

Parent/Student Handbook

2025-2026



St. John's
Lutheran School

300 E Fourth Street
Chaska, MN 55318

(952) 448-2526
www.sjschaska.org

DAILY HOURS OF OPERATION

Activity	Time	Frequency
School Office Hours	8:30 AM – 4:30 PM	Daily
Report Absences by Phone	8:30 AM – 9:30 AM	Daily
School Doors Open	9:00 AM	Daily
Classes Begin	9:20 AM	Daily
Classes Dismissed	3:50 PM	Daily
Chapel	9:30 AM	Thursdays

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AT ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

OUR MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

Mission: Equipping a life with a foundation of faith.

Vision: A vibrant school community where we prepare students to be world ready and faith secure.

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL DESIRES TO PROVIDE:

A loving, Christian environment:

- To teach children about the love of Jesus Christ, that through the Holy Spirit, they may come to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior.
- To provide a warm, safe, and caring environment in which our children can learn and develop.
- To build within our children an understanding of God's great love for them and a desire to be witnesses of that love and good news as they share it with others around them.

A talented, caring staff:

- To build an atmosphere of caring and sharing, where children learn to respect one another and build the necessary social skills that will enable them to attain success.
- To utilize the abilities of teachers, parents, students, staff, and others to achieve these goals.

Excellence in education:

- To provide the children of our school with a challenging, motivating, and innovative curriculum, taught by teachers who care about the children's best interests.

Development of the whole child:

- To assist parents and cooperate with them in the task of educating their children in becoming useful and productive Christian citizens.
 - To allow each child the chance to discover his/her God-given talents and abilities, and to allow those talents and abilities to flourish.
-

OUR BELIEFS

St. John's Lutheran School and Early Childhood Center are ministries of St. John's Lutheran Church and are grounded in the teachings of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). We believe that every child is a precious gift from God, created in His image, deeply loved by Him, and called to grow in faith, knowledge, and service.

We believe:

- In one God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (*Genesis 1:1*)
- That the Bible is the inspired and true Word of God, and it serves as the foundation for all teaching, learning, and daily life. (*2 Timothy 3:16*)
- That Jesus Christ, true God and true man, lived a perfect life, died for our sins, and rose again to bring us forgiveness and eternal life. (*Mark 10:45*)
- That we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, not by our own efforts or good works. (*Ephesians 2:8–9*)
- That the Holy Spirit creates and strengthens faith in our hearts through God's Word and Sacraments. (*1 Corinthians 12:3*)
- That the Church is the body of Christ, where believers gather to worship, receive God's gifts, and encourage one another in faith and life. (*Romans 12:4–5*)

At St. John's, we strive to reflect Christ's love daily - through faith-integrated education, compassionate care, and meaningful relationships. Whether nurturing young learners in our early childhood classrooms or guiding students through the elementary and middle school years, our mission is to help each child grow in their identity as a beloved child of God and walk as a disciple of Jesus.

We joyfully welcome children and families from all backgrounds and invite you to grow with us in a Christ-centered, grace-filled community.

THE PURPOSE OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN SCHOOL

St. John's Lutheran School is supported by the congregation to assist parents in fulfilling their God-given responsibility (Ephesians 6:4) to raise their children in the instruction of the Lord. The school seeks to meet the needs of the whole child by developing physical, mental, and spiritual skills, guiding students to live their lives in service to Jesus Christ.

NATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOL ACCREDITING ASSOCIATION

St. John's Lutheran School is a fully accredited member of the National Lutheran School Accreditation Association. St. John's meets or exceeds all national criteria and maintains the high standards set forth by the NLSAA.

PART ONE: THE OPERATION OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN SCHOOL

ADMINISTRATION

Because St. John's Lutheran School is maintained by St. John's Lutheran Church, final authority over the school rests with the congregation and its governing body, the Voters' Assembly.

To promote greater efficiency and ease of administration, the Voters' Assembly has established a Board of Education. This Board is composed of lay members, an Elder representative, faculty members, and the principal, who serves as an ex-officio member. The Board of Education establishes major school policies and is available to listen to concerns parents may have regarding policies and procedures. Board members for the current school year are listed on the back cover of this handbook.

ADMISSION POLICIES

DEFINITION OF A ST. JOHN'S MEMBER

Member families are defined as those in which one or both parents and/or legal guardians, along with the enrolled child, are listed on the membership rolls of St. John's Lutheran Church, Chaska. St. John's desires that all members of our church family grow in faith and discipleship.

Active member families consistently receive God's grace through the many opportunities for spiritual nourishment provided through Word and Sacrament. They faithfully worship together at St. John's, regularly attend Bible studies, and encourage their children to participate in Sunday School. Active members live out their faith through daily prayer, joyful stewardship of time, talents, and treasures, and mutual support within the Christian community. As church and school leadership, we are committed to walking alongside you in your faith journey. We look forward to our partnership in the ministry God has placed before us.

CHANGES IN MEMBER/NON-MEMBER STATUS

If a non-member family becomes members during the school year, their status will be adjusted for tuition purposes effective the month following their formal recognition as members of St. John's Lutheran Church. Membership requirements may be obtained through the church office or by speaking with one of our pastors.

At the start of the month in which a family is officially recognized as members, their billing will be adjusted to reflect the member tuition rate for the remainder of the school year. If non-member tuition was paid in full at the start of the year, monthly reimbursements will be issued for the difference between the non-member and member tuition rates for the remaining months.

ENROLLMENT PROCESS

Kindergarten

- **Eligibility:** Must turn **5 years old by September 1.**
- **Steps:**
 1. New families: Interview with the principal.
 2. Completion of New Student Application.
 3. Create a new account on TADS
 4. Pay registration fee.
 5. If needed: apply for financial aid.
 6. By July 1: Set up a tuition payment plan.
 7. In August: Assessments

* Health forms are required upon acceptance.

Grades 1–8

- **Eligibility:** Must turn **6 years old by September 1** for Grade 1.
- **Steps:**
 1. Interview with principal.
 2. Completion of New Student Application.
 3. Placement or readiness tests.
 4. Create a new account on TADS.
 5. Pay registration fee.
 6. If needed: apply for financial aid.
 7. By July 1: Set up tuition payment plan.

* Health forms and academic records are required upon acceptance.

General Timeline

- **New Student Applications:** Accepted at any time
- **Registration opens:** Last Monday in January
- **Apply for Financial Aid:** by May 15
- **Set up Tuition Payment Plan:** July

WAITING LIST POLICY

Students on the waiting list must have a New Student Application on file with the school office. The registration fee is due within one week of the student being notified of acceptance.

