

Sample Letter to the Principal

Please feel free to use this letter word-for-word when your church or organization is contacting your local school. You may even want to attach President Albert's article, [available here](#).

Dear Principal [Name],

We recently read an article by LSEA President Chuck Alberts titled "The State of Education." In it, he shared that too often people and organizations seek to engage with schools in the way they want to engage to solve problems they believe exist in ways they believe will solve those problems. They do so without first talking to educators, "those who have made this a profession, a passion, and life calling." We do not want to make this mistake. Instead, we recognize that we do not hold all of the answers. We want to engage in a way that is meaningful, useful, and appropriate. So, we are asking:

"How can we help you help your students?"

We are passionate about education. As United Methodists, "We believe that every person has the right to education... [and] In society, this function can best be fulfilled through public policies that ensure access for all persons to free public elementary and secondary schools..."¹ What you do at your school, the broadening and strengthening of young minds and hearts, has the potential to change the world. Education is the first step in preserving the earth's natural resources. Through education, scientists and farmers find ways to feed hungry people. Future lawmakers, pastors, doctors and nurses, and other world-healers are incubating in that school of yours. We are so grateful for the love, compassion, and guidance you are providing for our future leaders. Again, we are asking:

"How can we help you help your students?"

We have heard about other churches engaging with their local schools. We've heard of literacy programs that send church volunteers in to read to and with children. We've heard about churches that provide every teacher with a care package at the beginning of each year. We've heard about churches running tutoring programs in the school cafeteria once a week. We've heard about churches sending food home with children who would otherwise go hungry on the weekend. And we've heard about Community Builders, meeting with students during lunch to help them develop stronger relationships and set goals. We've heard about coat drives and book drives and school supplies drives. So many Christian organizations are engaged in their local schools, making a difference and building community. We want to join in! But not before we ask:

¹ United Methodist Church Social Principles: The Political Community, available at <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/political-community#education>.

“How can we help you help your students?”

We would be pleased to send our pastor, [Name], and missions chair, [Name], to meet with you and your teachers. We'll even send them with food, as that's what United Methodists do when they gather together with friends! And while we meet, you can tell us how we can help you help your students.

With Love and Gratitude,

[Name] United Methodist Church

[phone number]

[email address]