

Mission Statement: As a ministry of St. John Lutheran Church, the mission of St. John Lutheran School is to provide, in partnership with parents, a Christian education which guides children to know Jesus as their Savior through God's Word, and to strive for academic excellence in a life of service to Him.

Parental Responsibility: The home is and always will be the chief agency for the Christian training of a child. A Christian Day School does not relieve parents of their God-given obligation and responsibility. The home provides a Christian lifestyle, regular church and Bible class attendance, and a devotional prayer life. If the home and school are both Christ-centered, the child is receiving the best education he or she can receive anywhere. It is important that the home and the school work together to achieve this Christ-centeredness.

Student Responsibility: Part of the process of education is teaching children about personal responsibility and consequences. Parents are asked to please support us as we do this.

Administration: Control and supervision of the school is exercised by the Voters Assembly of St. John Lutheran Church through its Board of Child Christian Education (BOCCE). The school board is composed of members of St John Lutheran Church and its function is to oversee all educational programs. The school principal acts as an agent of the congregation and the BOCCE in the direct administration and supervision of the school.

Accreditation: St. John Lutheran School is accredited by the National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) and by the State of Indiana.

Arrival and Dismissal: The official school day extends from 8:00am to 3:00pm. All students should be in their classrooms by 8:00am so that routine matters such as attendance, lunch count, and extended care count may be completed. This is also a time for preparing for class, sharpening pencils, checking assignments, preparing books, and the like. Those who arrive after 8:00am must report to the office and will be marked tardy.

Early arrival extended care begins at 7:00am. When delivered to the school in the morning, the student must go directly to this early arrival room prior to 7:40am. Students arriving after 7:40am should go directly to their classrooms. At the end of the school day, students will be dismissed according to the dismissal schedule in place at the time. Staff members will supervise students until all students have been picked up. Students who cannot be picked up until after 3:10 are expected to report to Afternoon Extended Care.

Attendance, Tardiness, Early Release and Returning Students

- We are expected by the state to maintain a 96.1% attendance rate.
- Our students are expected to be in attendance 172 days per year, or no more than 8 absences per year (4 per semester).

- Absences that are “excused” include: personal illness or injury, medical or dental appointments, court appearance, and family emergency. All other absences are considered “unexcused”.
- More than 10 absences in a year is considered an “excessive absence”.
- Students who are absent due to illness may not participate in evening events unless they have returned to school by 12:00 Noon.
- Students (all grades) will be allowed to make up all work missed due to an excused absence. Students will not be allowed to make up work missed due to an unexcused absence.
- Excused Absence – Students in grades 5-8 will receive all missed work upon return to the classroom. Work is to be made up within the time frame set by the teacher.
- Vacation - Parents are encouraged to arrange vacations when school is not in session. However, if special circumstances arise and the family plans a vacation during the time when school is in session, the parents must contact the teacher (homeroom teacher in upper grades) at least one week in advance to explain the circumstances. Absences due to family vacations will be unexcused, but the child will be allowed to make up the work missed.
- Leaving and returning to school - Parents must report to the office to sign out a student who leaves during the school day.
- Students will be released only to the parent or legal guardian unless written permission from the parents or guardians states otherwise. If the student's release is an emergency, please notify the school office as to who will be picking up the student.
- Parents must report a returning student to the office in the same manner.
- Students are considered tardy at 8:00. Students arriving after 8:00 must be signed in at the office. Please do not just drop your child off at the curb. Accompany your child to the office and sign him/her in.

Closings and Delays: In the event of bad weather or other factors that make the closing of school necessary, families will be notified through Fast Direct and various TV stations in Indianapolis. Channel 6 is usually the first notified. Please do not call the school.

Change of address, phone, family, and health records: Parents are asked to notify us immediately when a change of address and/or phone occurs so we can keep our records up-to-date. Please also notify the school office if there is a change in family relationship, health-related items, immunizations, sickness, etc.

Chapel: Students K-8 attend chapel on Wednesday mornings at 8:10. The Pastor, the Principal, and members of the teaching staff lead services. Offerings are received weekly and designated to a variety of recipient ministries. Parents are welcome to attend anytime.

Cell Phones: Because students have access to the phones in the office, students are not permitted to carry cell phones at school.

Child Abuse Reporting: Child abuse and neglect are complex problems that are not confined to any race, social, economic, or religious group. Abuse cases may be a result of physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, and others. State law mandates that teachers report suspected cases of the child abuse to Child Protective Services. Procedures and guidelines will be followed, as able to ensure a prompt, professional treatment of the reported case.

