



# Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

## PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

# 2024/2025

This handbook provides policies, processes, and guidelines about *joining* our school, *learning and growing* at school, and *conducting ourselves* as St. John's Lutheran School students, parents, and teachers.

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## OVERVIEW

### Our Philosophy

All who have been brought to faith in Jesus Christ are commissioned by Him to preserve and extend the Kingdom of God. This is done by proclaiming to all the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Christian education is a vital component of every Lutheran congregation's ministry, applying Law and Gospel to all aspects of life and learning. We believe that the church can equip children and youth for ministry through full-time Lutheran schools. We purely teach God's Word, properly administer the sacraments, and carefully instruct our members according to the Confessional Standard of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Article III).

As an important ministry of this congregation, our Lutheran school helps fulfill each of our congregation's five functions as follows:

EDUCATION in Lutheran Christian doctrine is carefully taught to all students so those who come to faith may choose to become members of a congregation of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod at an appropriate time. Children are taught the demands of God's Law and are comforted by the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. They receive encouragement and instruction to live in service to Christ and others. To prepare for this service, they are taught how to develop and use their abilities in life. Subjects are taught by Lutheran Christians who are academically prepared to teach from the Christian viewpoint.

Using their God-given abilities, students and teacher strive for excellence in their use of current materials and methodology. Students are encouraged to become responsible stewards of their talents in a joy-filled Christian life.

*These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Deuteronomy 6:6-7*

WORSHIP in a Lutheran school is not confined to the daily classroom devotion or to whole-school worship experiences but also occurs throughout the day. Children are helped to grow in their prayer lives, learning to pray privately and corporately whenever needs or opportunities arise. Students and families are encouraged to regularly attend worship services at their home congregations.

Teachers provide a Christian model by faithfully attending congregational worship and by participating in other aspects of the church. Students lead and participate in worship in their classrooms and participate in weekly chapel services. They praise God through hymns and liturgy common to us as Lutheran Christians.

*Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name; worship the Lord in the splendor of His holiness. Psalms 29:2*

EVANGELISM is a mission of the church through its school. As students observe their teachers' confession, they learn to confess their faith. By leading a godly life, students bear testimony to each other and to their community.

*Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. Matthew 10:32*

FELLOWSHIP is enjoyed by all members of St. John's Lutheran Church and School. The congregation, teachers, staff, and students accept one another as fellow members of the body of Christ. They support, encourage, and witness to one another. The school is valued as an important part of the congregation.

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Acts 2:42*

SERVICE is part of Lutheran school life. Teachers, staff members, and parents serve the students and others by encouraging Christ-like compassion and love, and by volunteering in the community. In turn, students are led to serve others in these ways as well.

*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men. Colossians 3:23.*

## Our Mission

*Learning and living as God's baptized children.*

The mission of St. John's Lutheran School is to nurture young people through God's Word, sound Lutheran doctrine and worship, and a strong academic foundation. Our goal is to equip students to lead their lives as God's baptized children in this world and to carry out Christ's command to "make disciples of all nations." *Matthew 28:19*

## Our Vision

The purpose of St. John's Lutheran School is to nurture young people's faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior using God's Word and Luther's Small Catechism. At the same time, students are given a strong academic foundation that prepares them for life.

## Our Values

**Sound Lutheran Doctrine** – As a Lutheran School our primary job is to teach our students God's truth. We base our teachings on the LCMS doctrine, and it is carefully taught to all students so they are sure of what they believe and can defend their faith. Children are taught the demands of God's law and are

comforted by the saving Gospel of Jesus. We teach our students that “We don’t change the message, the message changes us.”

**Individual Attention** – Our small class sizes encourage students to be participants rather than spectators. Our teachers strive to show Christ’s love and forgiveness to each child. In August of every year, teachers visit with each student’s family (and share information about the upcoming school year).

**Loving Classroom Environment** – Love & Logic® principles: 1) With Christ as our leader, we will learn and live as Christ’s baptized children with the Law and Gospel as our guide. 2) Every attempt will be made to maintain the dignity and self-respect of both the student and the teacher. 3) Students will be guided and expected to solve problems without creating additional issues. They will be given opportunities to make decisions and expected to live with the consequences.

**High Level of Instruction** – Using their God-given abilities, students and teachers strive for excellence as they use effective, up-to-date learning and teaching materials. Students are prepared to become responsible stewards of their talents in a joy-filled Christian life.

**Friendship and Acceptance** – Students and staff accept one another as fellow members of the body of Christ. They play together, support each other, encourage each other, and witness to one another. Each person’s uniqueness is recognized, and individuals are helped to achieve their full potential. Each child knows that he or she is valued, accepted, and a respected part of the school community.

## Board of Education

The Board of Education (BOE) is made up of St. John’s Lutheran Church Members and school parents, with the principal and preschool director as ex-officio members. The group is responsible for the operation and administration of the school. BOE meetings are typically held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7pm and include the opportunity for public comments at the start of the meeting. BOE agendas and approved meeting minutes are available via the FACTS family portal.

## Parent/Teacher/Child Partnership



Success at St. John’s Lutheran School requires a partnership between parents, teachers, and students. With God central to this relationship, we have before us a master example of love and grace.

Parents, the success of our ministry ultimately rests with you. Your active participation in the academic, social, and spiritual education of your child, and the examples and expectations you provide, impact your child’s life more than anyone or anything else. Your children are God’s gift to you, and you choose to share them with us each day.



Teachers and staff are blessed by this gift of your children. Their duty is to model Christ by loving and respecting students, keeping them safe, teaching them His Word, maintaining high standards for academic study and student character, and instilling a passion for learning.

Students, you are in this school to grow in God's Word, develop your minds, exhibit strong character, and pursue the things in learning that excite you. Don't shy away from a challenge or experience. Make memories and friends, too! With the help of your parents and teachers, you are preparing for a life beyond our building. Both your parents and teachers expect you to work to your fullest potential and treat others with respect and kindness.

## Parent Teacher League

The Parent Teacher League (PTL) is made up of all school parents and teachers to support the mission of the school. The goal is to improve the experience for our students, teachers, and parents by raising funds, purchasing items, planning family and student activities, and supporting faculty and staff. The PTL Executive Board and Volunteer Committee are elected each year and meet monthly to plan and evaluate activities. Everyone is urged to take an active part in PTL by attending the meetings and/or volunteering for tasks as requested.

## Volunteering

The quality of the educational program offered to students at St. John's Lutheran School and Preschool is greatly enhanced with the volunteer assistance provided by many people. To you and to every person who assumes the role of volunteer, we say thank you!

Families of students and church members have a variety of opportunities to volunteer and support administration, faculty, and students in the following areas:

- Participation in volunteer opportunities on behalf of the school
- Assistance to the administration and/or teachers
- Helping during and with sporting events
- And other opportunities

These opportunities will be made available to the St. John's community as they arise, and task-specific details will be given to volunteers as they sign up.

Volunteers are expected to 1) communicate with the faculty/staff/board member they will be working with, 2) be reliable, 3) follow school rules, and 4) be familiar with the Parent/Student Handbook for the safety and protection of students, staff, and fellow volunteers. Additionally, they are to adhere to the St. John's volunteer policy, which is as follows:

- Volunteers, as a general rule, do not have direct supervision of students and do not interact with students without the presence of a school employee.
- Volunteers who have direct interaction with or supervision of students without the presence of a school employee on a regular or semi-regular basis must agree to a background check (to be renewed every three years).
- Volunteers in the school building during the day (i.e., librarians) are expected to participate in safety drills when enacted.

## Accreditation

St. John's Lutheran School & Preschool is accredited by the National Lutheran School Accreditations (NLSA) organization. The accreditation process involves an in-depth self-study and yields a scheduled improvement plan. To be accredited, a school must meet high standards of excellence and maintain accredited status by working on the identified areas for improvement. Our school is committed to this ongoing improvement process.

