



Zion Lutheran
Church & School

FAMILY HANDBOOK 2024-2025



Zion Lutheran School
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PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK

This handbook is intended to acquaint parents and students with the policies, practices, and procedures at Zion Lutheran School. Families should familiarize themselves with the handbook and refer to it when needed.

STATEMENT OF BELIEF

Zion Lutheran School is part of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS). As Lutheran Christians, we believe and teach:

- That God is one God in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
- That Jesus Christ is the Son of God, Lord and Savior of all
- That the Bible is the inerrant Word of God and reliable for teaching doctrine
- That Jesus died for our sins, rose again, and now lives in heaven, and will someday return to take all believers to be with Him
- That the only way to salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ
- That our good works cannot save us, but only by grace through faith
- That faith is a gift, not a work
- That God created each person as male or female.
- That marriage is the union of one man and one woman. (Genesis 2:2-24 and Matthew 19:5-6)
- That Zion Lutheran's pastors, principal, Mission council, and Board of Lay Ministry have the authority to act on behalf of the congregation in specific circumstances. The Constitution and bylaws of Zion Lutheran Church and School govern our decision-making and policies.
- That all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Psalm 139).
- That as we walk with him daily, God continues to work in our hearts and lives to make us more like Jesus.

MISSION STATEMENT

Knowing Christ, Sharing Christ – "Gathering in Grace"

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of our Christ-centered school program are:

- To equip our students to function as living, loving Christians now and as adults.
- To provide an educationally sound experience in all appropriate branches of learning within a Christian framework.
- To promote spiritual, mental, social, and physical development through loving discipline, reverence, and respect by God's holy will.
- To develop the ability to study and find information to increase knowledge, learning, and understanding now and in the future.
- To develop students' God-given talents for their good and the good of all humanity.
- To help students learn to be tolerant, creative, and cooperative.
- To help students learn limits of behavior regarding safety, health, and respect for others.

PHILOSOPHY

CENTERED IN CHRIST

Zion Lutheran School is founded on and centered on the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ, which are contained in the statement of belief.

NURTURE EACH CHILD OF GOD

All children are children of God. We treat each child as an individual child of God, nurturing them to their full potential in their spiritual, academic, physical, and emotional growth. In doing so, we provide each child with a Christ-centered education in all areas of learning in a safe learning environment.

AN ARM OF THE CHURCH IN WITNESSING

Zion Lutheran Church's philosophy is that God wants everyone to be with Him now and forever. The school is one arm of the church - a witness to all that Jesus is the Savior. (John 3:16)

WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE EACH CHILD A RESPONSIBLE MEMBER OF THE CHURCH

The school, church, and home work together to teach each child Christian values and morals to prepare them as responsible Christian members of society and God's kingdom. Each child should realize they are a future leader in churches and communities and are indeed a member of Christ's body.

WITNESS TO THE WORLD

As children grow in faith, their service to God and others is a witness to the world. (Matthew 28:19)

ACCREDITATION

Zion Lutheran School is fully accredited by the National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.

ZION'S HISTORY

Zion Lutheran Church was first organized in Alexandria in December 1886. In 1888, two lots were purchased at the corner of Third Avenue and Lake Street. The first church building was erected there in the spring of 1889. Previously, the congregation met in homes or rented spaces. For several years, Zion shared a pastor role with other congregations. Since 1920, Zion has been a single congregation with its pastor(s).

Zion Congregation has always strongly emphasized Christian education and has maintained a school since 1890. For the first twenty-two years, Pastor Bartz also served as a teacher in the school. 1912, Zion called W. E. Melchert its first principal/teacher. The original church building was remodeled and enlarged into a two-room school two years later. By 1940, the school had expanded, and Ruth Jensen was called as a teacher for the primary grades. By 1958, the student body had grown, requiring additional space. A new educational building was constructed and ready for use by the beginning of the 1961 school year. In 1999, the school was expanded again, and it had new offices, a gymnasium, restrooms, and a new preschool/kindergarten room. Between June 2010 and Spring 2012, a remodeling and construction project was completed, allowing for separate preschool and kindergarten rooms, a larger, safer entry area for the church and school, and added storage space to our facility. Zion Lutheran School celebrated its 125th anniversary in the fall of 2015.

"The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy." Psalm 126: 3

ORGANIZATION

Zion Lutheran School is maintained by Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, a member of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. The School Board functions as the congregation's representative in setting policies. All significant policies are recommended for adoption by the Voters' Assembly. The School Board comprises seven elected laypeople, with the pastors and principal as ex-officio members.

The principal functions as the executive officer of the School Board. They are responsible for the supervision of instruction, seeking with the faculty to constantly improve the quality of education.

CIVIL LIBERTIES AND BIBLICAL STANDARDS

Introduction

The following policy, regarding civil liberties and Biblical standards addressing sexuality, is designed to ensure that Zion Lutheran School operates in a manner consistent with the Word of God. Our policies are rooted in the Bible because we believe that the Bible is the inspired written Word of God and is in line with the doctrine of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.

Our understanding of human sexuality begins with our belief that each human being is created in the image of God as either male or female (Genesis 5:1-2), a biological sex and gender that is encoded genetically and manifested physiologically before birth. In addressing each other, we will only recognize pronouns of him and her based on the biological sex and gender of a person at birth.

We also believe sin has brought brokenness and corruption to the created order. This, at times, has caused disorder and confusion regarding gender identity and sexual attraction. God calls us to "love one another" (John 13:34-35) despite the brokenness and pain of our sinful world. However, despite sin and its consequences, we seek to honor the created order of "male" or "female" as defined above from conception.

We also believe marriage is the union of one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24). All sexual activity is to take place within the God-given boundary of marriage. The family units thus formed on these principles provide the foundation of civil society.

We also believe in God's transformational grace and love (Romans 12:2), who, in love, gave His life on the cross and rose from the dead. The power of His grace and resurrection can bring healing and help to those who struggle with these issues. (Ephesians 3:20)

School Admittance Policy

Zion Lutheran Church and School will permit the enrollment of children, regardless of home background, so long as the behavior and speech of the child and parents while at school functions or on school property comport with the Biblical behavior standards of Zion Lutheran Church and School. No matter their family composition, each child will be given equal enrollment opportunities.

Zion Lutheran Church and School seeks to strengthen students in Jesus Christ with the "Good News" of

the Gospel, applying the teachings of Scripture to life's situations in an age-appropriate manner. Therefore, the child's parent(s) is responsible for determining if they agree with and accept the doctrinal teachings of Zion Lutheran Church and School. Biblical teachings relating to family units will not be amended to proclaim something that the Gospel and God's Word do not support.

Access to School Facilities and Programs

As previously stated, biological sex is either male or female. Gender is encoded genetically and manifested physiologically before birth. The Bible teaches that modesty is to be exercised between the sexes. For these reasons:

1. Any student enrolled in Zion Lutheran Church and School shall, when utilizing a multiple-occupancy restroom or locker room on school property, utilize the facility corresponding to that student's biological sex, as recorded on the student's birth certificate.
2. Nothing herein shall prohibit the school from designing or designating restroom or locker room facilities for use by one (1) person at a time. Such facilities may be designated for use by both sexes.
3. Nothing herein shall prohibit a person entering a restroom or locker room facility designated for use by a particular sex:
 - i. For custodial, maintenance, or inspection purposes;
 - ii. For rendering medical or emergency assistance;
 - iii. For accompanying a person needing assistance; or
 - iv. Where a facility has been temporarily designated for use by individuals of the opposite sex as defined herein.

