) has seen several changes in his life. After graduating from GPLHS he went to Iowa State to study agri-business, then transferred to Martin Luther College for preseminary studies before switching to secondary English. Since he was studying to teach secondary English, David went to the University of Galway to study Medieval Literature, British Authors, Iconography and Shakespeare - all with credits to transfer to MLC. However, while he was there, he decided to study to become a pastor. But before going back for his final year at MLC, he will be taking a year to work with Academia Cristo, a Latin America training program for students to spread the Word and plant a church, and use his spanish language skills to interact with the the students and assist the missionaries.



RJ Perry (Class of 2023) finished 1st place in the shotput at the Carleton Meet of Hearts in Northfield, MN. He broke the MLC indoor record and was the UMAC Men's field athlete of the week!





**1200 Luther Lane NE
Watertown, SD 57201-8200**

Return Service Requested



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Upcoming Events

May 2	Panther Field Day
May 3	Delegate/Auxiliary Meeting starting at 10:00am
May 23	Spring Awards Ceremony 4:00pm
May 23	Kaleidoscope Concert 7:00pm
May 24	Graduation 10:00am
June 8-13	Panther Camp
June 22-28	Camp Luther
July 14	GPL Golf Open at Cattail Crossings Golf Course in Watertown, SD



Join us for the eleventh Annual Great Plains Lutheran Golf Open on Monday, July 14 starting at 9:30am. There will be food, fellowship, golfing, prizes and fundraising for GPL programs and activities. Register at <https://bit.ly/25gplo>

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