## ENROLLMENT

### Enrollment

New families will work with admissions to enroll their child in our school by following the enrollment process. Enrollment is official and students may attend when all steps are complete. The enrollment process is as follows:

1. Learn about St. John's Lutheran School with information in this handbook and on the school website.
2. Visit and tour our facility and meet with staff.
3. Apply:
  - a. Complete the online application (non-refundable \$22 fee).
  - b. Provide school records (if entering 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade).
  - c. Meet with the principal (if entering 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade and as requested for Preschool-4<sup>th</sup> grade).
4. Acceptance and grade placement
5. Enroll:
  - a. Complete the online enrollment process through FACTS.

- b. Pay the non-refundable enrollment fee (and the non-refundable tuition deposit if entering the preschool program).
- c. Sign up for a tuition payment plan in FACTS.
- d. Read the Parent/Student Handbook.
- e. Provide a birth certificate, immunization records, and emergency contact information.
- f. Submit a health care summary from your child's pediatrician (preschool only).

There are age requirements for the following grades:

- Preschool students must be at least 3 years old before Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> and fully potty trained, including being fully independent in the bathroom.
- Kindergarten students must be at least 5 years old before Sept. 1.
- 1<sup>st</sup> grade students must be at least 6 years old before Sept. 1.

## New Student Acceptance

New students will be accepted only at the beginning of a school year, at the start of a new term, or when a family moves into the area. Parents who are member of St. John's Lutheran Church have the right to enroll their child at any time of the school year and do not require Board of Education approval.

The school reserves the right to place a child in an appropriate grade based on records, school documentation, and parent interviews.

## Waiting List

In the event that a particular grade reaches capacity, interested families will be placed on a waiting list and notified if a spot becomes available. Members of St. John's Lutheran Church have priority on this list.

## Children with Special Needs

St. John's Lutheran School is not fully equipped to handle students with moderate to severe special needs. Enrollment of students with special needs is dependent upon the student needs and resource teacher support available. Special needs testing is done through School District #279. If a student qualifies for an Individual Education Plan (IEP), District #279 and St. John's Lutheran School will implement the service required under this legal document. Students who qualify for special services may spend part of the school day at St. John's and be transferred to/from a District #279 school for part of the day. Students who do not qualify for special services through District #279 may still receive resource teacher support through an Individual Growth Plan (IGP) at St. John's Lutheran School.

# Nondiscrimination Policy

The school admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic and school administered programs.

## Continuous Enrollment

St. John's Lutheran School utilizes continuous enrollment for students in grades K-7. This process not only simplifies re-enrollment for families, but also ensures that all current students have a spot for each upcoming school year through 8th grade.

Each December, existing families will receive notification of the upcoming school year's enrollment and tuition fees. Families have until January 31st to notify the front office that their child will not be returning. Failure to notify St. John's by this deadline will result in automatic enrollment and all applicable enrollment fees being assessed in February.

The tuition payment plan chosen during a family's initial enrollment will apply to all future years. Families may update this plan by contacting the business manager.

Continuous enrollment does NOT apply to preschool/pre-kindergarten students. Any family with a child either returning for an additional year to preschool/pre-kindergarten *or* entering Kindergarten from pre-kindergarten MUST complete an enrollment form in January to secure their child's spot.

### Continuous Enrollment Timeline:

- **December:** Kindergarten-7th grade families receive notification of the upcoming year's enrollment and tuition fees
- **January:** Enrollment forms due for returning preschool/pre-kindergarten students and existing pre-kindergarten students advancing to Kindergarten
- **January 31:** Deadline for K-7th grade families to notify St. John's of their intent to discontinue their student's enrollment
- **February:** Enrollment fees for upcoming school year due
- **July:** Tuition plans will be sent; first payment due in August
- **August:** Back-to-school packets available online for parents to review personal information

**Important Note:** Enrollment fees are non-refundable for families disenrolling after January 31.

## Back-to-School Night

Each August, St. John's will host a Back-to-School Night. This event is for all new and returning students and families and offers a one-stop opportunity to meet teachers and staff, view your child's classroom, drop off school supplies and required forms, pay fees, and purchase school T-shirts and other spirit gear.

## Changes in Personal/Emergency Contact Information

It is the full responsibility of parents to keep St. John's informed of any changes in personal information, including, but not limited to custody agreements, address/phone numbers, emergency contact persons and information, medical conditions including new or worsening allergies, and updated immunizations. St. John's Lutheran School is not responsible for any situations resulting from lack of pertinent information on the part of parents/guardians.

## Withdrawal

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from school at any time. A child may be withdrawn at any time at the discretion of the principal or Board of Education if it is determined that it is in the best interest of the child and/or the child's class.

## FINANCES

St. John's Lutheran School is owned, operated, and maintained by St. John's Lutheran Church.

The cost of education per student is in excess of \$7,000 per year. To cover the cost of education, parents pay tuition and an enrollment fee, and St. John's Lutheran Church members make generous financial contributions. Tuition and church contributions are recommended by the Board of Education and voted on at the St. John's Lutheran Church congregational assembly each year.

## Enrollment Fee

An enrollment fee is set by the Board of Education and charged every year for every student. It is due at the time of enrollment or re-enrollment and is non-refundable.

## Tuition Payment Policy Agreement

Tuition may be paid in full prior to the beginning of the school year or an available payment plan may be selected via our electronic online payment program in FACTS (see your tuition agreement in FACTS for all options).

## Delinquent Payment Policy

1. On the first business day after a missed invoice, FACTS sends an email to the family indicating the delinquency and urging payment. After a 5-day grace period, a \$35 late fee is added to the invoice and FACTS calls the family.
2. Step 1 continues each month an invoice is missed, including the addition of the \$35 late fee. At this point, the family should communicate with the school's business manager if payment cannot be made current.
3. At 90 days past due, the family will be considered to have a delinquent payment history. The account will be individually reviewed by the Board of Administration to determine appropriate actions necessary to resolve the delinquency.

**All families must be current in their payment of tuition.**

- **For returning students** – any student with an unpaid balance from the previous school year may not be eligible for the succeeding school year until any overdue balance is paid in full.
- **For students transferring out** – any transcripts/student records may be withheld until any overdue balance is paid in full.

## Meal Charge Policy

St. John's Lutheran School participates in the Minnesota Free School Meals program as outlined in [Minnesota Statutes 2024, section 124D.111, subdivision 1](#). In addition, this policy is to ensure that school employees, families and students have an understanding of the expectations regarding unpaid meal charges.

St. John's participates in the Minnesota Free School Meals Program, and therefore all enrolled students will be offered one breakfast and one lunch at no charge while at school regardless of an outstanding meal balance. All reimbursable meals offered meet state and federal guidelines. We will not provide an alternate meal unless related to a dietary need.

For St. John's to receive State and Federal reimbursement for meals served, each student must be identified at the point of service. Each student will receive their lunch, and the cashier will mark in FACTS whether or not they received hot lunch that day. St. John's does provide an opportunity for students to purchase second milk or a second entrée in addition to the reimbursable meal(s) and will be charged to their FACTS account on the next billing cycle. Payment is not allowed at the point of service. Once a participant has placed a meal on a tray or otherwise served the meal to a student, the meal may not be subsequently withdrawn from the student by the cashier or other school official, whether or not the student has an outstanding meals balance.

All students will be treated respectfully and in accordance with [Minnesota Statute 2024, section 124D.111, subdivision 5](#).

St. John's will continue to utilize its local process for addressing delinquent meal accounts. Once an unpaid meal account is determined to be uncollectable, St. John's does not use a collections agency to collect the funds. Our student information system FACTS will send out a missed payment email after the first missed business day as a reminder. Then a follow up is sent after 30 days. At that point, the business manager will be in touch with the family to make arrangements for payment. All students, including one who has been determined eligible for free and reduced-price lunch, must always be served a reimbursable meal even if the student has an outstanding debt.

School Nutrition Funds cannot be used to repay previous years' debts per 2 CFR Part 200.426.

This policy and any pertinent supporting information will be provided in writing via the student handbook to:

- All households before the start of each school year;
- Students and families who transfer into the school, at the time of enrollment;
- All school personnel who are responsible for enforcing this policy.