STAFFING GUIDELINES

The following staffing guidelines support St. John's mission, vision, and educational goals:

- Provide an aide in any single-section kindergarten or 1st grade class with 18 or more students.
 - Maintain a student-to-teacher ratio of no more than 24:1 in kindergarten through 4th grade.
 - Maintain a student-to-teacher ratio of no more than 25:1 in grades 5 through 8.
-

TUITION

The Board of Education embraces its Christian responsibility to support the enrollment of both member and non-member families in St. John's Lutheran School. Evangelism through education is pleasing to God. At the same time, wise stewardship is required to support the school's operations. Therefore, families are expected to help financially support this ministry through tuition. The following policies apply:

- Tuition is subsidized by church contributions.
- **Tuition Rates** – Tuition rates are determined by January in preparation for the upcoming school year.
- **Tuition Assistance** – Financial aid is available through the “*Little Lambs Tuition Fund.*” Applications must be submitted through TADS by May 15.
- **Payment of Tuition** – Payment plans (including 12-month auto-pay) must be set up by July 1.
- **Registration Fee** – The registration fee submitted is non-refundable. *

*Unless satisfactory arrangements have been made in writing with the Administration and/or Board of Education.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum at St. John's Lutheran School is grounded in the recommended courses of study from both the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the State of Minnesota. These governing bodies set the standards for preparing students for success beyond our school. Graduates are well equipped for secondary education at both Lutheran and public high schools.

Our curriculum is designed to be academically challenging, engaging, and motivating. Classes are taught in a warm, caring environment, based on the understanding that children who feel safe and valued are better able to learn. Our dedicated and nurturing teachers help students develop the skills needed to succeed academically, build healthy self-esteem, and cultivate a positive attitude toward learning.

Each day begins and ends with prayer. Students are instructed in Christian morals and values and taught how God's Word applies to their everyday lives. This foundation helps students grow in Christian discernment and live out their faith in practical ways.

CONTENT

A comprehensive Curriculum Guide is available to parents and staff upon request in the school office. This guide outlines the curriculum selection process and provides grade-level specifics for all subject areas.

Summary of Curricular Areas:

- **Religion:** Worship, Bible study, Catechism instruction, memory work, and confirmation preparation
- **Language Arts:** Reading and literature, grammar, spelling, research, creative writing, public speaking, and handwriting
- **Mathematics:** Number concepts, computation, problem-solving, and foundations of algebra and geometry
- **Social Studies:** Sociology, cultures, geography, history, citizenship, and current events
- **Science:** Laboratory experiences and foundations in physical, life, earth sciences, and chemistry
- **Health:** God-pleasing attitudes about self and others, human sexuality, and environmental stewardship
- **Physical Education:** Basic movement, rhythms, tumbling, fitness, games, and team sports
- **Fine Arts:** Art and music appreciation, choir, instrumental music, drawing, painting, and crafts
- **Computer Skills:** Keyboarding, word processing, internet safety, and digital research
- **STEM:** Integration of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics concepts through hands-on learning
- **Social Emotional Learning (SEL):** Understand and manage emotions, build positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and grow in Christlike character.

In addition to core instruction, St. John's offers enriching opportunities such as musicals, choral and instrumental programs, class trips, guest speakers, and outdoor education experiences.

CONFIRMATION

Students in grades 7–8 participate in a two-year program of instruction in the fundamentals of Christian doctrine as preparation for confirmation and church membership. Classes are held weekly during the school day and on Sunday mornings from 9:30–10:30 AM, from September through May.

TEXTBOOKS AND SUPPLIES

All textbooks are provided on loan to students through the Eastern Carver County School District, though materials with religious content are excluded from this program. Many textbooks and supplies are also funded by St. John's Lutheran Church.

Students are expected to care for all materials responsibly. Fines will be assessed for damaged books, and replacement costs will be charged for lost items.

A school supply list will be distributed to families prior to the beginning of each school year.

TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE

St. John's Lutheran School provides access to Chromebooks and Google Apps for Education to support learning. Use of school technology is a privilege, not a right, and students are expected to follow all guidelines for responsible and safe use.

Expectations for Students:

- Use only assigned devices and accounts; never access another student's account.
- Technology use must be teacher-approved and for school-related purposes only.
- Social media access is prohibited during school.
- Students are responsible for the care of devices and may be held accountable for damages.
- Personal login information must be kept private.
- Files may only be shared as directed by the teacher.
- Students may not download or upload unauthorized content.
- No personal information should be shared online.
- Inappropriate language or messaging is strictly prohibited.
- No online purchasing is allowed.
- All work submitted must be the student's own (no plagiarism).

Additional Notes:

- Internet use is monitored to protect students' safety.
- A signed Acceptable Use Agreement is required for all students.
- Google account access is available to students in grades 1–8 with parent permission.

A complete copy of the Technology Acceptable Use Policy is available by request from the school office.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued at the end of each trimester via Gradelink. They include academic progress along with a summary of behavioral and social development. These reports are intended to guide and support student growth. Open communication between parents and teachers is key to student success and well-being.

HONOR AND MERIT ROLL

Honor and Merit Rolls are published for students in grades 6–8 following each trimester.

- **Honor Roll:** GPA of 3.70–4.00
 - **Merit Roll:** GPA of 3.25–3.69
-

GRADING SCALE FOR GRADES K–2

We believe that competition for academic grades is not developmentally appropriate in the early grades. Instead, our grading system reflects individual growth and progress.

Kindergarten

- **C** – Consistently progressing; good grasp of materials
- **I** – Improving; needs more practice or support
- **B** – Beginning skills; still developing
- **Blank** – Skill not assessed this grading period

Grades 1–2

- **E** – Exceptional work
- **S+** – Strong effort and notable improvement
- **S** – Meeting expectations and working to potential
- **S-** – Below potential; improvement expected
- **N** – Needs improvement
- **U** – Unsatisfactory work; revision required

GRADING SCALE FOR GRADES 3–8

Grade	Percentage	GPA	Grade	Percentage	GPA
A	100–95%	4.0	C	77–75%	2.0
A-	94–91%	3.66	C-	74–71%	1.66
B+	90–88%	3.33	D+	70–68%	1.33
B	87–85%	3.0	D	67–65%	1.0
B-	84–81%	2.66	D-	64–61%	0.66
C+	80–78%	2.33	F	60% or below	0.0

BEYOND CURRICULUM

CHAPEL SERVICES

Every Thursday morning, students in grades K–8 gather for a chapel worship service. These services are led by the pastor, a faculty member, students, or a guest speaker. A weekly offering supports designated Christian mission projects. Suggestions for mission projects are welcome. **Parents are encouraged to attend and worship with their children.**

CHOIR

Children’s choirs are an important part of our worship life at St. John’s Lutheran Church. Students in grades K–8 share the Gospel through song during church services. Participation in choir and special choir events are a required component of the music curriculum.

BAND

In partnership with Mayer Lutheran High School, St. John’s offers weekly instrumental music lessons. Students learn both music theory and performance technique. More information is available in the school office.