Any student enrolled in Zion Lutheran Church and School shall, when participating in an athletic program offered by the school, participate on the team that corresponds with the student's biological sex, as recorded on the student's original birth certificate, except that a biological female student may seek to qualify to participate on a male team if a female team is not available for that sport. Any student whose external biological sex characteristics are irresolvably ambiguous may utilize the facility or participate on the sports team appropriate to the student's physical condition upon submission of a signed statement by a physician stating that the student was born having 46 XX chromosomes with virilization, 46, XY chromosomes with under virilization, or both ovarian and testicular tissue, or that the physician has otherwise diagnosed a disorder of sexual development (DSD) wherein the physician has determined through genetic testing that the student does not have the standard sex chromosome structure for a male or female.

Mascot: Cougars

School Colors: Red and White

Church and School Faculty and Staff

- Pastor Matthew Lorenz mlorenz@zionalex.org
- Mr. Andrew Strickland- Principal astrickland@zionalex.org
- Mrs. Elaine Beulke-Secretary ebeulke@zionalex.org
- Mrs. Amber Rousu- 8th Grade arousu@zionalex.org
- Mr. Kevin Day-7th Grade kdau@zionalex.org
- Mr. Brett Ludwig- 6th Grade bludwig@zionalex.org
- Miss Mary Seehafer-5th Grade mseehafer@zionalex.org
- Mr. Bryce Ludwig-4th Grade bhludwig@zionalex.org
- Mrs. Kirstina Kuhnau-3rd Grade kristina@zionalex.org
- Mrs. Mallory Chan-2nd Grade mchan@zionalex.org
- Mrs. Rachel Harbig-1st Grade rharbig@zionalex.org
- Mrs. Mandy Meyer-Kindergarten mmeyer@zionalex.org
- Mrs. Lucy Roste- Preschool lroste@zionalex.org
- Mrs. Angela Hughes- Prekindergarten ahughes@zionalex.org
- Mrs. Nancy Holm- Music nholm@zionalex.org
- Mrs. Denise Norheim- Lutheran Special Education Ministries dnorheim@zionalex.org
- Mrs. Karen Marotto- Business Manager kmarotto@zionalex.org
- Mrs. Cilicia Steidl- Communications csteidl@zionalex.org

Teacher Aides

- Mrs. Jane Close- Preschool
- Mrs. Jessica Malone- Preschool
- Mrs. Angela Wegner-Prekindergarten
- Mrs. Sue Peterson- Kindergarten
- Mrs. Heidi Wilken-1st Grade
- Mrs. Carissa Lawler- Kindergarten and 2nd Grade
- Mrs. Rebecca Rodgers- 2nd Grade

Z-Care

- Mrs. Jeanne Mattson

Kitchen Staff

- Mrs. Kim Gylsen-Head Cook kgylsen@zionalex.org
- Mrs. Jeanne Mattson
- Mrs. Deb Bohn
- Mrs. Judy Flemming
- Mrs. Bonnie Leverson
- Mrs. Ashley Gebhardt

Custodians

- Mr. Scott Caye scaye@zionalex.org
- Mr. Ray Montgomery

ABSENCE AND ILLNESS OF PUPILS

ABSENCE AND TARDY

School attendance is compulsory. **Parents should call the school office by 8:10 AM** if their child will be late or absent from school. **Please do not depend on a sibling to deliver this message.** Parents of any child unaccounted for by 8:40 AM will be notified by phone. This precaution is taken to inform parents that something unforeseen has prevented their child from safe arrival at school. Ten or more absences in a school year will result in a consultation with the principal before enrollment for the next school year.

Planned absences should be arranged with the teacher in writing at least one week in advance. Please discuss make-up work at this time. Teachers will do their best to provide assignments in advance if requested. These assignments will usually be provided on the last day of the student's attendance before the absence and should be submitted on the day of return to class. Because actual assignments and due dates can vary from original plans, students or parents (if it is a younger child) should check with their teacher(s) upon return to determine what was assigned. It is to the student's benefit to complete and turn in any incomplete work as soon as possible.

If students are to be kept in for recess periods because they are recovering from a recent illness or for some other reason, a written request must be sent to the teacher for each day this is required.

Upon parent request, homework assignments for absent students will be prepared and ready for pick-up in the classroom or the front desk **after 3:00 PM**. Parents are encouraged to help their children keep up with daily work by trying to pick up these assignments.

GUIDELINES

School begins at 8:15 AM. Students should be in their classrooms and ready to start class by that time. **All students arriving after 8:15 AM must go to the office for an admit slip and to the lunchroom to inform the cook of their lunch choice.** If the student does not advise the cook of their lunch choice by 9:00 AM, the student will automatically receive the hot lunch entrée that day and cannot change to a salad or sandwich. **Any student arriving after 8:15 AM but before 9:10 AM will be considered delinquent. Students arriving after 9:10 AM will be counted as ½ day absent. Students who leave before 2:00 PM are also counted as ½ day absent. Students who leave before 10:40 AM will be counted absent for the day.**

Tardy Policy

At Zion, we firmly believe that being prompt and providing your child with a steady routine is essential for a proper start to the day. All students must be seated and ready to begin class at 8:15 AM. If your child eats breakfast at Zion, they need to arrive at school no later than 7:55 AM to allow enough time to eat and report to class by 8:15. If your child rides a 206 bus in the morning, they will not have time to eat at school and report to class on time. Please ensure they eat breakfast at home if riding the bus to school. Students reporting to class late due to eating breakfast at school will be counted as tardy. When your child is late for school, they are not developing a proper routine, disrupt the rest of the class, do not have time to interact with friends, and cannot get appropriately prepared for the day. When a student is tardy three times in a quarter, the principal will call the parents. Also, a note from the principal will be sent home to help the parents develop a plan to eliminate future tardies. Students with three or more unexcused tardies in a quarter will be assessed a \$20 fee, with a new fee for each tardy more than 3.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

BEFORE SCHOOL/ ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Students coming to breakfast should report to the lunchroom between 7:40 and 8:00. Students who are not coming to breakfast will still go to the lunchroom until 8:00 AM. ALL STUDENTS ARRIVING AT SCHOOL BEFORE 8:00 AM. ENTER THROUGH THE OFFICE DOORS, PLACE ITEMS IN THEIR LOCKERS, AND THEN report to Z-Care if they are here before 7:40 AM or to the lunchroom if they are here after 7:40 AM. (The only exception would be students who have arranged with their teacher(s) to receive homework help.) ALL STUDENTS MUST REMAIN SEATED UNTIL THE 8:00 AM BELL RINGS.

ALL STUDENTS ARRIVING AFTER 8:00 AM SHOULD ALSO ENTER THROUGH THE OFFICE DOORS, PLACE ITEMS IN THEIR LOCKERS, AND PROCEED TO THEIR CLASSROOMS TO PREPARE FOR THE OPENING OF SCHOOL. Students should not loiter in the halls or locker areas. **We encourage parents to help students become more independent and responsible after the first week or two by allowing the students to come into the building, access their lockers, and prepare for their day on their own. For security reasons, all people who enter or leave the building during the school day will be routed through the main office area.**

AFTER SCHOOL/ DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Zion's after-school departure procedure attempts to make our dismissal time a safe environment for our students. At dismissal, all students will leave the classroom with their teacher. Once outside the building, all bus riders will walk to the loading area and enter their buses. Students who typically ride the bus should have a note from their parents if they are not to ride the bus that day. If no note is sent, students will be sent home on the bus as usual. Students walking or riding bicycles will leave the school grounds after the buses pull away. Students staying for after-school events must make arrangements with their teachers and/or be with a parent or guardian. All other students will remain with the teachers under the covered area connected to the school. (Z-Care Students will stay with their teacher unless the Z-care teacher is present.)

Parents picking up their children will park in the east parking lot and walk up, using the crosswalk to the school. Parents utilizing the pickup line will approach Lake St. from 4th Ave., and a staff member will direct drivers to form a line from Maple St.'s direction. Once the buses have departed, parents will be directed to enter the school/church driveway and pick up their children. Once students are loaded, parents will exit the pickup line onto 4th Ave. The principal and teachers will direct traffic each day.

