

School Handbook 2026-2027



St. John Lutheran School

102 W. Martin St., PO Box 67

Battle Creek, NE 68715

(402) 675-3605

www.stjohnbc.net/school



St. John Lutheran School

Connecting people in the heart of Jesus

102 West Martin Street., PO Box 67
Battle Creek, Nebraska 68715
schoolsecretary@stjohnbc.net

402-675-3605
Mr. Nicholas Onnen, Principal
principal@stjohnbc.net

Brothers and sisters in Christ:

Thank you for your interest in our school. We have adopted an admissions policy that opens the school to families who are supportive of our philosophy, objectives, and standards of education, and whose children meet our enrollment standards. Our purpose is to serve families who desire a Christ-centered education for their children.

The Student Handbook will introduce you to many of the school's policies, procedures, and expectations for both parents and students. The first several pages of the Handbook explain our religious purpose, mission, and beliefs. This school unashamedly believes, teaches, and practices the Lordship of Jesus Christ and acknowledges the authority of God's Word, the Holy Scriptures, without reservation. For example, if a question regarding biblical lifestyles arises in chapel or your child's classroom, the teacher will answer from a biblical viewpoint consistent with Lutheran Doctrine and St. John's Statement of Beliefs. If your beliefs and lifestyle choices are not in agreement with our beliefs, the teacher's answer may create conflict in your child's heart and mind.

Biblical principles are integrated into every subject taught at our school. Our staff is committed not only to academic excellence, but also to teaching students how to apply the truths of God's Word to every aspect of life.

We look forward to partnering with you to educate your child in God's truth.

Together in Christ,
St. John Board of Education and Staff



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Standards for Evaluating Prospective Students

If the individual class is able to accommodate additional students, the following will be used to evaluate prospective students:

A. Spiritual Considerations

1. Willingness of parents and student to be supportive of the school's philosophy of Christ-centered education.
2. Willingness of parents and student to support the administration and faculty in carrying out the goals and programs of the school.

B. Behavioral Considerations

1. History of acceptable citizenship in previous school experience.
2. Agreement of parents and student to abide by the behavior standards established by the school.

C. Academic Considerations

1. Documented record of grades and attendance in previous school experience.
2. Scores on achievement tests.

D. Personal Considerations

1. Student's special interests, talents, and skills.
2. School makes no distinction in its admission policy on the basis of race, color, or national and ethnic origin.

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MISSION, PHILOSOPHY, AND VISION

We seek to provide a Christian atmosphere in which our children can grow to their potential academically, spiritually, emotionally, and socially, encouraging them to learn responsibility, respect, honesty, and love through the Lord Jesus Christ.

St. John Lutheran School is a Christian School operated by St. John Lutheran Church for the purpose of offering a sound Christian education to children in preschool through eighth grade. St. John Lutheran School is open to children of sister congregations, churches of other faiths, and children of the community in order to provide these children with the privilege of a Christ-centered education. St. John Lutheran School assists parents in carrying out their responsibility for the spiritual training of their children.

The purpose of our school is to:

- Help each child realize their identity in Christ
- Develop each child's natural skills and talents
- Train students to develop relationship skills
- Prepare students academically, socially, and spiritually for high school and beyond
- Educate students in becoming responsible citizens

As a Christian ministry, we have the added privilege of guiding the child:

- See himself/herself as a child of God
- Understand the Triune God and His nature
- Learn to love and serve God
- See God as the source of strength in all times of need
- Pray and worship
- Care about all people and develop Christian relationships
- Understand their role and unique God-given gifts to serve in His kingdom
- Develop talents and abilities more fully and completely for His service

To help us reach our objectives, we do the following:

- Study God's Word daily
- Teach all subjects as God-centered, honoring that He is the Source of all true and useful knowledge
- Develop Christian character
- Maintain efforts to keep parents partnering with us to continue to develop Christian life

Every effort is made to meet or exceed standards of instruction provided by the Nebraska State Department of Education. Annually, St. John receives state approval to operate as an educational institution in the state of Nebraska and is accredited by the National Lutheran Schools Association. Our graduates enter high school prepared to meet and often exceed requirements as many of our graduates are represented on the honor rolls, speech teams, and sports teams.