Church/Sunday School Attendance: In keeping with the program of Christian education and training in the church and school, families are expected to attend worship services regularly. Teachers keep a record of church attendance because it is an indication of family worship life. The Philosophy and Purpose statements of St. John Lutheran School indicate the importance placed on regular church and Sunday School attendance. The example set by parents in this area will either support what is learned in the day school or, hinder such teaching and leave the child confused. Showing our Christian concern for the faith life of the child, church and Sunday School attendance figures are taken by the classroom teachers each Monday.

Communication and Cooperation: Active cooperation and communication between parents, students, teachers, and principal is necessary for the proper development of the child. Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit the school for conferences on matters pertaining to their child's progress and welfare. We believe that much good comes from the personal contact of parent and teacher. Misunderstandings and misconceptions can usually be avoided in this way. Parents seeking clarification on classroom operation and problems that arise should contact the classroom teacher immediately.

Communication, Written: School newsletters are published weekly and available through Fast Direct and also at stjohnindy.org. Many teachers also send home weekly newsletters.

Communication - Home/School Concerns: Because we have so many families involved in the programs at St. John Lutheran School, it is possible that concerns and disagreements may arise between the home, the teacher, and the school. In light of the guidelines given by our Lord in Matthew 18, we would suggest the following steps be taken toward resolution of such problems:

1. Listen with discernment and understanding that what is reported at the dinner table may not be exactly what happened.
2. Make an appointment with the teacher to discuss the area of concern. Resolution of the problem will probably come at this stage. If not...
3. Make an appointment with the principal to arrange a conference between parent, teacher and principal. Sometimes this third party is necessary. If, in your mind, no resolution has yet been achieved...

4. Contact one of the members of the Board of Child Christian Education so that the issue can be brought up and discussed at a meeting. You would want to be present at this meeting.

As difficult as it may seem to voice concerns, please be advised that anonymous complaints and concerns cannot be dealt with appropriately. Lasting resolutions of problems occur only as Christians are open and honest with each other and deal with the situations in an attitude of mutual respect and caring. Your input will help St. John continue to grow strong in its ministry.

Damages and Vandalism: St. John Lutheran School and all of the materials, equipment, facilities, etc belong to the members of St. John Lutheran Church. Misuse or abuse of these facilities creates greater expense in maintenance and upkeep for everyone. We expect that a feeling of ownership would develop where all students will take pride in their school and treat these facilities and materials with great respect and care. Any unnecessary hard usage or damage to books, desks, chairs, or other school property will not be tolerated. Replacement or repair of any item and the cost of the applicable labor is the responsibility of the parents and/or the child. Failure to pay for such damages may result in suspension from school.

Discipline and Conduct: The following guidelines are in effect for school, classroom, sports, activities, and all events associated with St. John Lutheran School.

Our school recognizes each student as an individual child of God and as such, each student must be dealt with on an individual basis. Those in authority are to approach each child with Christian concern and respect, aware of individual personalities, needs, and emotions. The school also recognizes the worth and value of various means and methods of discipline, and therefore trusts the discretion of the individual teacher in the employment of such means and methods within the framework of Christian love.

Our staff and Board for Child Christian Education expect the full cooperation of parents regarding the matter of corrective discipline in our Christian Day School. The goal of our discipline is self-discipline motivated by the love of Christ. This does not exclude the use of Law, but assures the erring sinner of God's grace in Christ as the constraining factor in his life. With the guidance of the Spirit, we seek to teach the children to lead Christ-centered lives.

Each teacher, therefore, is permitted the use of whatever means of discipline is necessary (with the exception of corporal punishment) and proper to achieve these ends. Problems that need further attention are referred to the parent(s) and principal for adjudication, and, if necessary, to the Board for Child Christian Education.

Students at St. John Lutheran School are expected to act in such a way that their behavior will reflect favorably upon the individual students and the school. Their conduct is expected to show respect and consideration for their fellow students and staff, creating a harmonious and Christian atmosphere for learning. To that end, there are established procedures to assist administrative personnel in handling areas of inappropriate behavior. These rules and regulations apply to all students attending school or school-sponsored events.

Students have a responsibility to report to school authorities their knowledge of other students' possession of weapons, drugs, alcohol, and other items that pose a potential danger to students, as well as bullying, harassing, or verbal abuse incidents.