ATHLETICS

Athletic programs are open to students in grades 5–8. Younger students may be invited to participate if needed to fill team rosters. St. John’s competes with area Lutheran grade schools in

Carver County, as well as in tournaments and special events.

Sports offered include:

- Flag Football
- Cross Country
- Volleyball
- Basketball
- Track & Field

A **separate Athletic Policy Handbook** will be distributed to all participating families.

A **parent meeting** is held at the start of each school year with the athletic director.

Attendance Policy for Events:

- Grades K–5: Must be accompanied by a parent to stay after school.
- Grades 6–8: Must have written permission and demonstrate proper behavior in the gym.

CROSSING GUARD POLICY

A supervising teacher or designated student must use a handheld **STOP sign** when students cross any street or intersection during the school day or on school-sanctioned outings.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY FOR FIELD TRIPS

- Field trips requiring transportation will use a school bus.
- Walking-distance trips do not require bus transport.
- After-school sports/events include bus transportation to the event. Typically bus transportation will NOT be provided home.

All off-campus trips require:

- Parent notification
- Signed permission form

Chaperone Guidelines:

- Age 21 or older
 - Responsible for the safety and whereabouts of their assigned group
 - No siblings allowed on field trips (unless specially noted on the permission form).
 - Must have completed Volunteer paperwork on file in the school office.
-

LUNCH PROGRAM

St. John's offers a daily hot lunch, provided by District 112 and prepared in our school kitchen. Students may also bring a lunch from home. Lunch includes milk. The cost is determined by District 112.

To join your child for lunch:

Call the school office and place your order **before 10:00 AM**.

Menus are published in the *St. John's News & Notes*.

Free & Reduced Lunch:

Available through the **National School Lunch Program** for qualifying families. Contact the school office for details.

Lunch Payments:

Make checks payable to:

District 112 Food Service

11 Peavey Rd.

Chaska, MN 55318

Questions? Call **952-556-6150**.

RECESS

Students in grades K–8 have scheduled recess most days.

Dress for the weather!

Students must wear jackets, hats, gloves, and boots during colder months. Inappropriate dress may result in staying indoors.

Indoor recess occurs during:

- Rain
- High winds
- Extreme cold
- Snow

Medical Exceptions:

A physician's note is required for exclusion from recess, including reason and duration. Students staying inside will work on quiet, independent activities.

Personal Equipment:

Students may bring personal items from home with parent permission:

- Basketballs
- Soccer balls
- Footballs
- Tennis balls

- Mitts

Not allowed:

- Equipment with handles (bats, sticks, etc.)
- Flip-flops or backless sandals

Note: The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items or injuries.

LIBRARY

Students may check out up to **two books** at a time.

End-of-Year Reminders:

- Notices for overdue books will be sent 2 weeks before school ends.
 - Fines will be assessed for unreturned or damaged books.
 - All fines must be paid by the last day of school.
-

AWARDS

Awards are presented at the end of the year to recognize:

- **Academic achievement**
- **School and church attendance**
- **Co-curricular participation**

Special ceremonies may be held to celebrate these accomplishments.

VOLUNTEERING AT ST. JOHN'S

St. John's Lutheran Church & School welcomes and encourages volunteer involvement in our mission to **equip lives on a foundation of faith**. Volunteers play a vital role in supporting students, staff, and programs, and we deeply value the time, talents, and care they contribute to our community.

Our Commitment:

- **Safe, Christian Environment:** Volunteers enhance learning while modeling Christ's love.
- **Whole-Child Focus:** Volunteers help meet spiritual, emotional, academic, and social needs.
- **Faith in Action:** Volunteering is a way to serve God and support our church and school family.

Volunteer Opportunities May Include:

- Classroom helpers
- Recess and cafeteria support
- Field trip chaperones
- Clerical or kitchen help
- PTL or committee work
- Sunday School, VBS, or coaching

Basic Requirements:

- All volunteers must complete:
 - A Volunteer Registration Form and Acknowledgement
 - Background Check (if working directly with students)
 - Code of Conduct agreement
- Volunteers must **always be supervised by a staff member and may not be alone with a student.**
- Volunteers must **sign in and wear identification** while on campus.

Conduct and Safety Expectations:

- Maintain confidentiality and professionalism
- Respect all school policies and staff direction
- Dress appropriately and follow school rules
- No discipline of students—refer concerns to staff
- No use of tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or weapons on school grounds
- Social media use and photo sharing must follow school guidelines

For those interested in volunteering, the full **Volunteer Handbook**, waiver, and Code of Conduct are available from the school office and must be completed before volunteering.

SCHOOL/HOME COMMUNICATION

Effective communication between home and school is essential to the success of each student and to our partnership with families. At St. John's Lutheran School, we are committed to maintaining frequent, clear, and consistent communication with families through a variety of tools and platforms.

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

- St. John's News & Notes
 - Gradelink
 - School Calendar
 - Parent-Teacher Conferences
 - Remind App
 - Homeroom App
 - Email
 - Weekly Word - Church Newsletter
-

ST. JOHN'S NEWS & NOTES

Our weekly school newsletter is sent via email to all families. It provides information about upcoming events, recent activities, and student achievements.

Parents and students are encouraged to submit noteworthy accomplishments or special announcements to the school office for inclusion in the newsletter.

GRADELINK

Gradelink is the platform used for:

- Attendance records
- Academic performance
- Report cards
- Missing assignments

Parents will receive login credentials from the school office. We encourage families to check Gradelink regularly to stay informed of their child's academic progress.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

A tentative calendar for the upcoming school year is published each spring.

Note: All dates are subject to revision. Updated calendars will be made available as needed.

PARENT–TEACHER CONFERENCES

Formal conferences are held during the **first trimester** to review student progress—spiritually, academically, and behaviorally.

Spring conferences may be scheduled by either parent or teacher request and are held in **April**.

For additional conferences, families may contact individual teachers at any time. If efforts to connect have been unsuccessful, the principal may assist in arranging a meeting.

SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION

In the event of inclement weather or emergency school closures, families will be notified via:

- **Email**
- **Facebook**
- **Text message** (via SmartSend Pro and/or Remind)
- **Phone call** (via SmartSend Pro)

St. John's follows **District 112 (Eastern Carver County Schools)** for weather-related closings. If either “**Eastern Carver County Schools**” or “**St. John's Lutheran, Chaska**” is listed as closed, then **all school events will be cancelled for that day**.

FIRE & TORNADO INFORMATION

FIRE PLAN

To ensure student safety and preparedness, **fire drills** will be conducted approximately once per month, weather permitting.

- The fire alarm will sound as **one continuous tone**.
 - Prior to the first drill, students will be instructed on procedures to follow during a fire evacuation.
 - Students must **exit the building in an orderly manner**. Pushing or shoving is strictly prohibited.
 - Each classroom has an **escape route map** posted near the door.
 - Teachers will direct students to the designated outdoor assembly area and take attendance once outside.
-

TORNADO PLAN

During tornado season, students will participate in **tornado drills** to prepare for severe weather events.