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General Information

St. John Lutheran School Staff

Mrs. Savannah Wagner.....	Preschool
Miss Cherie Werner	Kindergarten
Mrs. Wendy Signor.....	First Grade
Mrs. Jill Baumgartel	Second Grade
Mrs. Casey Volquardsen	Third Grade
Mrs. Natasha Onnen	Fourth Grade
Mrs. Katie Andersen.....	Fifth Grade Homeroom – Social Studies & Language Arts
Mrs. Steph Kollbaum	Sixth Grade Homeroom – Social Studies & Language Arts
Mr. Jonathan Baumgartel.....	Seventh Grade Homeroom – Math
Miss Jerrica Tietz	Eighth Grade Homeroom - Science
Mr. Nicholas Onnen	Principal
Mrs. Sarah Tillman	Librarian
Mrs. Lori Unkel	School Nurse - Teachers' Aide
Mrs. Erin Wragge	Teachers' Aide
Mrs. Casey Heller	Secretary
Mrs. Katie Schnitzler	Business Manager
Ms. Marcia Brockmann	Custodian
Mr. Kenny Volk	Custodian

Administration

St. John Lutheran School is a ministry of St. John Lutheran Church and operates under the guidance and support of the congregation. The voting membership executes its will through the office of the principal. Six or more elected members of the Board of Education serve as an advisory panel to the principal and assist in policy.

The adoption of the course of study, the selection of textbooks, and all major changes of the school are reviewed by the professional staff. The principal of St. John Lutheran School acts as administrative agent for St. John Lutheran Ministries in the direct administration and supervision of St. John Lutheran School. The entire faculty sees that the policies and wishes of St. John Lutheran Church are carried out and suggests changes that might improve the welfare of the school.

St. John performs background checks on all employees and volunteers who will regularly spend time with children.

Curriculum

Integrating the Faith—A Teacher's Guide for Curriculum in Lutheran Schools, A Curriculum for Lutheran Elementary Schools, and Nebraska State Education Guidelines serve as guides to implement methods and develop the content for our instruction. The curriculum of the school has been developed to provide a well-rounded education. The core curriculum is our Bible-based religion training. Our areas of instruction are religion, mathematics, social studies, English, spelling, reading/literature, art, science, music, computer, and physical education. The curriculum is reviewed annually and the schedule is always subject to revision in the interest of quality education.

Library and Media Center

St. John Lutheran School has a library that is available to the students and teachers, as well as members of the congregation. All books and movies are cataloged and the library is staffed at various times during the week.

Daily Procedures

Morning Procedures

- Morning Early Learning Center students will walk to the gym when excused.
- Vehicles entering the south school parking lot should use the east driveway and proceed through the horseshoe **in single-file order**.
- Students enter the building (south entrance) after 7:45 am, unless they have teacher permission to enter earlier. Supervision begins at 7:45. Students will remain in the gym until after daily prayer.
- **Student drivers are to park in the south half of the south parking lot.**
- **The school day begins at 7:55 a.m. Students should be in the gym by 7:55 a.m.** and will be recorded as tardy after 8:00 a.m. If students arrive after 8:00, they must check in the office upon arrival. **After 5 tardies in a semester, every subsequent tardy may result in a detention. See the complete tardy policy on page 6.**
- Students may ride bicycles to and from school, but not while at school. Refer to the safety policy for guidelines. Parents assume full responsibility for bicycles used and for students' conduct while bicycles are in use. **All bicycles are to be placed in the bike racks near the south school entrance.**

Afternoon Procedures

- Students are dismissed at 3:20. Students needing child care should go directly to the Early Learning Center. All other students should exit the south parking lot school doors and remain in designated areas until picked up. Prompt pick up is appreciated. When picking up students, **parents may wait outside the south school entrance or inside the first set of doors.** Please do not meet students in their classroom.
- Supervision ends at 3:35. Children not picked up by that time will be sent to St. John Early Learning Center.