Parents who must leave early (e.g., for a doctor's appointment, etc.) may walk up to the covered area and escort their child to their vehicle. We will not allow a child to leave the covered area to walk to parents in the street, parking lot, or sidewalk area without being directly escorted by an adult. **Your patience will help keep all of our students safe.** Parents wishing to stay and visit or allow their children to play on the playground may also walk to the covered area and escort their children to the playground.

Students who are not picked up by 3:05 PM will be checked into Z-Care by their teacher. If the student is not usually in Z-Care, the teacher will call the parents and let them know their child is being supervised in Z-Care. Parents or other drivers can pick up their children from Z-Care.

Parents are requested to notify their child's teacher in writing if their child will be going home with anyone other than the child's regular driver. This includes going home with a relative, friend, or another student. If a student is going to a different location than usual or needs to ride a bus other than their regular bus, a District 206 bus pass is required. We cannot issue bus passes without both parents' written consent.

Unsupervised play on the playground after school is not allowed.

STAYING AFTER SCHOOL

All students should be off the school grounds by 3:05 PM unless they are with a parent, are involved in an after-school activity, or are checked into Z-Care. **This includes siblings of students who are remaining at school past 3:05 PM.** Parents will be contacted to arrange for transportation home if a child needs to be kept after school for any reason.

BREAKFAST

Breakfast will be served between 7:40 AM and 8:00 AM. All students eat breakfast for free. Others will pay \$2.50.

Z-CARE (CHILDCARE) PROGRAM

Parents are offered childcare (before and after school) for all students in grades K-8 and after-school for our three and 4-year-olds through 8th grade in the afternoon. Z-Care runs from 7:00 to 8:00 AM. (K-8) and 3:00 PM until 5:30 PM (ages 3-grade 8). Morning Z-Care fees include breakfast. All school rules and policies apply to Z-Care as well. Please refer to the separate Preschool/Z-Care Handbook for detailed information about those programs.

ENROLLMENT

Admission

Zion Lutheran School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally available to students. It does not discriminate based on race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Re-enrollment

Families that are re-enrolling for the following year will do so in the following order:

1. Current Zion students
2. Siblings of current Zion students

Open Enrollment

When a classroom has an opening for more students, they will be admitted in this order:

1. Children of Zion Members
2. Children of other LCMS Congregational Members
3. Children from the community

We feel privileged to have children from the community enrolled to receive the benefits of Christian education. Children with significant behavioral, physical, or learning disabilities may be referred to I.S.D. 206 if it is determined that Zion Lutheran School cannot meet the student's needs.

Age

Kindergarten children must be at least five years old by September 1 and must have completed an early childhood screening.

All preschool children must be toilet-trained before the beginning of the school year. Preschool children must be at least three years old by September 1 for the Tuesday/Thursday program and four years old by September 1 for the Monday/Wednesday/Friday programs.

Physical Examinations

Students entering preschool or kindergarten are required by law to have a physical examination and a doctor's certificate of immunization. Transfer students must also have these documents unless previous school records show that they have had them within two years immediately preceding.

Students in the upper grades participate in extensive physical activity. A yearly sports physical is strongly encouraged.

Transfer Students

Transfer students will be placed in the grade recommended by the previous school attended or as determined by testing the child. Records will be transferred from the last school to Zion.

Re-enrollment

Notice of the re-enrollment period is made by publication in the school newsletter and the Sunday church bulletin. Re-enrollment materials are also sent to families at this time. Registration will not be accepted if the payment of tuition and other fees is not current.

Exceptions may be discussed with the principal and final approval by the Zion School Board. Incidental fees (yearbook, milk, etc.) will be invoiced in Facts during Back to School Nights.

Financial Support

Members of Zion Lutheran Church support the school through their regular contributions to the church. The congregation views Zion School as part of its overall mission and ministry to its members and the community. Zion intends to provide a Christian education for as many children as possible.

Student tuition covers only part of the school's financial need. In addition to the congregation providing substantial financial support for the school, the remainder is covered by tuition, third-source funds, matching gift programs, and various fund-raising activities sponsored by the School Board.

Tuition

Tuition should be treated like any other bill and paid in full promptly. It will be managed through the FACTS. (**Please Note: If you are paying with a credit card – a 3% charge will be added to your account.) Families who experience financial concerns that prevent them from making tuition payments on schedule should contact the principal to work out a payment plan.

FACTS will assess a \$50 fee each month that tuition is delinquent. Notices are sent after 30/60/90 days delinquent. A meeting will be held with the principal, business manager, and school board chair if tuition is more than 30 days past due. If tuition is more than 90 days past due, families will be given notice of dismissal

unless a solution is determined.

Helping Families with Tuition

Zion has three programs that can help families lessen their tuition payments: 1) the Tuition Assistance Fund, 2) The Scrip Program, and 3) the Parent Volunteer Program.

Tuition Assistance Fund

Tuition assistance, up to 50% of the tuition for each child, is available to those who show need. The Tuition Assistance Fund receives donations from individuals, groups, businesses, and sister congregations. Information and applications are available from the school office and in the packets distributed to all families before the start of school.

Scrip Program

The scrip program is the easiest and most effective way for families to lessen their tuition payments! Families can allow local, regional, and national retailers to pay a significant portion of their tuition simply by shopping for gas, groceries, clothing, etc., and purchasing store gift cards (scrip) from Zion. Families pay the same amount they usually would for these items, but a portion of the store's profit is "given back" to Zion. These "rebates" are split, with half going to Zion to pay operating expenses and the other half deposited into the family's tuition account. Zion keeps many cards for local and regional (St. Cloud, Twin Cities) retailers. These can be purchased during office hours in the school/church office or ordered online. More information, including registration forms and lists of participating retailers, is available in the office. **SCRIP rebates will be added to FACTS in January and May.**

Parental Involvement Policy (PIP) for Volunteer Hours

Zion families are a vital part of Zion's ministry. To encourage all families to participate in school activities, every family must participate in at least 10 PIP hours each school year. Unfilled PIP hours will be charged a \$10 per hour fee to be invoiced in May with the final tuition payment. It is the parent's responsibility to record and submit the volunteer hours to avoid receiving a bill. Any other paid position through Zion Lutheran Church and School will not count for the 10-hour requirement per family.

Activities for involvement are many and varied. A list of volunteer opportunities will be available on back-to-school night, and a form for keeping track of parent hours can be obtained from the school office. All hours are self-reported in the FACTS Family Portal.

VOLUNTEERS

Parent Involvement Policy (PIP)

Zion Lutheran School will always seek to do what is in our children's best interests physically, spiritually, emotionally, and intellectually. To that end, **parents may not actively participate in classes or activities, especially physical education classes (including skating/rollerblading), unless their assistance is required and requested by the classroom teacher.** Many activities (e.g., skating) require the children to maneuver physically throughout the gymnasium. Placing additional adults other than the teacher, aides, or requested helpers near the students during these activities heightens the chances of a collision, resulting in injury to a child. It is not in the best interest of our students to allow parents to participate in these classes. Allowing parents to participate actively in regular courses and activities sets a problematic precedent and becomes a liability issue for Zion Lutheran Church and School.

Parents are invited to watch classes or events provided they have contacted the teacher and scheduled their visit. Parents should refrain from standing outside their child's classroom and watching through the

door or windows, as this can be a distraction for their child and the entire class. At Zion Lutheran School, we are blessed to have many talented and dedicated volunteers who serve our teachers, administrators, and students in many ways.

The goals and objectives of our volunteer program are to enrich students' experiences beyond what is usually available in school, increase our children's motivation for learning, bring human resources of the community into the school, and assist our professional staff with non-teaching duties.