- Teachers will review proper tornado response procedures with students.
 - When a tornado alarm sounds:
 - Students will proceed quickly and quietly to their designated shelter area.
 - They will **kneel or crouch facing the wall**, cover their heads with their hands, and remain in this position until further instruction is given by a teacher or the principal.
 - Drills are designed to minimize confusion and maximize safety.
-

SCHOOL SAFETY PROCEDURES

St. John's Lutheran School has a comprehensive **School Crisis Intervention and Safety Procedures Manual**.

- Parents who wish to review the manual may do so by making an appointment with the school secretary or principal.
 - This manual includes protocols for a variety of emergencies to ensure the safety of all students, staff, and visitors.
-

PART TWO: PARENTAL PARTNERSHIP

COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS

While St. John's provides regular weekly communications through various platforms, there may be times when immediate contact with your child's teacher is necessary.

- For **non-emergency needs**, you may:
 - Email the teacher directly.
 - Call the school office to be transferred to the teacher's voicemail.
 - Send a written note with your child.
 - Teachers will also reach out by note, email, or phone when urgent communication is required.
 - To ensure effective communication, please keep **TADS and Gradelink contact information** up to date, including a reliable phone number where a parent or guardian can be reached in case of illness or injury.
-

HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS

Parental support with homework is critical. Please check daily with your child about their assignments. While time is provided during the school day, some projects and assignments will be completed at home.

- **Guideline:** Students should not have more than **10 minutes of homework per grade level per night**
Example: 3rd Grade = 30 minutes
 - If you notice your child consistently has excessive homework, please contact the classroom teacher.
-

ABSENT WORK POLICY

If a student is absent:

- The teacher will communicate all missed assignments.
 - A parent may request assignments in advance, but teachers ultimately determine when and how missed work is communicated.
 - Students are given **1 day per day absent** to complete the make-up work.
Example: 2 days absent = 2 days to make up the work
 - Work not submitted after the make-up window will be marked as late.
 - For **planned absences**, notice must be given **at least 1 week in advance**.
-

LATE WORK POLICY (Grades 5–8)

Assignments not turned in on time will receive the following late penalties:

1. **Days 1–3 late:** 10% deduction per day
 2. **After Day 4:** 50% deduction until the unit ends
 3. **End of Unit:** All missing assignments become a zero in Gradelink (but can still be submitted until the trimester ends)
 4. **End of Trimester:** No work may be submitted after this point
 5. **Mandatory Study Hall:** Assigned to students with late work
-

INCOMPLETE GRADES

In cases of **extended illness or extenuating circumstances**, a student may receive an "Incomplete" on their report card. Students have **two weeks** after the trimester ends to complete the missing work.

- Failure to complete the work results in **zero credit** and may lower the final grade significantly.
-

FAILING GRADES (Grades 5–8)

A student who receives a final grade of **“F” in one or more core subjects** (Math, English, Science, Social Studies, Reading, or Literature) for one or more trimesters in the same school year will be **required to come to school over the summer to complete credit recovery work**.

If credit recovery work is **not completed** or if the student does **not demonstrate sufficient progress**, the student **may be recommended for retention** following a conference with the teacher, principal, and parents.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR ATHLETICS

Participation in extracurriculars is a **privilege**, not a right. To be eligible, students must meet the following:

- **Behavioral Expectations:** Students/athletes must maintain good conduct at school, home, and in the community.
 - Violations of school rules may result in **temporary or permanent suspension** from the team.
 - Final decisions are made by the **Athletic Director and Principal** after consulting the student, parents, staff, and coaches.
- **Academic Requirements:** Athletes must be in good academic standing.
 - **Two D's:** May practice but **cannot compete** until at least one D is raised to a C.

- **One F: Cannot practice or compete** until the grade is raised to a D **and** no other D is present.
- Exceptions may be made for students with documented learning challenges or in extreme cases, upon review by the Athletic Director, Principal, teachers, parents, and coaches.

PLAGIARISM & ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) POLICY

At St. John's Lutheran School, we strive to **equip lives on a foundation of faith**, which includes a commitment to integrity, responsibility, and respect for intellectual property.

1. Definition of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's work, ideas, or expressions without proper acknowledgment and is strictly prohibited. Students are responsible for creating original work, reflecting thorough critical thinking, and originality.

- Copying from books, articles, or websites without citation
- Paraphrasing without attribution
- Submitting another person's work as your own
- Failing to use quotation marks for direct quotes
- Submitting **AI-generated content without attribution**

2. Use of AI Tools

AI tools, such as those for writing, researching, or generating content, can be valuable resources when used responsibly. However, students must follow these guidelines:

- **Academic Integrity:** We expect all students to approach their academic work with honesty and integrity. Teachers will instruct and help students understand how to research, write, and use AI tools ethically. By doing so, students will develop skills that will benefit them throughout their academic and professional lives.
- **Proper Attribution:** Any contributions made by AI tools must include proper citation and acknowledgement with adherence to teacher guidelines.
- **Ethical Uses:** AI tools should be used to aid learning, ensuring all work submitted represents their own efforts. Using AI to bypass learning objectives is considered academic dishonesty.
- **Teacher Approval:**
 - Teacher will provide guidance on the appropriate use of AI tools and assess the authenticity of the student work.
 - Students should consult their teachers before using AI tools for specific assignments to ensure the tool is appropriate for the task.
 - Understanding AI tool limitations requires exercising discernment in their accuracy, and students are expected to adhere to teacher guidance.
- **Support and Resources:** Students who are unsure about plagiarism or how to use AI tools correctly should seek guidance from their teachers or use school-provided resources

on academic integrity. We are committed to creating an environment that nurtures the academic, social, and spiritual growth of every student to achieve our vision of a vibrant school community where we equip students to be world ready and faith secure.

3. Consequences of Plagiarism or AI Misuse

Students found to have committed plagiarism or to have misused AI tools may face consequences, which could include:

- **Educational:** Re-doing the assignment, receiving additional instruction on proper citation and research practices.
 - **Academic:** Lowering of grades or receiving a zero on the affected assignment.
 - **Behavioral:** Meetings with parents, teachers, and administrators to discuss the violation and steps for improvement.
-

POLICY FOR EXEMPTION FROM COURSES / CLASSES

St. John's takes great care in the selection of curriculum and ensures that all instruction aligns with our mission and values as a Lutheran school.