St. John Early Learning Center

Child care is available at St. John Early Learning Center at the west entrance. Hours are 6:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. If you need child care, please contact the Early Learning Center at 402-675-4039 and make arrangements. This care is available Monday through Friday throughout the year. Your child must have immunizations and a completed file with the child care prior to enrollment. Before-school care and after-school care are available.

ADMISSION POLICY AND FEES

Nondiscriminatory Policy

St. John Lutheran School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, athletic and other school-administered programs.

Enrollment Policy

St. John Lutheran School is open to any preschool and school-aged child. New students who transfer from other schools must provide necessary records of grade levels successfully completed. Tests may be administered to aid in determination of grade level. Enrollments are subject to approval by the principal and/or the Board of Education. Students entering kindergarten must be five years of age on or before July 31.

Nebraska law requires all students, kindergarten through grade twelve, to be protected against measles, mumps, rubella, poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, and hepatitis B unless the parent/guardian signs a waiver. Students who are entering kindergarten, all seventh graders, and all out-of-state transfers need one dose of varicella (chicken pox) given on or after twelve months of age, and 2nd dose prior to thirteen years of age. If over thirteen years of age and not previously vaccinated for varicella, two doses of varicella, separated by at least one month are required. Written documentation (including year) of varicella disease from parent, guardian, or health care provider will be accepted. **Failure to comply with state requirements will result in an out-of-school suspension.**

Physicals are required of all students entering kindergarten, seventh grade, and those students transferring from another state. Students in athletics need to have a physical form submitted to the school prior to participation in school sports.

Admittance Policy

To ensure every child's needs can be best met; students seeking admittance at St. John are accepted on a provisional basis pending the completion of the student records (including academic, attendance, and behavior records). Provisional status will last for a minimum of 45 school days. If behavior, academic, or other issues arise, within the 45-day provisional time period, which indicate St. John may be unable to accommodate the needs of the student, admittance may be terminated, or provisional admittance status may be extended for a longer duration for further evaluation.

Financing/Fees

Presently, it costs approximately \$6500 per year for each child in school. To help with planning for the upcoming school year, every student PS-8 pays a pre-enrollment fee of \$100 (before March 1) or \$200 on/after (March 1) along with a registration fee. If the registration fee is not paid in full by the August registration day, families must enroll in the FACTS Tuition Management Program which allows parents to pay the registration fee on a monthly basis. The 7th and 8th grades have a non-refundable technology fee of \$50 to cover the maintenance costs for a designated 1:1 Chromebook. See Chromebook Agreement Forms for more information. If parents sign and return the contract, Chromebooks may be checked out by 5th - 8th grade students. Forms for check-out are available upon request with the homeroom teacher.

St. John Lutheran School is financed, in part, through the St. John Lutheran Church. We encourage all school families—both members and nonmembers—to prayerfully consider regular giving in support of the ministry of St. John. Church members are encouraged to tithe as an expression of faith and stewardship. Likewise, we invite nonmember families to commit to a monthly contribution, as they are able, to help sustain and strengthen the mission of our school.

Financial assistance is available via Children's Scholarship Fund of Omaha and St. John / Lawson Walz Scholarship Fund if financial need is demonstrated. Applications and additional information are available at the school office.

Please note: The pre-enrollment fee is non-refundable. The registration fee may be refunded at a prorated rate if a student withdraws before December 31. No refund is given if the student withdraws after January 1.

Books and Supplies

St. John Lutheran School supplies textbooks, workbooks, technology devices, and assignment notebooks. Textbooks and supplies are to be well cared for. All marks are to be erased before turning in the textbooks. Students will be held accountable for damages. A student supply list is provided and available for each classroom.