Any behavior not conducive to a healthy school environment will be dealt with at the discretion of the school administration, applying those necessary actions to control behavior. Each case is handled on an individual basis and the resulting disciplinary action shall be based on the available evidence and facts of each incident.

"Persistent disobedience" includes the following:

1. Continued class disruption – repeatedly involved in actions that disrupt the educational process
2. Disrespect – willfully intimidate, insult, use obscene or un-Christian language, or otherwise abuse verbally or in writing any member of the student body.
3. Insubordination – willful failure to respond promptly and courteously to authorized school personnel.
4. False Reports – falsely reporting incidents or making accusations that would seriously affect the welfare of others.
5. Cheating – deliberately or deceitfully using unauthorized material or utilizing materials or data prepared by someone else.

Options for "Persistent Disobedience" - Grades K-4

- a. Warning
- b. "X" minute time loss (recess, etc)
- c. isolation from class
- d. parent phone call to warn of possible suspension
- e. suspension – parent must pick up.

Options for "Persistent Disobedience" - Grades 5-8

- a. Warning
- b. Lunch Detention.
- c. After 3 detentions, meeting with parents
- d. Additional discipline notes could result in suspension
- e. Extended suspensions can lead to expulsion

Gross Misconduct includes the following:

1. Possession, use, or distribution of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, drug paraphernalia, or items of a sexual nature.
2. Vandalism and/or destruction of property
3. Disrespect or insolent behavior toward staff members
4. Initiating false alarms or making false reports
5. Possession of weapons or instruments used as such
6. Harrassment and/or intimidation
7. Inciting others to violence or disruption
8. Physical attack and/or threat thereof
9. Extortion
10. Fighting
11. Theft
12. Arson
13. Unauthorized computer access – use without consent or authority
14. Possession of fireworks or explosives

Behavior in the area of gross misconduct is likely to result in immediate suspension or permanent removal from school.

When students are caught fighting, the parents will be notified immediately and could be asked to come and take the student home for the rest of the day. The second time students are engaged in a fight, the parents will be contacted and the students will be suspended from school for 1-3 days. When two students are in a fight, both students will be disciplined on an equal basis, unless an adult in charge actually witnesses the fact that one student flagrantly attacked another student. To be sent home for fighting, the alleged incident must be seen by an adult in authority. In a fight not witnessed, the parties will be sent to the school office and appropriate action taken.

Suspension - A short-term suspension is a denial to a student to attend school and take part in any school function for a period up to and including five days. Such a suspension can be implemented by the teacher or the school administration. Long-term suspension/expulsion will be implemented by the administration and the Board for Child Christian Education. During the time of short-term suspension, the school and or the teacher are not required to provide the opportunity for the suspended student to make up work; instead, a –0- grade may be given for tests and assignments that are missed. Parents of a child who has been suspended will be required to attend a conference with the principal and appropriate school personnel following the implementation of the suspension.

Expulsion - If a student receives a third suspension, the suspension is for a minimum of five days and the student will be referred to the Board for Child Christian Education. The Board will be asked to make a decision regarding expulsion.

Conduct – Social Media

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. (Romans 12:2)

For their own safety and for the protection of other parties, students are encouraged to exercise the utmost caution when participating in any form of social media or online communication, both within the SJLS community and beyond.

Students who participate in online interactions must remember that their posts can reflect on the entire St. John Lutheran School community and, as such, are subject to the same behavioral standards as those set forth in the school discipline policies.

In addition to the standards found in the school handbook, students are expected to be aware of the following:

1. To protect the privacy of SJLS students and staff, students may not, under any circumstances, create, publish, or distribute digital pictures and video recordings of SJLS community members at SJLS events either on campus or off-campus.
2. Students may not use social media sites to publish disparaging or harassing remarks about SJLS community members, athletic or academic rivals, etc.
3. Students who choose to post editorial content to websites or other forms of online social media must ensure that their posts do not reflect poorly upon the school.

Failure to abide by the policy, as with other policies of SJLS, may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and possible expulsion.

Curriculum: All subjects of the school curriculum are taught in the light of God's Word, which forms the basis of curriculum development and improvement. St. John Lutheran School follows the curriculum evaluation/adoption schedule as established by the State of Indiana. We offer the following:

Religion - Bible stories and Bible study, worship experiences, doctrine, church history, mission education, memorization, confirmation instruction, hymn study, and religious songs.

Language Arts - Leveled reading program, English grammar, writing, spelling, handwriting, dramatics, speaking and listening skills, classroom reading supplemented with computer-based Accelerated Reader Program.