- St. John's takes great care in the selection of curriculum and ensures that all instruction of this curriculum aligns with our mission and values as a Lutheran school. Outside of consideration for an independent study or adjusted schedule request, a student may not request exemption from the school's determined coursework. This also applies to students with learning plans, although accommodations within the classes or how they are assessed may certainly be provided.
 - If there is a concern about course content or instruction that would necessitate a request for exemption, parents are encouraged to meet with the principal to discuss these concerns.
-

POLICY FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY

Independent study requests may be considered by school administration when all the following criteria are met:

- The study provides a justifiable equivalent to existing coursework.
 - The program is credible and offers assessment/evaluation and grades (or an equivalent).
 - Coursework is completed outside of the regular school day, unless it aligns with a supervised study hall.
 - The student remains in good behavioral and academic standing.
 - There is no pattern of concerning absences or truancy.
 - Parents must maintain communication as determined by the school.
 - Grade documentation must be submitted upon successful course completion.
-

ADJUSTED SCHEDULE REQUESTS

Adjusted schedule requests may be granted at the discretion of school administration, based on the following:

Homeschooling

- Hybrid schedules for homeschooling purposes are not permitted due to staffing and scheduling limitations.
- Exception: The school may approve a homeschool component as part of a support services plan.
- In such cases, parents must demonstrate compliance with state educational standards and documentation.

Athletics/Fine Arts (8th Grade Only)

- Students may request adjusted schedules due to extenuating sports-related circumstances.
- A meeting will be held to determine feasibility. Criteria include:
 - The student remains in good behavioral and academic standing.
 - No patterns of unexcused or frequent absences.
 - Parental communication maintained.
 - A plan in place for making up missed classes/work via independent study or alternate times at school.
 - St. John's school and activities must remain the top priority.

Note: The school reserves the right to deny or discontinue any adjusted schedule at any time.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

PHILOSOPHY

St. John's Lutheran School recognizes that daily attendance is critical to academic achievement. Students are expected to attend school and class on time, every day. Students with **seven (7) full or partial days of unauthorized cumulative absences** are in violation of state compulsory education laws.

Because strong attendance correlates with higher academic success and increased school engagement, St. John's encourages families to schedule appointments, vacations, and other activities **outside of school hours** or on non-school days whenever possible.

Please note:

- Family vacations during the school year may impact a student's learning and grades due to missed in-class discussions, group work, labs, and other activities that cannot always be made up.
 - Absences are **cumulative for the entire school year**, not reset by trimester or semester.
-

PROCEDURE FOR ABSENCES

St. John's is required to track all absences and tardiness, and to report educational neglect or truancy when applicable.

Parents/guardians must contact the school by 9:30 a.m. if a student will be absent:

- Call: **952-448-2526** OR
- Email: Both the school secretary **and** your child's teacher

If no communication is received by that time, the school will call to verify the absence.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

- **Morning Arrival:** Students should not arrive before 9:00 AM unless attending Before School Care or under prior arrangement with a teacher. Students arriving early will be sent to Before School Care and charged a \$10.00 fee.
 - **Afternoon Dismissal:** All students must be picked up by 4:00 PM. Any student remaining past that time will be sent to the After School Program and charged the \$10.00 fee.
 - **Transportation Changes:** Any changes to a child's after-school plans must be communicated in writing and signed by a parent/guardian. Please call the school office to report these changes—emails are not guaranteed to be seen, and no changes will be accepted after 3:20 PM. Bus-riding students without a written note will be sent home on the bus.
 - **Walkers:** Students not riding the bus will be escorted to the designated pickup area. Parents must use this location for pickup.
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PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students must be in school **by 12:00 p.m.** to participate in **any extracurricular activity** (games, concerts, plays, etc.).

Students who leave school early (except for a documented professional appointment) may not return for after-school activities that day.

TYPES OF ABSENCES

St. John's Lutheran School tracks all student absences and categorizes them into the following types:

1. Excused Absences - These absences are verified by a parent/guardian and accepted by the school as valid. Excused absences **count** toward a student's total absence record but are not considered a violation unless excessive.

Examples of excused absences include:

- Illness or injury (up to 10 undocumented days per year)
- Illness or emergency in the family
- Professional appointments (doctor, dentist, etc.) that cannot be scheduled outside the school day
- High school visits
- Car trouble or transportation issues
- Family matters necessitating absence (with advance notice)
- Absences outside the student's control (e.g., weather delays, power outages)

Note: After 10 undocumented sick days, a medical note is required for the absence to remain excused.

2. Unexcused Absences - These absences are **not verified** by a parent/guardian or are **not accepted** by the school as valid. Unexcused absences may lead to disciplinary action and, if excessive, legal referral.

Examples of unexcused absences include:

- Vacations
- Oversleeping
- Running late without valid reason
- Missing the bus or arranged ride
- Skipping class or school
- Absence not reported by a parent/guardian
- More than 10 undocumented illness days (without doctor's note)
- Other illegitimate or unverified reasons

Unexcused absences count toward the 10-day limit under state truancy law. Continued unexcused absences may result in referral to Carver County Health and Human Services.

3. School-Excused Absences - These absences are **initiated or authorized by the school** and do **not count** toward the student's absence record. They do not affect academic or activity eligibility.

Examples of school-excused absences include:

- School-sponsored activities (field trips, athletic events, performances)
- Suspensions (in-school or out-of-school)
- Authorized meetings with school staff

STUDENT TARDINESS POLICY

Tardiness disrupts classroom instruction and student learning. Students should arrive **a few minutes before 9:20 a.m.** to be ready for the day. A student is considered tardy if not **seated in their chair by 9:20 a.m.**

Note: Students arriving late must be checked in at the school office by a parent. Students leaving early must be checked out by a parent or legal guardian at the office.

ATTENDANCE NOTIFICATIONS AND INTERVENTIONS

Regular attendance is essential for academic success and spiritual growth at St. John's Lutheran School. We are committed to working with families to support consistent attendance and address any barriers that may arise.

Absence and Tardiness Guidelines

- Families will be notified if a student accumulates **10 or more absences** in a school year.
 - After **10 absences** in a trimester, a formal letter will be sent home.
 - After **5 tardies** in a trimester, a letter will also be sent home.
 - Continued absences or tardiness will result in a meeting with the principal and parents.
 - If the issue remains unresolved, it may be referred to social services.
 - In extreme cases, attendance concerns may result in retention or expulsion.
-

TRUANCY POLICY

In accordance with Carver County Health & Human Services:

- Students ages 7–17 with **10 full or partial unexcused absences** may be referred for **educational neglect or truancy**.
- Students with **more than 15 excused absences**, if those absences negatively impact academic performance, **may also be referred**.

Note: Schools are required to attempt interventions with families before making a formal referral.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (BOE) NOTIFICATION

The BOE shall be notified if a student is:

- Suspended
- Placed on probation
- Expelled
- Referred to Carver County for truancy

These actions are at the discretion of the principal; the BOE is simply notified.

REQUIRED PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL EVENTS

St. John's considers student participation in school-sponsored events (e.g., choir performances, school fairs, plays) an important part of our partnership with families.