St. John's will post this policy on the school website, in addition to providing the required written notification described above.

St. John's will ensure that any third-party provider with whom the school enters into either an original or modified contract after July 1, 2021, adheres to the school meals policy.

## Voluntary or Non-Hardship Withdrawals

Voluntary or non-hardship withdrawals of any children from St. John's Lutheran School and Preschool are not eligible for tuition refunds or credits. Any and all tuition paid prior to a student's withdrawal is non-refundable. However, tuition refunds or credits may be granted in special or extenuating circumstances through a formal request to the business manager. The Board of Administration will, at its next regularly scheduled board meeting, consider and act on a refund or credit request on a case-by-case basis.

## Tuition Assistance

Families may apply for tuition assistance through FACTS and must reapply each year. The best time to apply is January through May for the next school year, and amounts will be communicated by Back-to-School Night in mid-August. Tuition assistance applications and amounts are kept confidential.

Tuition assistance is limited only to students in grades K-8 of St. John's Lutheran School. Children enrolled in St. John's Lutheran Preschool are not eligible for tuition assistance.

## School Supplies

Students are responsible for their own materials. Each classroom list is found on the school website and contains the items needed prior to the start of school.

## Class Collections

Class collection of funds shall take place only under direct authorization of the principal or the Board of Education.

## Fines

Fines will be assessed by the teachers and the principal for damage and misuse of school property.

Damage may include, but is not limited to:

- Property/Furniture
  - Damaged property such as desks, lockers, chairs, bathrooms, or other items that belong to the school will be evaluated for fee assessment.
- Textbooks
  - Students are responsible for good care of textbooks and will be charged for loss or damage in excess of usual wear. The cost of damage to textbooks or lost textbooks will be assessed based upon the value.
  - Teachers may require textbooks to be covered.
- Library Books
  - The fine for an overdue library book is \$0.05 per book per day, excluding weekends and days school is not in session. At the end of the term, any missing books are declared lost, and a replacement value of the book is charged. The replacement value is \$8.00 for paperback books, \$15.00 for hardcover books, and \$2.00 for magazines.
  - Charges for damaged books will be assessed based on the damage in an amount up to the replacement cost of the book.



## ACADEMICS

### Curriculum

Curriculum is comprised of all the content for teaching various subjects to students. The core curriculum at St. John's Lutheran School for Preschool-8<sup>th</sup> grade includes religion and memorization, math, language arts (reading, writing, grammar, spelling, speaking), science, social studies or history, current events, physical education, art, and music.

- Handwriting is taught in K-4<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Technology is integrated into the classroom at all levels.
- Religion is central to bringing children closer to God in their daily living and, therefore, is integral to all subjects taught throughout the day.
- Music opportunities:
  - Choir is directed at all grade levels.
  - Encore Ensembles offers weekly band and orchestra lessons to the students in 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades. Sign-up and monthly participation fees are to be made by parents to Encore Ensembles.
  - PS-8<sup>th</sup> graders may be asked to sing during church services at St. John's Lutheran Church.
  - Musical participation includes all students.
  - Upper grade students may be given the option to play handbells or sing in the choir as a musical elective.

Curricula is reviewed by the teachers of the subject so that it can be aligned vertically from grade level to grade level. Curricula is assessed in the classroom by examination of national standardized testing results and student work outcomes. Curricula can be adjusted as often as necessary within the cycle to meet current student needs.

Listed below are the current textbook publishers and sources used in our school:

Religion: *Concordia Publishing House*; Bible (ESV version); Luther's Small Catechism

Reading: *Houghton Mifflin Harcourt* (K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade); *Pearson* (4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade); Various novels are also used (3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade). See teachers for complete lists.

Math: *Sadlier*

Social Studies: *Houghton Mifflin Harcourt* (K-5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade); *Prentice Hall* (6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grade)

Science: *FOSS*

English/Grammar: *Houghton Mifflin Harcourt* (K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade); *McGraw-Hill* (4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade); *Pearson* and *Prentice Hall* (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade)

Spelling: *Houghton Mifflin Harcourt* (1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> grade); *Zaner-Bloser* (3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade)

Handwriting: *D'Nealian*

Music: As selected by teachers

Art: *Art Attack* and as selected by teachers

## Grading Scale

The following grading scale is used at St. John's Lutheran School:

98-100% = A+	83-85% = B-	68-70% = D
95-97% = A	80-82% = C+	65-67% = D-
92-94% = A-	77-79% = C	64% and below = F
89-91% = B+	74-76 = C-	
86-88% = B	71-73% = D+	

For K-8<sup>th</sup> grade, a traditional letter grade is not given for memorization of God's Word. Students will be evaluated on their level of participation during class recitations, but the motivation for this task should simply be to love and learn God's Word by heart.

For K-4<sup>th</sup> grade, traditional letter grades are not given for handwriting, PE, music, and art. Instead, the following assessment measures are used:

O = Outstanding  
S+ = Doing well  
S = Acceptable  
S- = Inconsistent  
N = Needs improvement

## Promotion & Retention

Pupils advance to the next grade level at the end of the school year after satisfactorily completing the course of study required in their present grade.

In cases where a student's retention (repeat of a grade level) would serve to assist the student in his or her educational experience, the parents will be informed and will have the opportunity to discuss the matter with the teacher and principal. Prior to this, though, the process for providing intervention for a student who is failing is outlined as follows:

- At the end of Term 1, the teacher and principal will note any failing report card grades. If a student has a GPA lower than 2.0 or more than 2 Fs, parents and the student will be required to

meet with the teacher to create a plan for improvement. With the help of the resource teacher, an IGP may be adjusted or initiated if modifications are determined necessary.

- If the status of grades has not improved prior to midterm reports for Term 2, the student will be put on “academic probation” which means that he/she is now at risk for retention.
- If the status of grades has not improved prior to the end of Term 2, the discussion about retention will take place at the spring parent/teacher conference.
- The decision for retention is made by the principal in consultation with the classroom teacher and resource teacher. Testing may be required per an IEP.

## Homework, Late Work, & Make-Up Work

Homework can reinforce concepts presented in the classroom through review, practice, or enrichment and extension activities. Teachers may assign homework for these purposes. In addition, homework offers a way for parents to stay informed about the subject matter students are learning and to actively participate in the student’s academic growth. Parents are encouraged to become familiar with teachers’ homework procedures and policies.

There is continual discussion about appropriate amounts of homework. The actual amount of homework that is finished during the school day will likely vary from student to student. Homework levels vary for students based on many factors: general aptitude per subject, student work habits, study environment at home, after-school activities, etc. If your student spends a seemingly inordinate amount time on homework or conversely, never seems to bring anything home, schedule a personal appointment with your child’s teacher to discuss this issue. A suggested guideline is 10-15 minutes of homework per grade level (e.g., Kindergarten 10-15 minutes, 1<sup>st</sup> grade 15-20 minutes, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade 30-45 minutes). This guideline does not include minutes set aside for the habit of daily reading.

Teachers should make every effort to offer work time to students immediately following a lesson.

Teachers should contact parents if work time is habitually unused, or homework completion becomes a problem – preferably within the same week of making such an observation.

Late work is defined as work turned in after the due date or following an *unexcused* absence. Late work policies vary per class and will be communicated by the teacher. In general, grades are lowered for late work. If work is missing or late, a student may be asked to give up time in their daily schedule or after school to complete it, and scores will be lowered accordingly. Missing work often results in scores that are detrimental to student success.

Make-up work is defined as work turned in after an *excused* absence. The standard school policy for make-up work is as follows: For each *excused* absence due to illness, students have two days to

complete work. For each *excused* day of absence due to any other reason, students have just one day to complete make-up work. If make-up work is not completed within the given make-up time frame, it will be considered late work. If it is near the end of the term, this may result in an incomplete.