There are many ways volunteers can serve at Zion Lutheran School. These include but are not limited to escorting or driving for class field trips, coaching or refereeing athletic contests, preparing classroom materials (photocopying, cutting, etc.), and helping serve lunch. To carry out specific goals and one-time events such as fundraisers, sports events, and academic events, committees are formed with a chairperson assigned to set up meeting times and coordinate the program or event needs. Needs are made known through classroom newsletters and school weekly newsletters. Please assist where you are able. All volunteers must adhere to the guidelines passed by the School Board in April of 2014. Those guidelines are stated as follows:

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

1. Background checks will be done on all volunteers who work directly with children.
2. Every volunteer must complete Ministry Safe Training.
3. Any volunteer who may work with children alone without the teacher or aide's direct supervision will need to complete a comprehensive background check.
4. Any law violations may be considered grounds for eliminating a person from volunteering at Zion depending on the type of infraction, circumstances surrounding it, and the amount of time that has elapsed since the infraction.
5. Volunteers should remember that they serve as assistants to the teacher and not as replacements. The classroom teacher is responsible for the educational programs of his/her classroom. Volunteers need to get directions from the teacher or staff in charge of the activity.
6. Even though volunteers serve in a volunteer capacity when they have committed themselves to a task, people depend on them. If, for some reason, they cannot meet their commitment, they should inform the teacher, staff person, or committee chairperson so that the day's schedule may be adjusted accordingly.
7. Volunteers are sometimes party to privileged information or have the opportunity to observe individual children and interaction between students or between students and teachers. Information of this sort must be kept confidential. Volunteers do not have the authority to contact parents.
inform them of behavior problems or academic needs. Discussing school situations with other parents is also a breach of ethics.
8. Volunteers should not administer any consequences if such disciplinary measures are needed. This will solely be the responsibility of the faculty and staff of Zion.
9. Volunteers must check in and receive a visitor badge from the school office.
10. All volunteers must dress appropriately and modestly according to their biological sex.

PARENT-TEACHER LEAGUE (PTL)

The Parent Teacher League promotes the fellowship of Zion School families, supports specific school activities through fundraising and volunteers, and maintains the school bus. The PTL sponsors family events several times each school year. All parents, guardians, and teachers of students in grades preschool through eight are members of the PTL. Events are publicized through the weekly newsletter.

School Day

The school day for grades K-8 is from 8:15 AM to 2:55 PM

Preschool hours are as follows:

Three-year-old program (Tuesday and Thursday): AM session 8:00-10:45, PM session 12:00-2:45

Four-year-old program (Monday, Wednesday, Friday): AM session 8:00-11:15, PM session 12:00-3:00,
ALL-DAY 8:00 – 3:00

Curriculum

In keeping with the school's goals, our curriculum includes everything a child does under the school's guidance. What we teach and learn is done according to God and His Word. A period of instruction for faith-building and Christian life growth is vital in everyday activities. Equally important is interpreting secular subjects in the light of God's Word and guidance in Christian living.

We strive for student activity, involvement, and experiences in our instruction. All subjects typically taught in preschool through eighth grade (reading, phonics, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, physical education, art, vocal and instrumental music, and computer) are taught at Zion. In addition, students receive daily instruction in religion and memory work. Students take yearly achievement tests through which the staff can note individual and group strengths and weaknesses compared to national norms.

Physical Education

An ample physical education program is provided with the equipment in the gym, the gym itself, and outside play areas. All students must participate in physical education classes unless a note from a physician or parent is sent to the student's teacher. **Students need athletic shoes for each physical education class.** These may either be worn to school, or students may bring these shoes from home and change them into them for class.

Choir

All students in grades K-8 participate in the school choir. Rehearsals are held during the school day. As invited, this choir will sing primarily at Zion Lutheran Church and other churches.

All students are requested to participate when the choir sings. Watch the school newsletter for information. Students in Grades 7-8 may also participate in District 206 Choir. Please check with the District 206 Music Department.

Special Needs

For students who have special needs academically, behaviorally, or physically, District 206 provides testing to determine if they qualify for special services. District 206 will provide bussing from Zion to a District 206 school for special education services. The only special education services offered on Zion's campus are for students who qualify for speech services.

Students who do not meet certain levels of achievement in math and/or reading may qualify for extra help through the Title I reading and math program. This additional help will be provided by a title teacher who will come to Zion.

Psychological counseling is also available through District 206.

Homework

Zion recognizes two types of homework. One is regular daily assignments. The amount of work brought home will depend on the student's ability, organization, and study habits. Efficient, attentive students will complete more work during school hours. Long-term projects and test preparation that require work outside the classroom comprise the second type of homework. Middle- and upper-grade students will have an increasing number of both types. Students in the primary grades will have a small amount of work, including memory work. Occasionally, larger projects requiring work at home may be assigned.

Parents should be willing to point out mistakes in homework and encourage and guide their children, but parents should not do the work. Research reveals that student success declines the more a parent is directly involved with homework. We encourage parents to read to and with their children, to review and test math facts, spelling words, and memory work, and to supervise both the quantity and quality of video game use and television viewing.

STANDARDIZED TESTING (Gr K-8)

Standardized achievement tests called MAP Tests (Measure of Academic Progress) are given to students in grades K-8 two to three times each year. These tests measure Zion students against a representative national sampling. They are a tool to help us evaluate the student's year-to-year growth and our program's effectiveness. The test results are shared with parents, and a class summary is shared with the School Board.

HONOR ROLL

Students in grades 5-8 are recognized quarterly in the school newsletter for superior academic performance. Grades earned in the core courses of religion (including memory work, classroom work, and Confirmation), reading/literature, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies are used to calculate GPA (grade point average).

Principal's List

This is a prestigious academic achievement awarded to students who maintain an average of 95%-100% in the core courses with no grade in any subject lower than 85% or an "S." 18

Honor Roll

An average of 88%-94% in the core courses with no grade in any subject lower than 75% or an "S."

Awards

Awards are a recognition of student achievement and an opportunity to show how we use God's gifts to His glory and the best of our ability. An awards ceremony is held at the end of the year. Some awards are also listed quarterly in the school newsletter.

1. Perfect Church Attendance (Gr K-8)
2. Faithful Church Attendance (Gr K-8)
3. Perfect School Attendance (Gr K-8)
4. Commendable School Attendance (Gr K-8)
5. Principal's List (Gr 5-8)
6. Honor Roll (Gr. 5-8)
7. Athletics and Activities (Basketball, Cheerleading, Volleyball, ECHO, Track)

8. Presidential Academic Award (Grade 8)
9. The Stephen Hustad Award (Grades 6 & 7)
10. American Citizenship Award (Grade 8)
11. Robotics (Grades 5-8)

Chapel Services

Kindergarten through eighth-grade students and staff meet on Wednesday mornings for a worship service led by pastors, DCEs, teachers, and/or students. Preschoolers and their teachers meet once a month for a chapel service. These services are not intended to replace regular Sunday worship but rather to provide a worship opportunity designed for children and foster good worship habits. Students share God's gifts with others at home and worldwide through their chapel offerings. We invite parents and other visitors to worship with us.

Church Attendance

Religious instruction and school programs are an integral part of church life. Therefore, all students must attend worship services regularly. As we read in Romans 10:17, "Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ." Because we feel strongly about our students' participation in weekly worship, we record church attendance and report it quarterly. If it is noticed that a student is reporting that they are not frequently in attendance at their church, the teacher will contact the family to make sure the child is reporting accurately and to offer encouragement and assistance in helping the family worship regularly. Children who are not worshipping regularly and are Zion Church members will also be referred to the pastors and Board of Lay Ministry of Zion for encouragement and assistance.

Students are scheduled to sing as a group several times a year. We encourage all children to participate whether or not they are members of Zion. We also welcome having the children sing at other churches throughout the year. If you want the children to sing at your worship service, please contact your pastor and the school to see if arrangements can be made.