- **Attendance at these events is required.**
 - Parents should communicate in advance if a student will be absent. Special consideration may be given for excused absences (see attendance policy above).
-

CHURCH AND SUNDAY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Church and Sunday School attendance is a vital part of your child's education at St. John's Lutheran School.

- Families are encouraged to attend services regularly at their home congregations.
 - **Attendance is recorded weekly** by the classroom teacher.
-

PARENT-TEACHER LEAGUE (PTL)

All parents of St. John's Lutheran School students are members of the Parent-Teacher League. The PTL exists to support the school by utilizing the talents and resources of our parents. Parents are invited to serve on committees, assist with projects, and attend monthly meetings and events designed to build community and foster collaboration between school and home. PTL meetings and events will be advertised in the *St. John's News & Notes*.

FUNDRAISING

St. John's hosts several fundraising initiatives throughout the year, organized by the school or PTL. Proceeds are used to support special causes and purchase non-budgeted items that enhance student learning. The PTL typically leads two major fundraisers annually.

Additional fundraising includes:

- **8th Grade Washington, D.C. Trip:** Supported by four optional fundraisers involving students in Grades 6–8.
- **“All for One” Dinner and Auction:** An annual community event benefiting the school.

To comply with IRS regulations and ensure financial accountability, all fundraising efforts must be pre-approved by the administrative team and the St. John's Lutheran Church Treasurer.

THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans allows policyholders to direct charitable contributions to St. John's Lutheran School. Please contact your Thrivent representative or the school office for more information.

Additionally, parents are encouraged to explore matching gift programs available through their employers.

PARENTS AND VISITORS IN THE BUILDING

- Parents may accompany children to classrooms and lockers until 9:20 AM.
 - From 9:20 AM–4:00 PM, all visitors must:
 - Sign in and out at the welcome desk or school office.
 - Wear a visitor badge while in the building.
-

DRESS CODE

St. John's encourages students to reflect Christian values in appearance, recognizing our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit. Students should wear clothing that is clean, modest, age-appropriate, and weather-appropriate. The following guidelines apply:

- Clothing should not expose undergarments or excessive skin (midriff, chest, shoulders, or upper thighs).
- Shorts and skirts should be fingertip length.
- Spaghetti straps and tank tops that reveal undergarments are not allowed.
- Clothing must not display offensive, inappropriate, or un-Christian messages.

- Leggings/yoga pants should be paired with tops or dresses that reach fingertip length (Grades 5–8).
- Shoes must be safe for active play. Flip-flops and wheelie shoes are not allowed for outdoor use.
- Piercings are limited to girls' ears; tattoos and other body piercings are not permitted.

Physical Education: Non-marking tennis/athletic shoes are required for gym class.

LOCKERS

Students in Preschool–Grade 8 will be assigned lockers for school use. Inside decorations are permitted if they are respectful and leave no residue or damage. Lockers are school property and may be searched at any time. Students may not access others' lockers without permission; violations may result in loss of locker privileges and disciplinary action.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

St. John's uses MAP Growth Assessments in the fall and spring (Grades K–8) and Acadience assessments three times per year (September, January, May) to monitor academic progress. Test results will be sent home for parent review.

MEDICATIONS

All medications (prescription or over-the-counter) must:

- Be accompanied by a physician- and parent-signed medication consent form.
- Be in the original container (no baggies or envelopes).

Medications will be administered by the school nurse or trained personnel in her absence. Students may not keep medications in lockers or desks.

STUDENT ILLNESS AND INJURIES

- A school nurse is available daily. If not on duty, office staff will assess and respond to health concerns using emergency contact information provided by parents.
- Students must check out through the school office before leaving during the school day.
- A doctor's note is required for exclusion from recess or PE due to health issues.

Illness Guidelines:

- Fever of 100°F or more: Stay home for 24 hours after the fever returns to normal without medication.
 - Vomiting or diarrhea: Stay home for 24 hours after the last episode.
 - Undiagnosed rash: Consult a doctor before returning.
-

SPECIAL OCCASIONS & BIRTHDAYS

- Treats must be store-bought and in original packaging.
 - If birthday invitations are distributed at school, they must include all students in the class. Otherwise, please distribute them privately outside of school.
-

GRIEVANCE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY

At St. John's Lutheran School, we seek to reflect Christ's love in all our relationships. When conflicts or concerns arise among students, parents, staff, or faculty, we encourage a spirit of grace, patience, and open communication.

1. Address Issues Promptly and Respectfully

We ask all parties to address concerns as soon as possible, directly with the individual(s) involved, in a private and respectful manner, following the biblical principle found in Matthew 18:15:

"If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you."

2. Follow the Chain of Communication

If a concern cannot be resolved directly, the next step is to involve the appropriate supervisor:

- For student-related concerns, speak with the teacher first.
- If unresolved, bring the matter to the principal.
- For broader concerns involving school policies or administration, contact the school board or designated conflict resolution committee.

3. Maintain Confidentiality and Respect

All parties involved in a grievance should maintain confidentiality to protect privacy and foster trust.

4. Seek Mediation if Necessary

If the conflict persists, St. John's may offer mediation facilitated by a neutral third party to help reach a godly and peaceful resolution.

5. Commitment to Reconciliation

We aim to restore relationships in a way that honors Christ and reflects forgiveness, humility, and mutual respect.

DISCIPLINE & STUDENT BEHAVIOR

THE ROYAL WAY GUIDING PRINCIPLES

At St. John's Lutheran, we are committed to creating an environment that nurtures the academic, social, and spiritual growth of every student. Our guiding principles, known as **The Royal Way**, are rooted in our identity as followers of Jesus Christ and integral to our mission. These values shape our interactions, behaviors, and the overall culture of our school community.

1. **We Honor God**

- *Christ-Centered Living:* We encourage students to grow in their faith through regular worship, prayer, study of God's Word, and the reception of His grace through Word and Sacrament.
- *Christ-Centered Behavior:* Guided by Scripture, students are expected to live according to God's commandments and reflect Christ's love in their actions and choices.
- *Service in Christ's Name:* We participate in acts of service, understanding that we love because Christ first loved us (1 John 4:19). Students are encouraged to use their gifts to serve others joyfully.

2. **We Are Respectful**

- *Created in God's Image:* Every person is a unique creation of God, deserving dignity, kindness, and respect. Students treat themselves and others as God's beloved children.
- *Respect for Authority:* As Scripture calls us to honor those in authority (Romans 13:1), students listen to and follow the guidance of teachers, staff, and administrators, acknowledging that respect for authority reflects respect for God.
- *Respect for Property:* Students care for the blessings God has provided, including church and school property and the belongings of others, maintaining a clean and orderly environment.

3. **We Are Responsible**

- *Stewardship of God's Gifts:* Students are encouraged to be faithful stewards of their time, talents, and opportunities, using them for learning and growth.
- *Accountability in Christ:* Recognizing our sinful nature and the gift of forgiveness, students are taught to take responsibility for their actions and seek reconciliation when needed.
- *Contribution to Community:* Students actively support and build up the school community through their participation, cooperation, and encouragement.