## Standardized Testing

Students are tested annually using the MAP (Measure of Academic Progress). Students in 2<sup>nd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade are tested in the fall and spring in the areas of Reading, Language, and Math. Results are shared with parents after each testing period, generally accompanying report cards.

## Honor Roll

Honor roll is applicable to students in 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades for each term. Students achieve honor roll status with a GPA of 3.5 or higher. Students achieve merit roll status with a GPA between 3.0-3.49. Any subject for which a student receives a letter grade is part of the calculation.

## Field Trips

During each academic year, classes take field trips as part of their educational experience. A field trip is defined as any school-related and school-sponsored activity conducted away from the school grounds.

Field trips are a privilege rather than a right. The principal and teachers have the right to exclude a student from a field trip for academic or behavioral reasons. School expectations for behavior still apply on field trips.

Parental permission must be given for student attendance on a field trip. Students without a written permission slip signed by a parent/guardian will be required to stay at school. Permission given via phone is not acceptable.

Students are required to wear a red St. John's T-shirt on all field trips.

## EXTRACURRICULARS

### Athletics

Athletic teams are offered for students in 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade. See the Athletic Handbook on the school website for all information and policies. Participation fees apply to offset the cost for officials, uniforms, and tournament entry fees.

## Ski Club

A downhill ski club is offered for students in 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade. Parent volunteers coordinate the club including communicating, scheduling, and chaperoning four Friday ski trips in January through March. Participation fees apply.

## Ineligibility

A student becomes ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities (athletics, Eagle Teach Team, and Ski Club) if his or her grade point average (GPA) falls below a 2.0 or the student has two or more Fs. An ineligible student will not be able to participate in practices or games/competitions for a minimum of two weeks and until his or her GPA improves to 2.0 or higher. The Athletic Director will use FACTS to check GPA status on Fridays and will notify the student's classroom teacher(s) before sending email notification to the parents. In the event where modifications are being made for a student, exceptions may be considered.

## CONDUCT & BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

### Love and Logic

St. John's Lutheran School has developed the following as their Core Principles for Love and Logic®:

1. With Christ as our leader, we will learn and live as Christ's baptized children with the Law and Gospel as our guide.
2. Every attempt will be made to maintain the dignity and self-respect of both the student and the teacher.
3. Students will be guided and expected to solve problems without creating additional issues. They will be given opportunities to make decisions and expected to live with the consequences.

### Guidelines and Code of Ethics for Discipline

Rules in the classroom are few. We believe that all students are different, and all actions and reactions are very personal in nature. Effective discipline involves a few overriding tenets rather than a long list of specific rules. Situations are dealt with as they arise, with a focus on enabling the student to grow and learn from his or her own actions. This is how the real world works.

# Guidelines for Student Behavior

A student may engage in any behavior which does not create a problem for anyone else. If a student finds himself or herself in a problematic situation, the school will adhere to the guidelines above, operating with the following principles as our guide:

- We will react without anger or haste in problematic situations.
- We will proceed in all situations with the best interest of the student in mind. Social, emotional, and academic well-being will be fostered.
- We will guide students toward personal responsibility and the decision-making skills they will need to function in the real world.
- We will provide consequences that are not punitive but that allow the student to experience the results of poor choices, enabling him or her to make better choices in the future. We firmly believe that mistakes and consequences pave the road to learning.
- We will deliver consequences for problem situations in such a way that the student will not be humiliated or demeaned. This does not imply that all consequences are private.
- Equal is not always fair. Consequences will be designed to fit the problem of individual student(s) and may be different even when situations appear to be similar.
- We will make every effort to ensure that students understand why they are involved or affected by the consequences. If this is ever unclear in any way, students are free to ask.
- If we act or react in a way that a child truly feels is unjust, that child need only say to us, "I'm not sure that's fair." We will arrange a private conference during which the student can express to us why he or she feels our actions were not fair. This may or may not change our course of action. We are always open to calm, rational discussion of any matter.

*Adapted from Jim Fay and Dr. Charles Fay, Ph.D.*

## Persistent Unacceptable Behavior

If a student displays persistent unacceptable behavior, defined as persistently conducting oneself in a manner that is either physically or emotionally harmful to oneself or others, or is persistently disruptive to the class as a whole, and the above does not work to curb the behavior, further action will be required. These actions include:

1. The persistent unacceptable behavior will be documented by the teacher or aide as soon after its occurrence as possible by completing a Behavior Incident Report. This report will not only document the behavior but will provide context for the behavior.
2. Parents will be notified via email of the unacceptable behavior, as well as what actions were taken by the teacher/aide to correct and stop the behavior.

3. If the student persists in the unacceptable behavior, a meeting will be scheduled with the teacher, principal, and the parents, with the purpose being to develop a written behavior plan for the child, parents, and teacher to follow.
4. If, despite implementation of a behavior plan, the unacceptable behavior continues beyond the limits imposed, parents will be notified via phone that they must pick up their child from school.
5. If the student is unable to modify his or her behavior to meet the behavioral standards in the classroom, St. John's Lutheran School reserves the right to dis-enroll him or her. This dis-enrollment may take place after utilizing the previous steps, or it may be immediate if a student's behavior creates a health and/or safety risk to himself or herself or to other students or staff members.

## Consequences for Serious Offenses

We must emphasize that there are certain behaviors for which clear and immediate consequences must exist. The consequences for any of the behaviors listed below (bullying, possession of weapons or illegal drugs, and sexual harassment) are immediate and non-negotiable. While we understand that intent can be difficult to decipher, any behavior that puts a person's safety at risk must be taken seriously.

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: In-School Suspension
  - The student will spend one entire school day under the supervision of the principal or preschool director.
  - While suspended, a student may not participate in any extracurricular activities, including ESP, until they have returned to school for one day. This means that if a student is suspended from attending school on Friday or sent home from school on a Friday due to a suspension the following Monday, he or she cannot participate in any of the Friday, Saturday, or Sunday games of a tournament or other extra-curricular activities.
  - All homework and quizzes that would have been turned in or taken that day will be recorded as zeros. (The principal will determine whether tests or classroom presentations will be allowed to be made up.)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: Out-of-School Suspension
  - The student will remain home for two days and will not be permitted on school grounds for the duration of the assigned suspension.
  - The same in-school suspension rules listed above will apply.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: Expulsion
  - The student will be expelled from school permanently.
  - Tuition will not be refunded in the instance of expulsion.

The principal reserves the right to skip any of these steps if the situation is deemed to be severe enough in nature.

Additionally, there may be other instances where a student may be expelled from St. John's Lutheran school or parents asked to withdraw their student from the school. In cases of expulsion, the BOE will review the facts of the situation with the principal and reach a decision focused on preserving the best interest of the greater learning environment.

## Bullying – A Serious Offense

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Typically, it is repeated over time. An individual who is being bullied has a hard time defending himself or herself.

Bullying can take many forms:

- Physical bullying (such as hitting or punching)
- Verbal bullying (such as teasing or name calling)
- Nonverbal bullying or emotional bullying (such as intimidation, using gestures, or social exclusion)
- Cyber-bullying or bullying through note writing (such as posting insulting messages on social media, sending insulting messages via email, or sending insulting notes to others in the classroom)

At St. John's Lutheran School, there will be no tolerance for bullying behavior. Teachers and staff members will actively and consistently teach and model positive behavior(s), and immediately address any aggressive or harassing behavior(s). These behaviors will be immediately reported to the principal.