Textbooks, Supplies, and Equipment

School books and equipment must be used with proper care. All hard-backed textbooks should be covered to lessen damage and wear. Students must reimburse the school for damaged or lost textbooks or library books. Students will also be held financially responsible for school furniture and equipment that is deliberately or carelessly defaced or damaged. Misuse of school property is not in keeping with Christian stewardship.

School Locker

Student lockers are the sole property of Zion Lutheran School. Zion Lutheran School reserves the right to search any locker at any time to maintain an orderly, safe school environment. We search student lockers if we are looking for lost/stolen items, seeking to find items for parents, or if we have reason to believe students may violate Zion's rules or policies. We will also occasionally check student lockers for cleanliness or to pinpoint the source of unpleasant odors. Occasionally, Douglas County Sheriffs will check the lockers upon request from the school office.

Recess

Students will usually go outside for recess. Fresh air and exercise are essential to the maintenance of good health. Children will stay inside if weather conditions make outside play impossible or dangerous.

Boots and proper winter clothing are a must for younger children and are encouraged to be used by older

children when snow is on the ground. See the section on Dress and Appearance for further information.

School Telephone Use

The school telephones are to be used by students only in cases of emergency and with the permission of a teacher. They should not be used for making social arrangements, forgetting homework, or a ride to an athletic event. All students must receive permission from a teacher to use a school phone. Students will be called to the phone only in cases of emergency. All other messages should be forwarded through the office.

Parents who need to get a message to a child regarding transportation home or a change in after-school activities must call their child's teacher before 2:15 p.m. to ensure the message is delivered before the end of the day.

Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Many students bring cell phones or other electronic devices to school before or after school hours. All cell phones and other electronic communication devices must be turned off before entering the building. These devices must be given to the teacher or placed into the appropriate receptacle when the student enters the classroom and may not be used without the teacher's permission. They are not to be stored in student lockers. Some medical devices require cell phones. In those cases, cell phone use is allowed only for device monitoring. Cell phones will be confiscated and given to the principal if these guidelines are not followed. Confiscated cell phones or other electronic devices will be returned **ONLY TO THE STUDENT'S PARENTS OR GUARDIAN**. Zion assumes no responsibility if a cell phone is lost, stolen, or damaged.

Extra-Curricular Activities

We strive to give our students a varied background in many personal growth and development activities. Extra-curricular opportunities at Zion include contests and competitions, instrumental music, vocal music, and athletics. Zion students are also allowed and encouraged to participate in District 206 extra-curricular activities, including band, orchestra, choir, and athletics.

Contests

Academic competitions, including a Spelling Bee, Bible Bowl, and Knowledge Bowl, may be held during the year. Some of these competitions will be held in conjunction with students from other Lutheran schools. Grade levels involved in each contest and other information will be available in the school newsletter and from the faculty.

Robotics

Students in grades 5 through 8 may participate in our robotics club. The team will compete against other schools. Students participating in **ROBOTICS** must meet the eligibility requirements for Zion athletics programs. See the Athletic Handbook for a complete explanation of academic eligibility.

Instrumental and Vocal

Beginning in grade 5 for orchestra and grade 6 for band, Zion students have the opportunity to participate in instrumental music through District #206. Students in grades 7 and 8 can also join the Choir through District #206. These opportunities are offered during the school day, some at Zion and some at District #206 schools. Contact the music department at DMS for further information.

Seventh and eighth-grade students at Zion also receive instruction and practice playing handbells.

Athletics

Zion offers students the opportunity to participate in team sports including girls' volleyball (grades 6-8), boys' and girls' basketball (grades 5-8), girls' cheerleading (grades 5-8) and boys' and girls' track (grades 4-8). Volleyball and basketball teams may include students one grade lower if it is determined that more players are needed to fill a team. Throughout the school year, other sports programs on a smaller scale may be offered to students in younger grades depending on volunteer interest in leading and coaching such programs. Participation in any Zion athletics program is limited to students of Zion School who are in the correct grade level for the program.

A participation fee for each program helps cover the costs of items such as equipment and uniforms. Parents are responsible for other expenses associated with the athletic program, such as transportation and tournament hotel rooms.

Athletic participation is a privilege. Athletes are expected to show Christian behavior and good sportsmanship at all times. Zion reserves the right to withhold athletic participation for students as either a consequence for behavior issues in school or as a consequence for unsportsmanlike behavior at practices and/or games. Student-athletes must also remain academically eligible to participate in Zion athletics. When conflicts arise, academics must take priority. See the athletic handbook for a complete explanation of eligibility requirements.

While attending an athletic contest, students are expected to remain in the specific area where the competition is being held (athletic field, track, gymnasium, etc.) This includes students attending as spectators as well as players.

Student spectators, especially younger children, are expected to always remain with their parents.

Field Trips

School-sponsored field trips will be conducted periodically. All students are expected to participate. To participate in field trips, students must be in good standing in academics and behavior. Students whose grades or behavior are unacceptable will not be permitted to participate in school field trips. This decision is to be solely the school's responsibility after consultation between the teacher, principal, and parents. A signed permission slip is required for all field trips, whether local or out-of-town. Oral permission, such as by telephone, is not acceptable. When transportation other than the bus is needed, drivers must be at least 21 years of age, licensed and insured, and be able to clear a background check. Drivers must have a copy of their current driver's license and insurance information on file in the office. This information should be updated as needed throughout the year.

By law, each child must wear a seat belt when driving, and younger children may not ride in the front seat. Also, Minnesota's booster seat law states that a child cannot use a seat belt alone until they are 8 or 4 feet 9 inches tall — whichever comes first. Children not meeting these requirements must use a booster seat on school field trips when riding in parent/teacher vehicles. Parents must provide a booster seat if a student needs a booster seat to go on a school field trip. Zion Lutheran School does not have booster seats. According to the law, any child without a booster seat (and needs one) will not be allowed to go on field trips where parent or teacher vehicles are used. Booster seats are not required when riding Zion's bus. **STUDENTS MUST STAY WITH THE ZION GROUP AND MAY NOT LEAVE THE GROUP FOR ANY REASON.**

Supervision of Students at School Events

Students on field trips, athletic events, and any other school activity are under the authority of the Zion Lutheran School teachers and staff, and all school rules apply. No student may leave the designated area (track, ball diamonds, etc.) UNLESS their parent is physically taking them away from the area AND has

communicated with a written note given directly to the teacher by the parent or guardian. When teachers cannot find students, this creates a very stressful situation.

Christian Discipline

Zion Lutheran School is where God seeks to accomplish His good and gracious will for students. Living in the assurance of God's love, mercy, and forgiveness, students are encouraged by the power and teaching of the Holy Spirit to live Christian lives in accordance with God's will for them. Students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the School Board are responsible for maintaining an environment conducive to Christian education for all students.

"Discipline" comes from the same root word as "disciple." That best explains our objective in the discipline procedure: enabling students to become Disciples of Christ. Our ultimate goal is that students develop an attitude of love and respect for parents, teachers, classmates, and self. We view discipline not in terms of punishment but rather the teaching of self-control. Discipline is positive when the goal is to build self-respect in the heart, not tear self-respect down. Every effort will be made to make discipline educational to help the child understand the purpose and benefit of the disciplinary process.

We make a determined effort to maintain Christian discipline at all times. Students must understand that they owe obedience to teachers as a God-given command and that **each student is responsible and accountable for his or her behavior**. Our teachers make every effort to treat all children fairly and kindly in accordance with God's command and Jesus' example from Scripture.

Employees and volunteers of Zion Lutheran School will not administer corporal (physical) punishment of any form.

Students who demonstrate a continued lack of self-control and fail to function within the school's guidelines may be given detention or suspended from the school by the principal. Suspensions may lead to eventual expulsion from Zion by the School Board. Any student facing expulsion will be entitled to due process, which includes a written complaint and a hearing before the school board.

