

# New High School, Smaller Class Sizes Feature in Immanuel Lutheran School's Alpena Expansion

*Congregation has already raised \$1.1 million towards project;*

ALPENA, MI, UNITED STATES, January 27, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Immanuel Lutheran School](#), one of the oldest and fastest-growing Christian schools in Northeast Michigan, has recently offered more details on its school expansion campaign.



Aerial photo of the new campus at 700 Pinecrest St.

The extra space will allow Immanuel to offer high school grades beginning in Fall 2026. This will be the first time that Alpena families have had the option of a parochial high school since the closure of Alpena Catholic Central in 1971. In addition, it will allow more combined grades to be split into their own classrooms, resulting in a lower student-to-teacher ratio in the coming school year.

“

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*Rev. Joshua Schultz*

According to Rev. Joshua Schultz, Immanuel's principal, "Not only does this expansion allow us to offer more grade levels, but it also provides us with an opportunity to flex into the growth we're experiencing at the elementary level. God has blessed our enrollment so that we have needed to

offer single grade classrooms, rather than the split classes we've had for decades."

"The building expansion and movement of current classes to the new building opens classrooms and creates more opportunities to teach, proclaim, and live Christ as we prepare the youth of our community with the intellectual knowledge and spiritual strength for this life and eternity. "

Immanuel currently serves pre-kindergarten through 8th grade students. Enrollment has drastically increased over the last ten years, going from 80 students in 2015 to 150 students in 2025. The biggest source of enrollment growth? The community. While half of Immanuel's

students come from church families, the other half attend other Alpena-area churches. It's a positive development, even if the existing school building has mostly run out of space.

"Parents see the value in a Christ-centered education," says Principal Schultz. "Our goal is not to compete with the public schools, but rather to offer an option for an intentionally and unapologetically Biblical worldview that informs our policies, curriculum, and general approach to education. "

Renovation is well underway at Immanuel's future second campus. The school building at 700 Pinecrest Ave. was formerly home to ACES Academy, an alternative education program operated by Alpena Public Schools. The \$2 million dollar project will bring the 60+ year-old building up to modern building codes that prioritize the safety of students and staff.

So far, the project has been funded by [Immanuel Lutheran Church](#) and several donors from the community. A wider capital campaign is set to launch in Spring 2026.

In November 2025, the congregation was approached by an anonymous donor who offered a \$100,000 matching gift challenge, which the congregation met and surpassed by Christmas. Now, another group of donors has pledged to donate \$450,000 if their gift can be met by June 30, 2026.

"Meeting this initial goal helps us continue construction with minimal to no initial debt," Principal Schultz says. "Starting debt free with the renovations helps us keep the focus on academics and affordable Christian education."

Enrollment opens in March 2026. Interested families are encouraged to apply early. Immanuel will initially offer high school grades 9 & 10. The school plans to recruit additional staff and offer grades 11 & 12 starting in 2027.

Immanuel Lutheran School, founded in 1875, is one of the oldest [Lutheran schools in Michigan](#). It moved to its current building in 1958. With a mission to "teach, proclaim, and live Christ in all things," Immanuel Lutheran School gives Alpena-area families a Christ-centered school option with strong academics and rich extracurriculars.

Dylan Tanner  
Immanuel Lutheran School  
+1 855-466-6348

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