Teachers and staff members demonstrating bullying behaviors will be subject to a conference and review with the principal. An action plan will be created to address needed behavior changes. Follow-up review(s) will take place at intervals determined by the principal and the Board of Education. Severe instances of staff bullying behavior may result in immediate dismissal. Examples of prohibited actions by teachers and staff as a means of discipline include:



1. Subjugation of a child to corporal punishment, which includes but is not limited to:
  - Rough handling
  - Shaking
  - Pinching
  - Shoving
  - Slapping
  - Hitting
  - Hair pulling
  - Kicking
  - Spanking
  - Ear pulling
  - Biting
2. Subjection of a child to emotional stress, which includes but is not limited to:
  - Name calling
  - Ostracism
  - Shaming
  - Making derogatory remarks about a child or the child's family
  - Using language that threatens, humiliates, or frightens the child
3. Punishments for lapses in toileting
4. Withholding food, light, warmth, clothing, or medical care as a punishment for unacceptable behavior
5. The use of physical restraints other than to physically hold a child where containment is necessary to protect a child or others from harm
6. The use of mechanical restraints, such as tying

## Weapons – A Serious Offense

Weapons are not permitted on or near school grounds. "Weapons" include any object, material or substance which in the manner it is used, designed to be used, or intended to be used, can produce death or serious bodily injury. This also includes any object which is generally used for non-violent or non-dangerous purposes but which can be considered a weapon under this policy as a result of its use or intended use. A rendering, replica, or facsimile of a weapon or violent instance is also considered under this policy. The school reserves the right to search the locker, desk, person, and personal belongings of a student when it is believed to be necessary for the health, safety, and welfare of that or another student.

Examples of objects that can be considered a weapon are:

- Firearms, rocks, ball bats, cigarette lighters, knives, bottles, ropes, brass knuckles, sling shots, cans, water pistols, chains, and cap guns

## Illegal Drugs/Alcohol – A Serious Offense

Smoking/vaping, and the use of tobacco products, alcohol, and drugs are prohibited on the school property and grounds, including the parking lots.

## Sexual Harassment – A Serious Offense

Harassment of any nature by students, faculty, staff, or parents is a serious offense and will not be tolerated at St. John's Lutheran School. Sexual harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- slurs, jokes, repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications, unwelcome touching, pressure, threats, or ridicule

Anyone who believes that they have been or are being sexually harassed is strongly encouraged to immediately report the harassment to school authorities (e.g. principal, preschool director, Board of Education chairman).

Teachers and staff members found guilty of sexual harassment will be subject to a conference and review with the principal. An action plan will be created to address needed behavior changes. Follow-up review(s) will take place at intervals determined by the principal and the Board of Education. Severe instances of sexual harassment may result in immediate dismissal.

## Conflict Resolution

Whenever a parent or student has a question or concern, the following procedure based on Matthew 18 should be followed:

1. Contact the teacher first if the problem pertains to the classroom or students. For a question or conflict with another school family member, contact those involved directly before involving school authorities.
2. If the problem is not resolved, involve the principal.
3. If the problem continues to exist, request a meeting with the Board of Education chairperson and principal. This meeting should provide proper closure, with the hope that it can be one that is God-honoring. The Board of Education serves as the policy maker and has charged the principal and the teachers with the responsibility to see that policies are carried out.

If this Christian procedure is followed, problems can be resolved before the situation becomes a matter of gossip and a sin against the 8<sup>th</sup> commandment.

# Technology Use

Technology will be used in the classroom, and students will have access to the Internet to enhance their education. With the ability to use technology comes responsibility. The school and students are expected to treat the use of technological devices ethically and responsibly. The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Any misuse will result in the loss of privileges, disciplinary action, or possible legal action.

St. John's Lutheran School:

- Maintains a content filter to help prevent access to inappropriate information and controversial material. However, on a global network, it is impossible to control all of the information available. The school believes the benefits of the information and interaction the Internet provides to students, in association with adult supervision, outweigh the possibility that users may encounter something not consistent with appropriate educational material.
- Provides careful direction and supervision of students, appropriate to their age.
- Enforces rules for acceptable use of technology.

Students must follow these rules for acceptable use of technology at St. John's Lutheran School:

- Treat all technological equipment with care.
- Use the internet or other network services for educational purposes within the school's policies, objectives, and Christian principles. Using the network to access illegal, obscene, or pornographic material is not allowed.
- Ask for teacher permission to use the Internet or other electronic devices, including cell phones and smart watches.
- Sound should be muted unless the teacher grants permission for use of sound associated with the instructional activities. A teacher may permit the use of earbuds or other types of headphones.
- Voice, video, and image capture applications may only be used with teacher or principal permission.
- Do not use or access personal (home) email accounts or social media during school hours on school computers or personal devices.
- Be a good digital citizen and represent our school well: That includes, but is not limited to:
  - Never send or encourage others to send abusive or threatening messages.
  - Never swear, use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language.
  - Do not send anonymous messages or represent a message to have been written by another – all correspondence must be clearly identifiable as to its originator.

- Do not reveal your name, home address, phone number, names or addresses of others, or any other personal information online.
- Observe copyright laws:
  - If you copy material, you must give credit to the author or source.
  - No software may be reproduced nor can illegal copies of software be used at school.
- Keep passwords private and respect other people's passwords and accounts.
- Refrain from opening, deleting, moving, or modifying other people's files without permission.
- The school can and may review content and messages that are sent through our network system.

### *Chromebooks & Other Learning Devices*

Students in 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade are allowed to bring their own learning device to use in the classrooms. The recommended device is a Chromebook. The device should be in good working condition and easy to use and connect to the school's wireless network. Learning devices will be used to access the student's Google accounts, work on cloud-based assignments, and access the Internet. All rules for acceptable use of technology as noted previously and the following rules apply for student-owned devices:

- The privately owned learning device owner is the only person allowed to use the device.
- Learning devices are to be used only at teacher-approved times during school hours. Devices are not to be used before or after school unless under classroom supervision.
- Internet can be accessed through the school's wireless network only, and not cellular or other connections.
- Learning devices are brought to school at the students' and parents' own risk. In the event that a privately owned device is lost, stolen, or damaged, the school is not responsible for any financial or data loss.
- School personnel are not expected to repair, correct, troubleshoot, or be responsible for malfunctioning personal hardware or software.
- The school reserves the right to examine the privately owned electronic device and search its contents if there is a reason to believe that school policies or local, state, and/or federal laws have been violated.
- Teachers and/or the principal reserves the right to confiscate or withhold the device if a student is misusing it.

## Lockers

The provision of a hallway locker is a privilege rather than a right. Lockers are the property of St. John's Lutheran School and are provided as a service to 2<sup>nd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students. The school accepts no responsibility for the contents of any locker or lost/stolen items. The school reserves the right to search the locker, desk, person, and personal belongings of a student when it is believed to be necessary for the health, safety, and welfare of that or another student. A locker is assigned to each student at the beginning of the year or upon enrollment. Lockers are only available for use by enrolled students when school is in session. Each student is expected to abide by the following rules and guidelines:

- Use only the locker assigned to you.
- Do not tamper with lockers or locks.
- Keep your locker locked at all times (for applicable grades). Always close the door, turn the combination dial, and test the door to be sure it is locked.
- Memorize your locker combination. Do not share locker combinations with anyone.
- Storage or possession of items prohibited at school such as alcoholic beverages, illegal substances, flammable liquids, weapons, explosives, and any other potentially dangerous substances or item is strictly forbidden in lockers.
- You are responsible for the care and appearance of your locker. Lockers should be kept clean and neat, both inside and outside. You may occasionally be asked to clean out your locker.
- Do not use any adhesives to attach anything to a locker surface.
- Do not keep food in your locker outside of school hours, including weekends and holiday breaks.
- Backpacks and cell phones should remain in your locker during the school day. It is advisable that you keep valuables such as money, electronic devices, etc. in your locker when not in use.
- Report locker issues to your homeroom teacher.
- All items must be removed from your locker at the end of each school year. Homeroom teachers will inspect lockers and dispose of anything left inside.

## Dress Code

At St. John's Lutheran School, the dress of the students shall reflect the modest and good taste becoming a Christian person.

The following dress code applies both at school and at all school functions:

- Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be mid-length or longer.
- Shorts can be worn from April 15<sup>th</sup> to October 15<sup>th</sup>.
- 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade: Leggings or spandex shorts are not acceptable classroom dress unless worn under appropriate clothing, such as mid-length shirts, skirts, dresses or shorts.