Teachers are responsible for setting classroom rules and procedures that will affect a proper classroom learning climate. Teachers have a degree of flexibility in establishing these rules as long as they do not conflict with established school expectations. School rules apply to all school-sponsored activities, whether on or off campus.

If students or parents have discipline-related questions, they are encouraged to schedule outside school hours to discuss the matter with the teacher. Teachers aid the discipline process by:

1. Communicating their discipline procedure to students and parents.
2. Calling parents when repeated behavior problems occur.
3. Informing the principal of behavior problems.

Parents aid the discipline process by:

1. Giving the teacher respect and support.
2. Teaching their children to do the same.
3. Promptly discuss any questions or concerns with the teacher rather than other parents.

Expectations

As children of God and in order not to disrupt the learning, play, or lunchtime of others, our students will observe the following expectations:

At all Times and Places

1. Show respect for teachers, staff, fellow students, and self.
2. Follow directions.

3. Use language appropriate for a Christian
4. Keep hands, feet, and objects to oneself.
5. Exercise appropriate care for Zion Lutheran Church and School building and properties
6. No chewing gum.

In the Classroom

1. Be prepared for class.
2. Raise your hand to speak.
3. Take responsibility for learning.

Throughout the Building

1. Walk in a quiet and orderly manner.
2. Pass to the right when meeting others in the hall or on the stairway.

In the Cafeteria

1. Use good manners.
2. Speak softly.
3. No throwing food or milk cartons.
4. Clean up one's mess, disposing of all wrappers and containers when leaving.
5. Remain seated until dismissal after the meal.

On the Playground

1. Play in designated areas within sight of supervisors.
2. No roughhousing and dangerous play.
3. Practice Christian sportsmanship.
4. Wear appropriate footwear.

In the Gymnasium

1. Wear approved gym shoes.
2. Return equipment to its proper place after use.
3. No roughhousing and dangerous play.
4. Practice Christian sportsmanship.

In the Restroom

Students are expected to use restrooms conforming to their biological sex.

On the Bus (Zion's or District 206)

The buses are an extension of the classroom, and all school rules apply to students on buses, whether on Zion's or District 206 buses. Breaking the rules on District 206 buses will also result in consequences at Zion.

Discipline Steps toward Suspension or Expulsion

If a student consistently and intentionally chooses to violate school rules or acceptable behavior practices, the student may be placed into the Discipline Step Program.

Step 1. The student meets with the principal for counseling, indicating the seriousness of the offense(s). Repentance and forgiveness are exchanged. The principal informs the parent or guardian, and the student's

name and a description of the behavior(s) leading to the Step are recorded in the Disciplinary File and sent to the parent for signature.

Step 2. The student meets with the principal for counseling, indicating the seriousness of the offense(s). Repentance and forgiveness are exchanged. The student writes a plan to improve his/her behavior. A conference is held with the student, teacher(s), principal, and/or assistant principal. At this conference, the concerns are discussed, and the student presents his/her improvement plan. The parent(s) or guardian(s) and student are made aware of the next step in the procedure if the problem behavior continues. The School Board is informed, and the step is recorded in the Disciplinary File.

Step 3. The student meets with the principal to discuss the problem/situation. The student is suspended for two days and placed on probationary status. The student is again responsible for writing an improvement plan during this suspension. Following the suspension, a conference to discuss the matter will be held. The participants are the same as in Step 2. Depending on the problem, the pastor(s) may also be present. The parent(s) or guardian(s) and student are counseled that the next step (4) will include suspension and possible expulsion. The School Board is informed, and the action is recorded in the Disciplinary File.

Step 4. The student will meet with the principal. The student will be temporarily suspended pending action by the School Board. The principal and/or assistant principal will notify the parents by phone and in writing, and the school board will meet during a special session. The parents will be invited to attend this School Board meeting to speak on behalf of their child and/or to express any concerns. The School Board will decide on the expulsion of the student. A final report will be sent to the parent.

Failure of the student or parent to follow any requirements of a given step will result in immediate movement to the next step.

Severe behaviors calling for immediate intervention and discipline include but are not limited to disrespect to an adult; willful disobedience; leaving the school grounds without permission; extended truancy; harassment of others physically, racially, religiously, sexually, or in any other manner; improper use of school's computers or internet service; possession, use, or sale of a controlled substance; concealed weapon (including look-alike); stealing; vandalism; fighting; violent action or threat of it; or suspicion of criminal activity.

If, in the administration's opinion, a student's conduct is sufficiently aberrant, a student may be advanced to any step, including step 4. Additional consequences may be required in some cases. Consequences may be increased or modified at the discretion of the administration. All actions will be generated in a Christian spirit, with proper use of Law and Gospel.

Records of any student on Step 1 or Step 2 will be cleared at the beginning of the second semester of the school year. Records of students on Step 3 will not be removed, and those students will remain on probation for the remainder of the school year.

Very rarely does a student exhaust all of the above steps. In cases where rules are clear and consistent, few students move beyond Step 3. **Parental support is the key!**

Things to Leave at Home

Weapons are not to be brought to school. This includes any object, such as a knife, gun, explosive device, or look-alike object, that could be used to cause bodily harm. These will be confiscated, and additional consequences may be assigned as appropriate.

Transportation

School District #206 provides bus service for Zion students on the public school routes. Students are delivered to Zion in the morning. After school, students are bussed to Discovery Middle School and transferred to the bus that takes them home. Any student going home with another student and/or traveling to a different destination than home or daycare must obtain a District 206 Bus Pass from their teacher. Passes will only be given if Zion receives written permission from the parents of both children.

If you have a question about bus routes and times or need to change your child's pick-up or drop-off location, contact the transportation director for District #206 at 320-762-3317. The 206 busses are an extension of our school's Classrooms. Inappropriate behavior on the bus can lead to losing the privilege of riding and will result in discipline at Zion Lutheran School.

Bicycles

Students who ride bicycles to school are expected to follow all traffic rules. After arriving at school, students are to place bicycles in the bike rack near the school entrance and leave them there until dismissed at 3:00 p.m. Following the dismissal, students should walk their bikes to the edge of the school property and begin their trip home **after the buses have pulled away**.

Lost and Found

We find that many items accumulate but are never claimed by anyone. These items are in a container next to the downstairs lockers by the gymnasium door. Please check there to retrieve lost items. Periodically, unclaimed items are given to charity.

Parties

Classroom parties are held at school for holiday observances. Students may also provide birthday treats. It is highly recommended that treats be store-bought items.

When students plan to have parties at home or another location, invitations and "thank you's" should be mailed rather than distributed at school unless the entire class is invited. To protect the feelings of all students, we strongly encourage parents to include all members of a student's class when planning a party.

Food Service

Breakfast will be served between 7:40 AM and 8:00 AM each morning.

A meal meeting government standards for Class A lunch is served daily. Families may receive free or reduced-price lunches anonymously by applying according to the guidelines provided to every family before the start of school.

Extra lunch and milk will be billed through your student account. Parents will be notified when their account reaches a negative balance. Students in grades 1-8 who desire a morning milk break can purchase milk for the year in advance. Cost information is sent out before the start of school. Payment is due by the end of the first week of school. Students in PS and K receive milk each day at no additional cost.

Lactose-free milk will be provided to students who are lactose intolerant. A note from the student's physician is needed to provide this service.

Dress and Appearance

Students' appearance should reflect the modesty and good taste of a Christian person. Children should

come to school clean and dressed neatly.

Since styles are constantly changing, the school reserves the right to determine what is appropriate for the environment at Zion. Parents will be notified when changes in appearance are necessary.