Mathematics - Basic operation of addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions and decimals, geometry, beginning algebra, metric system, problem-solving, computer keyboarding, word processing and desktop publishing.

Social Studies - Geography, history, political science, social living, government, Indiana history, and current events.

Science - Concepts in biological and physical science through study, laboratory demonstrations, experimentation, health and safety, drug and alcohol awareness, and decision-making skills.

Music - Student participation and relevant experiencing of musical concepts, singing, music appreciation, rhythm, choirs at all levels (K-2, 3-5, 6-8). Participation of grades 6-8 in Lutheran Schools Music Festival.

Art - Drawing, painting, form, art appreciation, sculpting, ceramics, home arts. Participation in Lutheran Schools Art Show.

Physical Education - Body strength, coordination, perceptual motor development, group games, recreational opportunities, individual and team sports. Grades K-5 Physical Education program provided by SHAPE Curriculum Services.

Outdoor Education – for fifth and sixth Grade. An experience to enjoy God's creation and to learn through direct contact with nature.

Dress Code Enforcement: Dress code requirements for school and school-related activities are available on a separate guideline sheet. Parents are requested to monitor what their children wear to school according to these approved guidelines. The school reserves the right to make final determination on the validity of student dress. Parents will be notified if students are not dressed within the guidelines. They will be expected to bring proper clothing. The student may not attend class until the situation has been resolved.

Enrollment: Enrollment and re-enrollment of students begin during the month of January. New students may be enrolled after consultation with the principal and completion of the enrollment procedures. Age requirements follow the Code of the State of Indiana. Students entering Kindergarten of the current year must be five years old prior to the state-identified enrollment date.

Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco: Any student who intentionally sells, gives, uses, or is under the influence of illicit drugs, narcotics, alcohol or tobacco products at school or any school-sponsored activity shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Fast Direct: This secure school administration database is an online record of student and family information. The system also includes family financial information, student assignments and progress reports, and a message board. Please check with the Principal for an Activation Code to use this system.

Financial Obligations: Our operation depends on prompt payment of all bills. Families are expected to remain current on all charges for tuition, fee, band, lunch, early childhood milk and other miscellaneous fees.

Fire and Tornado Drills: These monthly drills and quarterly drills are required by state law and should be taken seriously; cooperate and follow teacher directions.

First Aid and Injury: Teachers or the school office will administer first aid in cases of minor injuries. In the case of major injuries, or what is thought to be serious injury, parents will be notified and an ambulance may be called.

Food, Candy, and Soda: The “pop” machine is not to be used by students. The chewing of gum is not permitted anywhere on school premises during school hours. Candy and soda should not be brought to school, except in the case of birthdays or special events.

Geography Awareness Week: Students in grades 3 through 8 participate in conjunction with activities sponsored by National Geographic Society.

Grandparents Day: Students may be represented by Grandparents and/or other special friends.

Harrassment: St John Lutheran School will not tolerate any harassment of any person relating to the person’s race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, or disability. The term “harassment” includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, or other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual’s race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, or disability. Any unwelcome sexual advance, request, or other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment. Harassment of any nature is a serious offense. Those accused of harassment should talk immediately with the Principal.

Immunization: State law prescribes certain immunizations at various ages. When a child enrolls in a school for the first time, or any subsequent time and at any level, his parents must show proof of immunization or that a current medical or religious objection is on file. Students who do not have an immunization record on file by the first day of school are subject to a temporary school suspension until the information is secured.

Learning Opportunities Center: This Center, open daily from 12:00 - 3:00, is designed to help our students who have been diagnosed with various learning difficulties. Students who need individual attention will be able to work with a staff person according to a personalized educational plan.

Library: Each class is regularly scheduled into the library. Remember to return all books as indicated.

Lost and Found: Articles of clothing, shoes, books, lunch boxes, and other items are kept under the mailbox in the school office. Smaller jewelry items are kept in a separate area. Please ask the secretary for assistance when looking for lost items.

Lunch Program: Our school participates in the National School Lunch Program, administered through the State of Indiana Department of Education. The purpose of the lunch program is to provide well-balanced meals at a reasonable cost and to promote healthy eating habits. Monthly menus are sent home with school newsletter. Menus can also be viewed on the Fast Direct system. Parents are asked to pre-pay for lunches by looking over the monthly menu, checking the days on which their children will eat, then sending a check for the amount to “St John Food Service”. Accounts can be monitored on Fast Direct.