- It is inappropriate to wear clothing advertising alcohol, cigarettes, or gambling, or clothing that depicts sexual innuendos, bands/music groups, offensive language, put-downs, or inappropriate pictures (including demonic symbols or violence, skulls, crossbones, or skeletons, etc.)
- Clothing that at any time exposes undergarments, the midriff, or back is not acceptable.
- No spandex, tube tops, form fitting tops, spaghetti straps, or low necklines are allowed.
- Clothing should not have holes in them nor be cut off with frayed ends.
- Boots and warm outerwear are to be worn when the weather dictates, so that students may participate in outside classes and activities.
- Footwear must have a back strap and be worn with socks. Students must have one pair of footwear for indoors and one for outdoors. The pair for indoors will remain at school for students to change into upon arrival.
- Tennis shoes are required for PE. Slip-on shoes are not acceptable for PE activities. Non-marking shoes are needed for indoor use.
- Hats, hoods, and bandanas may not be worn inside the building.
- Pajamas are not proper school attire.
- No unnatural hair color will be permitted.

The first violation of the dress code will result in a warning. Subsequent violations will result in a consequence as determined by the teacher, preschool director, or principal.

## Recess

Students must obey the following recess rules:

- Stay inside the designated boundaries: K-8 playground and swings, athletic fields, and the blacktop area. The preschool playground is reserved for preschool use.
- Play only approved activities on the blacktop area. The activities can include 4-square, hopscotch, jump rope, basketball, and bouncing balls. There can be no kicking or throwing balls in this area.
- No running in front, behind or underneath other students who are swinging.
- Go down the slides only – do not walk or climb up the slide.
- Keep rocks, sticks, etc. on the ground, but creative (non-weapon) play with these items is allowed and encouraged.
- Keep off the baseball field during the wet season or during spring thaw.
- Play on the preschool playground is limited to preschool students only.

Note: Students have indoor recess if, at the time they'd otherwise go outside, the temperature is zero degrees or below OR if the windchill is -10 degrees or below.

# Housekeeping

Everyone at St. John's Lutheran School & Preschool will work together to keep the church and school clean and presentable and to increase the lifespan of the facility.

- Shoes, Jackets, Backpacks, & Lunch Containers
  - Shoes, jackets, backpacks, and lunch containers should be stored neatly in each class's designated area. Students will use the hooks, bins, cubes, and carpeted mats provided.
  - Shoes should be kept clean.
- Eating & Drinking
  - No colored drinks are allowed in the building, except in or near the cafeteria and gym.
  - Eating is not allowed in the classrooms except during designated breakfast time, snack time, and special occasions such as birthdays, holidays, and class parties.
- Common Sense
  - If you drop it, pick it up.
  - If you see trash on the floor, pick it up and dispose of it appropriately.
  - If you spill it, wipe it up or notify someone.
  - Keep classrooms, hallways, walls, ceilings, and bathrooms clean.
  - If you see vandalism, report it.
- Lost & Found
  - A lost and found area will be available for parents and children to check regularly. Items will be periodically cleared out and given to charity.

## GENERAL

### Hours of Operation

Official school hours for Preschool – 8<sup>th</sup> grade are 8:00am – 3:00pm.

### Arrival & Dismissal

For arrival:

- School doors open at 7:00am for grades Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> grade and at 7:30am for Preschool.
- Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students arriving between 7:00-7:30am will be supervised and must wait in the entrance area until they are excused by the morning bell to go to their classroom. Classroom doors open at 7:30am.

- All K-8<sup>th</sup> grade students are encouraged to arrive by 7:45am to allow time to get settled and prepare for the day.
- Students are to enter the building through the main entrance on the north side of the building (door #1). All other entrances will be locked.
  - Bus drivers dropping off children will do so at the curb in front of the building.
  - Parents dropping off children should enter the parking lot from Mystique Dr. and continue forward to the front curb. Pull forward as far as possible to allow the maximum number of cars to unload. Students should quickly exit the car and come inside the school. Students should not get out of the car until parked at the curb.
  - Parents parking in the lot *must escort their children* into the building using the crosswalk.
  - Parents who wish to have their children walk or bike to school must consult with the principal first to determine a safe plan. Students must obey all traffic rules. Bikes are not to be ridden until the school day ends unless specific permission has been given by the teacher. If students need to cross County Road 101, they must walk their bike across the road with the supervision of an adult. The use of skateboards, scooters, heelys, or roller blades is prohibited.
  - Students are to report directly to their classroom or as directed by the teacher.
- **All cell phone use by both parents and children during arrival is prohibited.**
- Once on school premises, students may not leave unless given special permission by a teacher.

For dismissal:

- Students must leave school by 3:20pm, unless participating in the extended school program (ESP) or being supervised by staff prior to an extracurricular activity. Students not picked up by 3:20pm will be admitted to ESP; all applicable ESP fees will apply, including a drop-in fee per child.
  - If a student is not able to attend ESP because of services being suspended or terminated, a penalty fee of \$1.00 per minute beginning at 3:21pm will be applied for every minute the student remains at school.
- Students are to exit the building through the main entrance on the north side of the building (door #1).
  - Bus drivers will pick up children at the curb in front of the building and exit the parking lot before parents.
  - Parents picking up children in carline should line up in the back of the parking lot until a school official waves the first car forward to the curb in front of the building. Please have your family carline sign visible so that communication for your child(ren) to meet you is clear and efficient. Pull all the way forward to allow more cars to stop along the



curb. Children should quickly enter the car and parents drive away from the curb, then pull out of the way in the parking lot to help with child safety restraints as needed.

- Parents may not use the alternate lot or CR 101 entrance (door #3) to pick up students.
- Parents parking in the lot *must escort their children* from the building to the car using the crosswalk.
- Parents who wish to have their children walk or bike home from school must consult with the principal first to determine a safe plan. The use of skateboards, scooters, heelys, or roller blades is prohibited.
- **All cell phone use by both parents and children during dismissal is prohibited.**

## Attendance

Regular attendance is necessary for overall student success and is expected every scheduled school day. Attendance does affect a student's academic achievement. Students who attend school regularly perform better in class.

Absences will be considered *excused* or *unexcused* and will be tracked in FACTS.

If a student shows signs of illness, he or she should be kept at home per school guidelines. An absence in the case of illness is considered excused as long as the school secretary is contacted no later than 8:30am. Please do not rely on an email to your child's teacher to communicate an absence.

Parents are encouraged to align extended vacations with vacation days already offered during school breaks. If your child must be absent for any reason other than illness or family emergency, please inform the school secretary at least two weeks prior to the absence and email a written request for excused absences on the date(s) in question to the principal. Once travel or an extenuating event is *excused* by the principal, the following protocol must be followed:

- At least two weeks prior to leaving, the parent and student should contact each teacher to determine what work needs to be completed and when.
  - Teachers may require that some work is completed prior to leaving.
  - The work that teachers determine may be finished upon a student's return must be completed according to make-up work guidelines.

Reminder: If extended travel is *not excused* by the principal, no additional time is given to make up work and late-work penalties will apply.

Please try to schedule doctor and dentist appointments during days or times when school is not in session. If a student misses two hours or more in any given day of school, he or she will be marked absent for half the day. Advance notice for appointments is required for it to be an *excused* absence.

The school secretary must be notified at least one day prior to the appointment or the absence will not be counted as *excused*.

## Tardies & Leaving Early

To encourage responsibility and to provide a successful start to the day for your child, tardiness should be avoided. K-8<sup>th</sup> grade students who are not in the classroom by 8:00am will receive a tardy. Tardy students need to check in with the secretary before going to the classroom.

When there is substantial inclement weather or a traffic accident that affects the roads for drivers in the morning, tardies within a reasonable amount of time will be *excused*. All other tardies will be considered *unexcused*, including those caused by traffic, road construction, poor planning, etc. Calling the school ahead of time does not excuse a tardy.

When a student accumulates five tardies, the teacher and/or the principal will contact the parent(s) with an expected meeting time to discuss a plan of action outlining future consequences. These may be individualized according to the situation.

Leaving early for any reason outside of a previously arranged appointment per school policy is not allowed. Infractions will be handled in the same manner as tardies.