Responsibility for student appearance lies with the home, but we do ask for cooperation in the following areas:

1. Please avoid all clothing and hairstyles which are extreme in style. All clothing should be in good condition. No clothing that exposes undergarments, the midriff or back, or has narrow straps should be worn. This includes spaghetti straps and tank tops. Tops should not have a low neckline. Clothing with messages that do not reflect good taste, negative messages or images, and/or carrying advertisements for beer or tobacco products is not permitted. Head coverings such as hats, caps, and bandanas should not be worn in the building. Extreme hairstyles (unnatural colors, spikes, mohawks, designs shaved into heads, etc.) can distract the student and classmates and should be avoided.
2. Students must dress in conformance with their biological sex.
3. Appropriate footwear and winter clothing should be worn in cold weather as children will continue outdoor activities.
 - a. Boots are required for all students in grades K-4 for outdoor activities when snow is on the ground. Boots are optional for grades 5-8, but if boots are not worn, students will be confined to the cultivated areas of the parking lot and street.
 - b. Boots must be replaced with dry shoes in the building.
 - c. Students in grades K-4 must wear snow pants or snowsuits.
 - d. Students in grades 5-8 are also encouraged to do so.

The use of cosmetics is discouraged. Any cosmetics to be worn at school should be applied at home. If a student persists in what the teacher determines as excessive use, she will be asked to remove the cosmetics, and parents will be notified.

Shorts and skirts may be worn when weather conditions warrant. They must be at least knuckle length or longer on the student. Please check the length of at home before coming to school. Kindergarten through Grade 3 students must wear shorts underneath their skirts/dresses.

Students must wear appropriate footwear (tennis/athletic shoes or boots) for outdoor play at recess and tennis shoes in the gymnasium. For safety reasons, students without proper footwear will not be allowed to participate.

For safety reasons, Zion has banned "Flip-Flop" type footwear (worn at the pool or beach). Students in Preschool-Grade 3 must always have their backs on their shoes. Students in Grades 4-8 may wear shoes without backs if they have proper shoes outside and in the gym.

Upon the first dress code violation, the child will be warned and asked to change into appropriate clothing. The second offense will initiate contact with the parents to rectify the situation. Continued code violation will result in detentions and possibly the student being placed on Zion's Discipline "Step System". Since styles are constantly changing, the school reserves the right to determine what is appropriate for the environment at Zion. Parents will be notified when changes in appearance are needed.

SEVERE WEATHER

School Cancellation or Late Start

School will be canceled or start late for severe weather whenever Alexandria District #206 does so. If there is a question about whether the school will be in session or begin late, tune in to one of the local radio or television stations or check the Alexandria School District 206 website at www.alexandria.k12.mn.us. Parents will also receive a phone message via Zion's *School Messenger* system if school is canceled or delayed.

Early School Closing

In case of an early school closing, our School Messenger Communication System will notify you of the closing. We may also have your oldest child at Zion try to contact you. The oldest sibling will then notify his/her younger siblings at Zion about your plans for picking them up or riding the bus. If you, your emergency person, or your daycare provider cannot be reached, your child(ren) may be going home on the bus to an empty house. Please help us keep your children safe by keeping your phone numbers current in the office.

FIRE, TORNADO, & LOCK-DOWN DRILLS

Fire drills and tornado drills are held according to state guidelines. Students are instructed regarding the correct procedure for each drill. All building occupants must follow the procedures and participate in the drills. Lock-down drills are also conducted to prepare for unlikely situations where the student population may need to be secured inside their classrooms.

COMMUNICATION

Please help your child's teacher by informing him/her of anything that could affect your child's ability to learn during the school day. Please contact the teacher by phone or note before the start of the day. These situations include but are not limited to the following:

- The child has been sick overnight or over the weekend
- The child is on medication
- Serious illness or death of a family member – this could include pets
- Any other stressful situation that might impact your child

FACTS

Zion uses the student information system called FACTS. This system helps communication between school and home and develops a sense of community among our families. Parents have 24/7 access to student grades, assignments, missing work, teacher messages, school announcements, calendars, lunch account information, and many other items. Families will also have the ability to pay tuition and incidental fees through FACTS. This will also be the primary method of email communication for parents, teachers, and special groups (e.g., PTL, parent volunteer groups, classroom families, etc.). Zion will assign all families a log-in code and answer questions that parents may have regarding the FACTS program.

FACTS also allows us to call, email, or text all parents of Zion students. This system will notify parents of emergencies, early dismissal, school cancellations, upcoming events, and important school news.

Newsletter

The school newsletter contains valuable information regarding activities and schedules. Our Communications Director will publish the newsletter on Thursdays. You will receive e-mails from csteidl@zionalex.org. Please add this address to your email list so the emails won't go to your junk mail. These newsletters will also be available at the zionalex.org website by clicking "School Families."

Grading and Reporting

Student grades are reported quarterly on report cards for students in grades K-8. The report card gives parents the teacher's evaluation of the child's work habits, social behavior, and attitudes. It also indicates the child's progress in accomplishing academic goals. Not all students can reach the same level of achievement. However, we encourage each child to use God's gifts fully. Mid-quarter progress reports are also prepared for students in grades 3-8. Grades can be accessed 24/7 on FACTS.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences, scheduled twice yearly, allow for discussion of the home-school life of the child, weaknesses and abilities, the report card, and plans for cooperative action. Parents or teachers are encouraged to arrange additional conferences as needed.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

AMONG ADULTS (Parents, teachers, etc.)

Zion Lutheran School follows the philosophy of Matthew 18 to resolve conflicts and restore harmony. Following the Biblical precept, disputes, and concerns should be determined using the following steps:

1. Person to Person (e.g., parties involved) - This is by far the most God-pleasing way to resolve conflicts.
2. Person to Person with a mediator (e.g., parties involved with a mediator) - Keeping the matter between the two parties and a mediator can resolve many problems quickly. The concerns and the actions taken toward a solution will be documented.
3. If all others have failed, the final step is to bring the concern to the School Board for resolution. This is considered the final step and should be done only after repeated efforts at steps one and two above to resolve the matter. The School Board may ask for the Pastor's involvement. Non-school or spiritual issues will be referred to another appropriate party.

At each level, all parties should remember that resolving the conflict is the goal rather than an attempt to "get one's way."

Out of Christian love and respect for others and in the spirit of Matthew 18, please keep discussions of grievances between affected parties and deal with them as outlined above.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The staff will treat minor injuries occurring at school. If a child is more severely injured or becomes ill, every effort will be made to notify the parent or other responsible adult immediately. If a parent/guardian or designated contact person is not located, necessary treatment will be procured using the family physician.

Sick children need to be at home. We do not have facilities to keep ill students at school for extended periods. Please be prepared to provide transportation home should your child become ill during the school

day. If your child is sick in the morning, please arrange for him/her to remain home. **Zion Lutheran School's official policy is that all students with fevers are not allowed to attend school or school activities until they have been free from fever (100 degrees F or greater) for twenty-four hours without the aid of fever-reducing medication and can resume the everyday routines of school.** Sending ill children to school hampers their recuperation and risks the infection of other students. Also, students who have had vomiting or diarrhea should be free from these symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school.

Medical conditions of a chronic nature, such as allergies, epilepsy, diabetes, asthma, heart conditions, etc., should be reported on the health form provided each year.

Medicine

A physician's statement or medical usage slip **is required to administer any prescription, detailing the medication's frequency, dosage, and duration. Over-the-counter medication** must also have a note that a parent or guardian signs. **All medicine must be kept in the school office.**

Records

Each student's health record is on file at school. This record includes past health history, immunizations, examinations, special conditions, and name of family physician and dentist. Any changes in this record, especially immunization updates, should be forwarded to the school office by the parent.

We have a school nurse who regularly schedules eye and ear examinations.

Zion Lutheran School does not provide accident insurance for individual students. Parents are encouraged to maintain adequate health and accident coverage for their children.