Medicine and Aspirin: The state of Indiana does not allow teachers and staff to dispense medicines of any kind unless accompanied from home with parent permission and directions how to dispense the medication. Medicines that are brought from home should be taken to the school office for safekeeping. The medicines should be taken only in the school office in the presence of a staff member.

Money: Students may have money at school if necessary, but are strongly encouraged to leave all money at home.

Music and Fine Arts: Choirs are available to all students K-8. These choirs provide special music at worship services on a rotating basis. The Junior Choir participates in the Lutheran Music Festival in the spring. Students in grades 5-8 are offered an opportunity to participate in band. Selected artwork from all levels is displayed at the Lutheran Schools Music and Art Festival in the spring of each year at Lutheran High School.

Non-Discrimination Policy: St. John Lutheran School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students in the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions, policies, and athletic, and other school-administered programs.

Nuisance Items and Weapons: Items brought to school that are not part of the necessary or required school supplies or material are considered “nuisance” and may be confiscated by the teacher (examples: water gun, radio, toys, etc). Students possessing items which pose a danger to students and staff (guns, knives, matches, fireworks, etc) will be referred for immediate administrative action, which could include suspension and/or expulsion and referral to law enforcement agencies.

Parent-Teacher League (PTL): The purpose of this group is to help the home and school work together for the welfare of the students. There are a number of ways to participate in PTL. Information is usually made available at the beginning of the school year.

Playground and Recess: Students are provided with at least one recess period per day, supervised by staff members. Students are encouraged to use this time to visit and play with friends and classmates, practicing Christian sportsmanship. Students are expected to treat classmates with respect.

Policies Not Covered: Any school or classroom procedure not spelled out specifically in this document shall be left to the discretion of the homeroom teacher or principal.

Report Cards and Mid-Quarter Reports: Report cards are issued once every nine weeks (four times a year). To help parents assess progress, we also send Mid-Quarter Reports home in the middle of each grading period. Parents are reminded that mid-quarters are not entered into the permanent records and are intended only to inform the parents of student progress to date. This leaves enough time to help students work on their grades before report cards are issued.

Restroom: Teachers allow for periodic restroom breaks throughout the day. Students are encouraged to use the restrooms at these specified times. Self-control, hygiene, and discipline are essential in the restroom.

Revisions/Updates: Revisions and updates to this student handbook information can be made throughout the year by the Board for Child Christian Education. Changes will be communicated through the weekly newsletter.

School Pictures: School pictures are taken in late September. Parents have the opportunity to purchase various photo packets. Delivery is usually before Thanksgiving.

Sci-Fest: All students in grades 3-8 participate yearly, usually in February or March. This event is also open to younger students who wish to participate.

Search and Seizure: Schools may conduct reasonable searches that are motivated by reasonable suspicion. Such searches may be targeted toward a specific student or students. School officials may search student desks since these desks are the exclusive property of the school. School officials may search student clothing, purses, and book bags under a "reasonable suspicion."

Soliciting and Selling: In the interest of eliminating what may become a school nuisance, no solicitation or selling of any kind of product is allowed unless previously approved by the Principal.

Spelling Bee - Students in grades 1-8 participate in the St. John Spelling Bees, usually held in March or April of each year.

Sports (Inter-scholastic) - Girls in grades 5-8 may participate in soccer, volleyball, basketball and cheerleading. Boys in grades 5-8 may participate in soccer and basketball. Students in 5-8 participate in yearly track and field day with other Lutheran schools. Students must meet eligibility requirements with respect to grades and church attendance to participate in sports activities.

Standardized Testing: As part of the State Accreditation process, all students in grades 3 through 8 take the ISTEP+ each year. Students in grade 1 and 2 take the Terra Nova Achievement Test in the spring. Additional tests may also be administered in the spring. When received, test scores and summaries are made available to parents with the next report card.

Telephone: Teachers may be contacted before or after school. A message may be left on their voice-mail during the school day. Parents are urged to use discretion in calling the school and asking their child to call home. We encourage arrangements for after-school activities on the part of a student be made before the child leaves home in the morning. Parents, if you want this rule enforced for your child, please be sure he/she does not have your permission to make such a call. Similarly, arrangements to be picked up after school should be made ahead of time. Responsibility lies with the student to find out in advance when that activity will be over.

Volunteers: St. John Lutheran School welcomes adult volunteers in many ways. If you wish to assist at St. John, please contact your child's classroom teacher directly. In the case of general school volunteers, please contact the principal.