## Truancy

A child is considered truant when he or she accumulates seven or more unexcused absences in a single school year. The school has a right to enforce truancy laws and may seek intervention from local authorities. Truant students may be subject to grade level failure.

Absences of seven or more consecutive days will be handled on a case-by-case basis and may require additional evidence supporting the reason for the extended absence to continue to be considered excused.

## Meals & Snacks

Both breakfast and lunch are provided daily for K-8 students free of charge for the 2024/2025 school year thanks to a national government program. Breakfast is served in the cafeteria from 7:30-7:50am, and students may or may not opt to participate. Monthly breakfast menus are available on the school website.

Students have the option of bringing their own lunch each day or purchasing a lunch prepared and served by our food service staff. For those who bring their lunch, refrigeration and microwaves are not available, and soda is not allowed. Milk, however, may be purchased for a small fee. Monthly hot lunch menus are available on the school website.

While breakfast and lunch are free for students, second portions for lunch and lunch for non-students do cost. The price for the 2024/2025 school year is as follows.

- Second serving: \$2.35
- Milk: \$0.49
- Non-student: \$5.33

Payment for meals may be made via your FACTS account.

Any student who forgets his or her lunch will be provided a hot lunch, and the family will be billed through FACTS (when applicable). Non-students, such as visiting parents, who wish to eat a hot lunch should contact the front office staff by 8:30am on the day that lunch is desired.

## Special Treats

Treats for special occasions, such as a child's birthday, are welcome. However, any treats brought with the intention of sharing must be store-bought; homemade treats are not allowed. Please make sure there are enough available for all children to enjoy and that a different treat is available, if needed, for any child with allergies. The time of day the special treat is shared is left to teacher's discretion.

## Transportation

St. John's Lutheran School owns and maintains a school bus. This bus is available for K-8<sup>th</sup> grade student transportation to and/or from school based on having a driver and on route availability established at the beginning of each school year. Participation fees apply.

Students living outside of District #279 may receive a bus reimbursement from their school district following each school year. Reimbursement amounts and policies vary by district.

Preschool-8<sup>th</sup> grade students ride the St. John's Lutheran School bus for field trips unless otherwise indicated on the field trip permission form.

All students participate in bus safety and bus rules training in the fall of each year. Bus transportation is a privilege, not a right. Students will be suspended from riding the bus temporarily or permanently for causing a problem. Students must obey the following school bus rules:

- Listen, obey, and show proper respect to the driver at all times.

- Be at the bus stop on time.
- Wait for the bus off the roadway.
- Cross the road ten feet in front of the bus.
- Keep head and hands inside the bus.
- Keep hands and objects to yourself.
- Stay in one seat.
- Use normal conversational voice or quieter.
- Help to keep the bus clean.
- Do not eat food or drink on the bus.
- Refrain from bringing skateboards, bats, and toys onto the bus.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

### Sources of Medical Care for Students

The following sources of medical care are available for all students and will be utilized as necessary:

- First aid for minor injuries will be administered by St. John's staff trained in first aid, including our school nurse. The school nurse assists both students and families with health at school.
- Emergency medical professionals, including EMTs and paramedics, notified through 911
  - St. John's will allow the medical professionals to determine which area hospital is best equipped to help sick/injured students.

### Required Forms

Birth certificates, immunization records, and emergency contact information are required for K-8<sup>th</sup> enrollment, as previously stated in this handbook; preschool enrollment includes the above as well as a health care summary from the child's pediatrician.

### Children's Medical Information

It is the sole responsibility of the parent to notify St. John's of any medical conditions, allergies (including food allergies), or needs for their child. Parents are required to keep this information up-to-date and notify the front office of any changes, including when any new immunizations are received.

### Administration of Medicine

A medication form is required for all prescription medication and over-the-counter medication to be administered at school. This form may be obtained from the school nurse or front office and includes

both a physician's written order and parent signature. All medications must be current, meaning that they cannot be expired, and must be in the original pharmacy-labeled container. Whenever possible, medications should be given at home to avoid interruptions in the school day. Students may bring their own cough drops with a note from home authorizing their use at school.

## Use of EpiPens

Emergency stock epinephrine auto-injectors are available during the school day in a secure box in the kitchen and in the nurse's office. Each location is stocked with an EpiPen auto-injector pack which includes a junior dose for those between 33 to 66 pounds and a regular dose for those over 66 pounds. The EpiPens will be available for individuals with unidentified allergies and experience an unexpected anaphylactic reaction during the school day. These are not intended for students who have identified severe allergies and a health plan requiring them to have an EpiPen available at all times but may be used for anyone experiencing a severe anaphylactic reaction.

## Sick Children

Children should be kept home if they are ill or exhibit any of the following symptoms: a temperature over 100 degrees, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Any student who is feeling ill or displays any of the above symptoms while at school will be isolated from his or her classroom and a parent will be notified to pick up the child. Parents are expected to pick up a sick child from school within 1 hour of notification.

Students must be symptom-free without the aid of medication for a period of 24 hours before returning to school.

All students will be expected to participate in recess and PE unless they have a written excuse from a parent or doctor.

In the event of a contagious reportable disease, including but not limited to, strep throat, pink eye, lice, scabies, ringworm, chicken pox, and COVID-19, parents are required to inform the front office within 24 hours of the diagnosis.

Parents will be notified by email of any confirmed diagnosis of a contagious reportable disease at St. John's.

For illnesses and diseases, K-8 will follow requirements of local and state health departments and report to them as required. For those with students in preschool, please note that as a licensed program under the Department of Human Services (DHS), the preschool program will follow all requirements of DHS. Therefore, preschool requirements may differ from those of K-8.

## Injured Children

In the event that a child is injured while at school, the following will occur:

- Minor injury:
  - Injuries requiring minor treatment (such as for bloody noses, minor cuts/scrapes, etc.) will be cared for using appropriate first aid measures by trained staff.
  - The injury and treatment will be recorded in the accident/injury log.
  - If warranted by the severity of the injury, parents will be notified.
- Injury requiring medical care:
  - Immediate action will be taken to ensure the safety of the injured child and others in the area.
  - The front office staff will be notified to assist.
  - First aid will be administered as necessary by trained staff. Safety precautions will be taken by those administering aid, including wearing gloves if blood or other bodily fluids are present.
  - 911 will be contacted if needed. If so, one staff person will remain with the injured child while another one places the call.
  - Parents will be notified immediately.
  - Emergency medical services will transport the child, if needed and at the parents' expense, to the appropriate hospital of their choice. A staff member will accompany the injured child if a parent is not present.
  - An Injury/Incident Report will be completed by staff.

All accident, injury, and incidents, along with their subsequent reports, will be reviewed annually by the principal and preschool director in conjunction with the school nurse. An analysis of the information will be performed to determine if any modifications to policies and procedures are needed.

## Mandatory Reporting

Teachers and staff members are mandated reporters, which means they are legally obligated to report any signs or conversations of abuse or neglect of a child to the appropriate authorities immediately.

## Safety Drills

Students will participate in 5 fire drills, 1 severe weather drill, and 5 intruder drills throughout the school year.

## COMMUNICATION

Open, on-going communication is critical for student success at St. John's. Parent email and phone numbers are collected on or before Back-to-School Night in mid-August and must be kept up to date at all times.