A FINAL WORD FOR PARENTS

The home and church share the responsibility of Christian education. Zion Lutheran School is an arm of the church and does not seek to supplant the all-important role of parents but rather to aid, support, and reinforce it. To take full advantage of what the school can do, parents are encouraged to:

1. Be faithful in church and Bible class attendance and participation in the Lord's Supper.
2. Use God's Word regularly in private and family devotions.
3. Pray regularly for themselves and their children, the church and school, and its staff.
4. Set a consistent example of Christian living and Christian purpose.
5. Show a continued interest in the school life of each child.
6. Encourage the child to do their schoolwork neatly and correctly, to the best of their ability.
7. Provide a quiet place for study and access to reference materials and age-appropriate books for recreational reading.
8. Provide training in and modeling of helpfulness, courtesy, and Christian values.
9. If interested, make an appointment to visit the school when possible to gain first-hand knowledge of what is "going on in school."
10. Take advantage of the earliest opportunity to speak to your child's teacher should there be a question or misunderstanding.
11. Refrain from discussing school problems in front of children or with unaffected parties.
12. Be a committed, contributing member of PTL.
13. Faithfully read the school newsletter and other communications.

A BRIEF EXPLANATION OF WHAT LUTHERANS BELIEVE

Zion Lutheran School is a resource to provide a Christian education from a "Lutheran" perspective. When you want to know what "Lutheran" is, you can find help from Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism. It is arranged according to six essential teachings from God's Word. These are the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Confession and Absolution. The

following is an attempt to explain the Lutheran perspective.

The Ten Commandments

In these laws, God describes what He expects from us. There is a Natural Law that God has written into every person's heart (mind). It gives them an idea of what is right and what is wrong. The Ten Commandments or Moral Law is a fuller explanation of this Natural Law. Obedience to the Moral Law is not optional; neither can we be saved by obeying it. The primary purpose of the Law is to show us our sins, so we realize our lost condition and the need for a Savior.

Once the Holy Spirit works faith in Christ within a person's heart, that person is no longer under the bondage of the Law. The Law guides Christians to what they should or should not do to lead a God-pleasing life. The power to live this life always comes from the Gospel. Even Christians cannot keep the Law perfectly, but because they have been joined to Christ by the Holy Spirit's work through God's Word, Christians want to keep God's Commandments and strive to serve Him.

Finally, we should note that Jesus summarized the two parts of the Ten Commandments in this way: Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, soul, strength and mind, and you shall love your neighbor as yourself."

The Apostles' Creed

What we believe affects how we live. We must first realize that God, the Father, made us and now provides everything necessary to support our body and life. In response, we ask Him to help us fulfill our duty by thanking, praising, serving, and obeying Him.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God from eternity. He is also human because He was born of the Virgin Mary. He willingly gave up His place in heaven to become man, and He allowed Himself to be arrested, tried, condemned, and killed on the cross so He could pay the price for our sins. His resurrection shows us that He has also defeated death and the devil. Faith in what Jesus has done for us moves us to ask His help as we desire to live under Him in His family and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness.

Romans 8:7 says the sinful mind is hostile to God. I Corinthians 12:3 says that no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. God, the Holy Spirit, calls us to be members of His family. He uses the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection in our place to assure us that He loves and cares for us. Only through the power of the Holy Spirit can we believe that Jesus Christ is our Savior.

The Lord's Prayer

Prayer is our response to God's grace and mercy. As children of God, we desire to speak to Him through faith in Jesus. Jesus opened the communication channel with our Heavenly Father when He died for our sins and rose again. We add the phrase "in Jesus' name" to our prayers.

Baptism

Scripture teaches that we are sinners from the moment we are conceived (Psalm 51:5). We read in Ephesians 2:3, "Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath." Peter preached on Pentecost (Acts 2:38), "Be baptized . . . for the forgiveness of your sins." Jesus commanded us to baptize "In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit." Sin separates us from God and makes us objects of His wrath. Baptism in the name of the Triune God brings us back to God and establishes a proper relationship with Him. Baptism is God's gracious activity by which He turns us around. Paul writes in Titus 3, "He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit." Since we are sinners from the moment of conception and since baptism is for the forgiveness of sins, infants also benefit from baptism. Baptism is a means of grace through which we have forgiveness and eternal life. We also understand, however, that each day,

we continue to sin. Daily, we must turn to God and ask for the Holy Spirit's help to live a new life that glorifies God. Paul describes this new life as a life filled with and controlled by the fruit of the Spirit. This life is characterized by love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

The Lord's Supper

When Jesus gave us the Lord's Supper, He said of the bread, "This IS my body." He said of the wine, "This IS my blood." Human reason cannot understand how a piece of bread can be Jesus' body, and wine can be His blood. Faith simply takes Jesus at His Word. Christ promises that each time we take the Lord's Supper, He will be present with the body and blood that He gave and shed on the cross for our salvation. The fact that He is present in that bread and wine tells us that He is not holding our sins against us. Baptism is God's way of starting us in a new life as members of His family. The Lord's Supper is His way of nourishing our faith and keeping us close to Himself.

Confession and Absolution

Dr. Martin Luther wrote, "When I urge you to go to confession, I am simply urging you to be a Christian." To be a child of God is to admit our shortcomings and our sins. We accept both God and, very expressly, those we have sinned against. The whole purpose of confessing sin is, to be honest about our condition and to realize our only hope for relief from the agony of sin-broken relationships comes from God's grace. Thankfully, God has given the church, His people here on earth, the authority to announce forgiveness to those who are sorry for their sins, want to change their lives and turn to Jesus as their Savior. The church also has the authority to withhold forgiveness from those who are not sorry and have no desire to change.

Lutheran Schools Provide Christian Education

Christian distinctiveness is apparent in Lutheran classrooms in the following ways:

1. Jesus Christ, Redeemer and Savior, is the center of all teaching, learning, and living.
2. Teachers view all students as redeemed children of God.
3. Students are urged daily to view themselves, their classmates, and their teachers with respect, esteem, and dignity
4. Teachers help students know and understand themselves, their needs, their talents, and their purpose as Disciples of Christ within their community, church, and society as a whole.
5. Lutheran classrooms are communities where children learn to care for and help one another learn, grow, and apply what they believe. Appropriate classroom behavior based on self-discipline is the goal of the caring community. Christian love and forgiveness are operative in all relationships.
6. Because children grow and mature differently, lessons are designed to allow for individual differences and growth patterns. Performance measurement is based on individual progress and growth, as well as comparison to a grade-appropriate performance standard.
7. The curriculum is designed to include academic subjects and all aspects of a comprehensive education. Learning and living Christian values and lifestyles is essential to daily Christian nurture.
8. Because fathers and mothers are viewed as the child's primary teachers, teachers intentionally involve them as partners in the teaching/learning process. This involves more than simply reporting the child's performance and progress to parents.
9. Lutheran classrooms are distinctive as they provide a Christ-centered environment that:
 - a. fosters learning and growth;
 - b. encourages appreciation of beauty, the arts, and culture;
 - c. cultivates habits of cleanliness and orderliness;
 - d. creates an awareness and appreciation of God's daily loving presence;
 - e. fosters fellowship and friendship;
 - f. focuses on Christian joy and hope;
 - g. conveys Christian goodwill toward all people.

A Brief History of Lutheran Education

From the beginning, Lutherans realized the importance of providing Christian training for children, both boys and girls; wherever the Lutheran church went, the Lutheran school went with it.

Christian schooling was conducted on board ships and continued immediately upon arrival in America. Dr. C. F. W. Walther, our synod's first president, tells us that a school was founded within a few days after the arrival of the first immigrants in St. Louis.

One condition of membership in the Missouri Synod was that "the children of the congregations are provided with Christian schooling."

The chief reason for Christian day schools was religious instruction, such as Luther's Catechism, Bible history, Bible reading, Christian hymns, and so on, not teaching the German language.

Other subjects like history, reading, writing, and arithmetic were taught in a way so "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" was applied to the whole life of the school.

In the early days, it was almost a foregone conclusion that if a pastor was called to a congregation and there was no school, he promptly organized and taught the school.