4. **We Are Safe**

- *Physical Safety:* In gratitude for the bodies God has given us, students follow safety rules and procedures to protect themselves.

- *Emotional Safety:* We foster a Christ-like culture of compassion and encouragement, where bullying, harassment, and exclusion have no place.
 - *Digital Safety:* Students are taught to use technology responsibly and ethically, honoring God in their online interactions and protecting personal and community well-being.
-

IMPLEMENTATION AND EXPECTATIONS

- *Modeling the Royal Way:* Teachers and staff, as Christian role models, reflect these values in their words and actions.
 - *Positive Reinforcement:* Behaviors that reflect The Royal Way are encouraged and celebrated through recognition, affirmation, and reinforcement.
 - *Discipline:* When students fall short, we respond with loving correction and guidance, using appropriate consequences that aim to restore relationships and foster spiritual growth.
-

PARENTAL PARTNERSHIP

We believe Christian education is a partnership between home, school, and church. Parents play a vital role in reinforcing The Royal Way. We encourage families to discuss these values at home, attend worship together, and responsibly support our shared mission to raise children in the faith (Proverbs 22:6).

By embracing The Royal Way, we strive to cultivate a Christ-centered school community where each student is equipped to live a life founded on faith, to learn joyfully, and to serve lovingly—now and for eternity.

BULLYING PROHIBITION POLICY

A safe environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment. School administrators, faculty, staff, contracted service providers (bus drivers, food service workers, etc.), and volunteers demonstrate appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and respond to incidents of bullying. St. John's requires the development and implementation of a Bullying Prevention Program.

The term bullying includes, but is not limited to, intimidating, aggressive, humiliating behavior or intentional "harm doing" by one person or group. It may be a single incident or carried out repeatedly over time. It may be targeted toward an individual or group.

Bullying behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal, written, or electronic insults or threats
 - Psychological acts such as spreading rumors or shunning
 - Inappropriate physical behavior such as hitting, punching, or gestures
-

CONDUCT IN THE CLASSROOM

St. John's strives to provide an environment conducive to the spiritual growth of young people developing their Christian faith. The following guidelines promote academic, social, and spiritual welfare:

- Respect teachers and authorities.
 - Respect classmates.
 - Respect others' personal space and property.
 - Be prepared for class and complete all work.
 - Follow directions.
 - Stay on task and use time wisely.
 - Work cooperatively with others.
 - Do your best work and maintain academic integrity.
-

CONDUCT IN THE HALLWAYS

Students will walk quietly and safely. Running, pushing, skipping, or sliding on railings is prohibited.

CONDUCT AT RECESS

- Wait inside by the designated door for the supervisor.
 - Cross the north field only with supervisor's direction.
 - Play without striking or disturbing others.
 - Use equipment properly; damage will be charged.
 - Request help from supervisors as needed.
 - No throwing of rocks, snowballs, sticks, or other objects (except balls, Frisbees).
 - Misbehavior may result in loss of playground privileges.
-

CONDUCT IN THE BATHROOMS

Wash hands, leave lights on, avoid loud talking or horseplay, and dispose of paper towels properly. Report issues immediately.

CONDUCT IN THE CAFETERIA

Visit quietly. Avoid horseplay and throwing food. Damaged silverware must be paid for. Sharing food is not permitted to limit germs. Teachers monitor for safety.

ELECTRONICS (Smart Watches, Cell Phones, AirPods, etc.)

All electronic devices must remain off and put away while on school grounds unless a teacher gives permission.

Consequences:

1. First Offense – Warning; student asked to put device away.
2. Second Offense – Device confiscated until end of the day.
3. Third Offense – Device held by the principal; parent must retrieve.

Repeated violations will require a parent-principal conference.

CONSEQUENCES FOR NEGATIVE CONDUCT

1. **First Violation:** Written warning; repentance and forgiveness exchanged.
2. **Second Violation:** Parents notified; principal meets with student.
3. **Third Violation:** Noon detention assigned; parents notified.
4. **Fourth Violation:** After-school detention assigned; parents notified.
5. **Fifth Violation:** Meeting with parents, principal, possibly pastor; may result in suspension, probation, Board notification, or expulsion.

Failure to follow consequences leads to progression to the next step. Most cases resolve by step 2 with parental support.

Note: Records on steps 1 and 2 clear each trimester; students on step 5 remain on probation.

IMMEDIATE STEP 4 OR HIGHER VIOLATIONS

The following may result in immediate placement on Step 4 or expulsion:

- Physical assault
 - Criminal acts
 - Drug, tobacco, alcohol use or possession
 - Stealing or vandalism
 - Truancy or excessive tardiness
 - Disrespect or defiance toward authority
 - Harassment (physical, racial, religious, sexual, etc.)
 - Violation of weapons policy
 - Improper use of school computers or internet
-

WEAPONS POLICY

Weapons or items resembling weapons are prohibited on school property and related activities. Any weapon will be confiscated immediately. Weapons include, but are not limited to firearms, knives, clubs, tasers, metal knuckles, nun chucks, mace, explosives, etc. Any violation of this weapons policy will be met with quick and immediate action. Consequences for such violations will include, but not be limited to, the following steps:

1. Any weapon will be confiscated immediately.
 2. The violation will be immediately reported to the police.
 3. Parents will be contacted immediately.
 4. A suspension will begin immediately.
 5. A meeting between school officials and the parents will take place to determine a course of action.
 6. If a suspension occurs, the student will not be allowed back into school without a written report from a counselor.
 7. A plan of spiritual guidance and Christian support would be made available to the family by way of the pastor, Principal, and the Board of Elders of St. John's Lutheran Church.
 8. All decisions and consequences set forth will be carried out with the best interest and safety of all students in mind, and only after prayerful thought, deliberation, and a good measure of Christian guidance rooted in prayer.
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THREAT POLICY

All threats are prohibited within St. John's Lutheran School and Church including school buses, field trips, or any other school-related activity. A threat is an expression of intention to inflict evil, injury, or damage to others or property. Any violation of this threat policy will be met with quick and immediate action. Consequences for such violations will include, but not be limited to, the following steps:

1. All threats will be taken seriously.
2. The violation will be immediately reported to the police.
3. Parents will be contacted immediately.
4. The Board of Education will be notified.
5. A thorough investigation will be completed.
6. A meeting between school officials and the parents will take place to determine a course of action.
7. If a suspension occurs, the student will not be allowed back into school without an apology, a meeting with the pastor and/or principal, and a reinstatement plan that will be created and followed.
8. A plan of spiritual guidance and Christian support would be made available to the family by way of the Pastor and/or Principal.
9. All decisions and consequences set forth will be carried out with the best interest and safety of all students in mind, and only after prayerful thought, deliberation, and a good measure of Christian guidance from our loving Lord and Savior.

DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT POLICY

St. John's Lutheran School has a written discrimination, harassment, violence, and abuse policy in place. A complete copy of the policy is available through the school office. Below are sections 6-10 of that policy:

1. Therefore, based on Scripture, St. John's Lutheran Church and School will not tolerate any discrimination or harassment of persons relating to a person's race, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.
2. Discrimination or harassment of any nature is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. Retaliation against a person who makes charges of discrimination or harassment will also not be tolerated.
3. Those persons who believe they have been a victim of any type of discrimination or harassment should report the incident to the administrative pastor, visitation pastor, or Principal. These servants then have the responsibility to document the incident and take appropriate action.
4. The action taken by the above servants will be determined based on the incident and as mandated by Scripture, the guidelines of which are stated above.
5. This policy applies to all staff, students, and subcontracted workers while acting under the auspices of St. John's Lutheran Church and/or School.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ON SCHOOL BUSES

St. John's Lutheran School partners with Independent School District 112 to provide safe and orderly transportation for students. The school bus driver is responsible for the entry, transport,

and exit of students and has the authority to enforce the following regulations, as endorsed by the Board of Education of St. John's Lutheran School.

SAFETY AND BUS MANAGEMENT

- The bus driver is the responsible authority on the bus and must be obeyed at all times.
 - Students must board and exit the bus only at designated stops.
 - Students are to remain at a safe distance from the bus as it arrives or departs.
 - Pick-up times are pre-established; students are expected to be on time at their designated stop.
 - Students must go directly to their seats and remain seated while the bus is in motion.
 - Backpacks, musical instruments, and other large items must be held securely and must not obstruct aisles or impact other riders.
 - Food and beverages are not permitted on the bus for safety and cleanliness.
 - Only authorized students may ride the bus. Non-regular riders must have written permission.
 - Drivers may assign seats to maintain order and safety.
 - When crossing the road, students must walk in front of the bus only after receiving a signal from the driver.
 - Loud, disruptive, or distracting behavior is not allowed.
 - Profane, disrespectful, or inappropriate language is prohibited.
-

STUDENT BEHAVIOR ON THE BUS

- Tampering with emergency exits or safety equipment is strictly forbidden.
 - Throwing, spitting, or shooting objects in, at, or from the bus is not allowed.
 - Defacing or damaging the bus is prohibited.
 - The possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal substances is strictly forbidden.
 - Dangerous, inappropriate, or offensive items are not allowed on the bus. Animals may not be transported.
 - Fighting, shoving, or any form of physical aggression is unacceptable.
 - Harassment of any kind—including physical, racial, religious, or sexual—is strictly prohibited.
-

CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE BUS BEHAVIOR

Students who violate any of the above rules will be warned by the bus driver and/or bus company. Continued violations will result in loss of bus privileges, according to the following progression:

1. **First Offense:** Up to 2 school days of bus suspension
2. **Second Offense:** 2–5 school days of bus suspension
3. **Third Offense:** 5–10 school days of bus suspension
4. **Fourth Offense:** Recommendation to the Superintendent or designee for extended suspension up to the remainder of the school year
5. **Severe Behavior:** May result in immediate escalation at the discretion of the principal

In addition to the above consequences, students who violate bus rules may also be placed on the **St. John's Lutheran School Discipline Step System**, as detailed in the school's discipline policy.

INSTRUCTION AND AGREEMENT

During the first weeks of school, teachers will provide instruction on appropriate bus behavior and review bus safety rules and expectations with students.

All parents and students will be required to sign a **Bus Ridership Agreement** to acknowledge that riding the bus is a privilege and an extension of the school day. By signing, families affirm their understanding of the rules, responsibilities, and potential consequences associated with bus transportation.

Note: All students in **Preschool (4-Year-Old)** through **Grade 8** must have a signed Bus Ridership Agreement on file to ride the bus, including for **field trips**.

PARENTAL RIGHTS & LEGAL ENTITLEMENTS

TRANSPORTATION

Students residing within the boundaries of **Independent School District 112** are eligible to receive **free bus transportation** to and from St. John's Lutheran School. There is no charge for this service.

FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE LUNCHES

St. John's Lutheran School participates in the **National School Lunch Program**. Free and reduced-price lunches are available to families who meet eligibility requirements. Applications and copies of the policy are available from the school office. All applications are handled with strict confidentiality.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

Educational screening and testing services through **District 112** are available upon the recommendation of the classroom teacher or at the request of the parent. With parental consent, students experiencing academic, emotional, or social challenges may be assessed by professionally licensed staff from the public school district.

Students identified with special needs may receive services in the areas of:

- Speech and language
- Emotional or behavioral support
- Learning disabilities
- Physical or mental impairments
- Other health-related concerns

In addition to services offered through District 112, St. John's Lutheran School also employs a **Special Education Teacher** and a **School Psychologist** to provide further academic and emotional support.

HEALTH SERVICES

Health services at St. John's Lutheran School are provided part-time through funding from the **State of Minnesota**. The school nurse is responsible for:

- Maintaining individual health records
 - Conducting hearing, vision, and scoliosis screenings
 - Performing annual height and weight checks
 - Monitoring immunizations
 - Administering basic first aid
 - Managing school medical supplies
 - Supporting health-related instruction and teacher resources
-

COUNSELING SERVICES

St. John's Lutheran School has access to a **part-time school psychologist** available to support individual students and small groups. This professional may also assist with referrals to outside agencies when appropriate. These services are partially funded by the **State of Minnesota**.

If you would like your child to meet with the school psychologist, please contact the school office to initiate the process.

SCHOOL RECORDS AND RIGHT TO PRIVACY

Student records remain the property of **St. John's Lutheran School** but are under the oversight of parents/guardians. The following policies apply:

- Upon transfer to another school, records will be released upon official request.
- Graduated students' records are transferred to their respective high schools during the summer prior to enrollment.
- Records, excluding health records, may be withheld if there are outstanding tuition or other balances due to the school.

Parents may review their child's academic records at any time by scheduling an appointment through the school office. Access may be arranged before or after school or during parent-teacher conferences.

Parental Communication:

Each family is unique. It is the responsibility of both parents/guardians to communicate with one another regarding their child's education. Most school communication will be provided digitally via the school website. If printed forms or hard copies are required, one copy will be sent home per child unless both parents have requested otherwise.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

St. John's Lutheran School admits students of any race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, scholarship programs, admission policies, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Chairman: Aaron Schmidt

Faculty Representatives: Kendra Gilmore, Al Dutcher

Early Childhood Representative: Tracy Koepsell

Rotating Faculty Representative(s): Julie Herrmann / Stephanie Wilaby

Board Members:

Jeff Matzke

Jeff Kuester

Angela Fransen

Kendra Stewart

Nathan Messer

Madeline Leason

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