- FACTS
  - FACTS is a fully integrated online student information system used at St. John's Lutheran School to record student information and documentation, grades, attendance, report cards, etc. Parents are granted access to the FACTS Parent Portal in order to access this information.
- Text Messages
  - Text messages will be used to send important information such as school closures and emergency alerts. All messages will come from the number 317-06 and will begin with "SJL-MN."
- Report Cards
  - Report cards are each issued 3 times per year for K-8<sup>th</sup> grade.
  - Preschool progress reports are issued 3 times per year.
- Student Records
  - Your child's records are carefully maintained as your child attends St. John's Lutheran School. Scholastic records are forwarded upon transfer to a new school in compliance with the law. St. John's will retain the originals of the basic information and only copies will be mailed to the transferred school. Parents may not hand deliver their child's records to the next school.
  - Test results are included in the child's record file. These test results are used by the staff for curriculum planning and for pupil guidance. Diagnostic tests are given when necessary and advisable. An accurate record of test results is kept to show the progress of the child.
  - No individual or agency outside our school will be permitted to inspect your child's school records without your written permission. Should you wish to examine your child's record file, you may arrange to do so by making an appointment with the principal. Any challenge of the accuracy, relevance, or propriety of an entry in the school pupil records, exclusive of academic grades (unless the grade is not accurately recorded), can be made through the principal. Parents also have the right to insert a reasonable statement setting forth their position on any disputed information contained in the record.
- Parent/Teacher Conferences

- These mandatory meetings are a great opportunity to talk about each student's achievements and opportunities for improvement.
  - PS-8<sup>th</sup> grade conferences take place in the fall/winter and again in the spring.
- In-Person Meetings
  - "Tell the Teacher More Days" are scheduled in August to initiate positive parent/teacher communication about each student.
  - Occasionally during the school year, in-person meetings will need to be scheduled to address concerns or bring new ideas. Parents, teachers, or staff members may schedule these meetings at agreed-upon times.
- Email & Phone
  - Most communication will take place via email and occasionally via phone.
  - Teachers and staff commit to responding to parent emails and phone calls within 48 hours and request that same courtesy from parents.
  - When teachers email parents, they may include the principal in the "cc" line of the email message.
  - All-school emails will be sent sparingly to help filter key communication.
  - Text messaging between parents and teachers/staff for school purposes is discouraged to help maintain professionalism. We encourage email as the primary form of written communication.
  - Students must ask teacher permission to use phones (cell phones or school phones) during school hours, including field trips, concerts, and other events. In the event of improper use, cell phones and other electronic devices will be confiscated and returned to parents only. The secretaries are available to forward messages to students from 7:30am – 3:00pm.
- Classroom Newsletters
  - Preschool – 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers send home a printed daily or weekly classroom newsletter.
- All-School Newsletter
  - Every Thursday, the school publishes "The Eagle Connection" all-school newsletter. The newsletter will be sent to parents via email and posted on the school website.
- Social Media
  - The following are the official social media accounts for St. John's:
    - [www.facebook.com/STJLeagles](http://www.facebook.com/STJLeagles)
    - [www.instagram.com/STJLeagles](http://www.instagram.com/STJLeagles)
- Website
  - The school website is maintained at [www.stjlutherschool.org](http://www.stjlutherschool.org)
- Yearbook



- A yearbook is created and distributed each year and includes individual and group pictures of each student from preschool-8<sup>th</sup> grade.

## SCHOOL OPERATIONS & POLICIES

### Inclement Weather

- In case of bad weather, refer to local TV stations, email, school website, and school social media for notification of school closings. A text message from 317-06 will also be sent to parents to notify them of the closure.
  - When District #279 schools close, St. John's Lutheran School will also close.
  - The extended school program (ESP) will also be closed if St. John's is closed due to inclement weather, or if school closes early during the day.
- In case of an all-school emergency, refer to your email as that is the fastest way for the school to communicate to all parents. Parents may also contact Corcoran Police, as they will be the school's first contact in the event of an all-school emergency.
- Individual health or other individual emergencies will be communicated via phone.

### Visitation Policy

All visitors to the school are required to 1) sign in at the school office when first entering the building, 2) wear a name badge while on school property, and 3) check out upon leaving.

### Parental Permission Policy

A permission form must be completed by each family annually on or before Back-to-School Night in mid-August granting permission or denial to use a child's image and/or name for marketing purposes. In addition, no child will be involved in any occasion of research, experimental procedure, or public relations activity without parent permission. Permission forms are maintained within the child's records.

### Pet Policy

Fur-bearing and warm-blooded animals, especially cats and dogs, are triggers for many students with asthma and allergies. Therefore, cats or dogs are not allowed in the school building(s) with the exception of service animals and administration-approved registered therapy animals.

Requests to bring animals to school must be brought to the principal or preschool director for approval. If approved, any animal, other than service animals and administration-approved registered therapy

animals, brought to school by a student, parent, or teacher, should be brought in a cage or muzzled and on a leash.

Anybody bringing any animal to school is strictly liable personally for the injury of the person bitten/scratched by it. Proof of insurance may be required.

## EXTENDED SCHOOL PROGRAM (ESP)

St. John's Extended School Program (ESP) is for families who need childcare beyond the normal school hours. The program provides a safe environment for children to socialize, play, eat a snack, and do homework.

### Availability & Registration

ESP is available for all students in grades Preschool-8<sup>th</sup> grade from 3:00-5:30pm each academic day. Spots are based on the number of staff available, with priority given to those families who schedule their ESP usage in advance using Sign-Up Genius.

Because children are automatically enrolled for ESP when registering for school, there is no additional need to register your child for ESP.

### Scheduling Your Child

Each week a Sign-Up Genius link is included in the Eagle Connection All-School Newsletter, which is emailed to parents every Thursday. This link offers families the ability to schedule their children for ESP either one week at a time or for an extended period.

Schedules for the upcoming week must be submitted no later than each Thursday at 11:59pm. At that time, scheduling for that coming Monday through Friday is closed, and the ESP director must be contacted to make any changes or additions to the schedule. If availability remains, your child will be scheduled to attend; a drop-in fee may apply, and this fee is in addition to the regular daily rate.

In the event that a particular day is full, ESP will not be available for drop-ins, and alternate plans will need to be made by the parents for the child. **ESP is not guaranteed for children who are not scheduled.**

Any child who has not been picked up by 3:20pm and is not involved in afterschool activities will be sent to ESP. A \$5.00 drop-in fee per child, in addition to the daily rate, will be charged.

## Rates & Billing

ESP charges a flat daily rate of \$10.00 per child, regardless of the amount of time spent in attendance each day (this rate does not apply to Summer ESP).

Parents are billed for ESP use through their FACTS account.

## Picking Up Your Child from ESP

Parents picking up their child from ESP must park in the back lot between the school and the parsonage. Upon arrival, use the buzzer located by door #7 and be prepared to show ID, as all ESP staff are trained to ask for identification from any unknown individuals. Once inside, please go directly to the ESP room to sign your child out using your assigned personal identification number. Children will only be released to persons who are listed as authorized.

ESP closes daily at 5:30pm. Late pick-up fees will be automatically charged for any child remaining at ESP after 5:30pm. Families will be charged a total of \$1.00 per child per minute for every minute late beginning at 5:31pm. These charges will be automatically applied to the family's account. Parents should either call the ESP room at 763-420-2426 ext. 37 during ESP hours or contact the ESP director to notify staff of any extenuating circumstances.

## Penalty Fees

The following penalty fees will be applied when applicable. These fees are in addition to the standard daily rate.

- **Drop-in fee:** \$5.00 for every child who attends unscheduled or with 24-hours or less notice.
- **Late pick-up fee:** \$1.00 per child for every minute late beginning at 5:31 pm.
- **No-show fee:** \$3.00 for every child who does not attend when scheduled for the day; this excludes absences due to illness IF the ESP director is notified.
- **Late payment fee:** Please refer to your FACTS account for information on late payments.

## Termination of ESP Services

ESP is a privilege. Services may be suspended or terminated by the ESP director or the principal as needed for reasons including but not limited to:

- Continuous behavior that poses problems and/or risks to self, other students, or staff
- Repeatedly arriving after 5:30pm to pick up your child

- Repeated failure to submit timely attendance schedules
- Repeated failure to submit timely ESP payments

## Financial/Tax Statements

Please refer to your FACTS account for information regarding financial and tax statements.

## Summer ESP

Full-day Summer ESP will be offered for most of the summer months when adequate interest and staffing are available. The summer program is available only to those students entering Kindergarten-6<sup>th</sup> grade. Information regarding Summer ESP is released in late-winter to early-spring.

Families must be up to date with all ESP payments to attend Summer ESP.