Student Insurance

All students should be covered by health insurance. If students are not covered by a parent's health plan, insurance can be purchased through the school. The plan is underwritten by Student Assurance Services. Coverage plans are detailed in a brochure that will be offered at registration.

HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

Battle Creek Public School provides hot lunches for St. John students. Students may bring their own lunches, but all will eat at the public school. Lunch and milk funds are paid to the secretary in St. John's school office. All checks should be made payable to St. John Lunch Fund. Should you have questions concerning your child's account, you may call 402-675-3605.

Government systems (free and reduced lunches) are in place and available to help families who struggle financially to pay for students to eat hot lunch. Families may apply for free/reduced benefits at any time during the school year. Students who have a \$0.00 balance in their lunch account will receive a notice and ordering of extra entrees will not be allowed. Once the account balance reaches negative \$10, the student may not be allowed to order lunch until the balance is paid. Report cards and all school documents may have a hold placed on them until any outstanding balances are paid.

Nondiscrimination Statement for National School Lunch Program

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

(2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
(3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance is important to the progress of the child and the maintenance of school standards.

If a student is to be absent, the parents are to communicate the reason for their absence via phone call, note, or in person, with the school. If it is not communicated, the parents may be contacted.

Excused absences include illness, doctor's appointments, family emergencies, and funerals. All other absences are unexcused.

Absences for reasons other than illnesses are to be avoided. When a student knows he/she will be gone from school, his/her teacher should be informed PRIOR to the day of absence. Absence for two to four hours shall count as ½ day absence. Absences longer than four hours shall be counted as one day. Appointments with doctors, dentists, etc., should be made during non-instructional hours when at all possible. The student's teacher should be informed as soon as possible when the student has a serious illness, has undergone surgery, or for any other reason will have a prolonged absence.

Excessive Absences and Truancy

If a student accumulates more than 16 absences in a school year, the student's academic progress and readiness for promotion will be reviewed. As part of this process, summer school may be required for promotion, and in some cases, retention may be recommended. Factors considered will include: reasons for absences, mastery of grade-level content, and completion/non-completion of the student's missing assignments.

Make-Up Work

Students are responsible for obtaining and completing work they have missed. The make-up work will be assigned at the teacher's discretion.

For excused absences, students are allowed one day of grace per day of absence (e.g. five days absent = five days to turn in missed assignments.) For any class missed, the teacher may also assign the student additional make-up work. The work is based on the instructional objectives for the course and needs of the individual student in mastering the essential skills and course requirements.

For an unexcused absence, assignments are expected to be completed on time. Parents may call to obtain assignments to be picked up at the end of the day. Students who will be out for a planned absence for an extended duration should make arrangements with each teacher to obtain assignments before leaving. It is at the teachers' discretion if assignments will be given prior to an extended leave. Some assignments, projects, or tests may need to be completed upon return.

Students who are sick or absent during the afternoon portion of the school day are not permitted to participate in athletics, extra-curricular activities, or school sponsored events that evening. Students who are absent from school—unless on a school-sponsored activity—are not permitted to be on campus or attend school events during the school day. Exceptions may be made for students with siblings competing. Violating this policy may result in disciplinary action and considered truant.

Tardy Policy

When students are tardy to school, it affects the classroom environment and is not conducive to learning. Students will be counted tardy if they are not seated in the classroom at 8:00 a.m. Students who arrive after 8:00 will need to check in at the school office. Families will receive a call from the office if this is a persistent problem. After 5 tardies in a semester, every subsequent tardy will result in a detention.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Homework

St. John Lutheran School believes that homework is a valuable part of learning. It gives parents an opportunity to observe the study habits and achievements of their children. Homework can best be done in a quiet, well-lit room free from distraction and interruption. It is best if a regular time can be set aside for homework. While very little homework is required in the primary grades, some is expected. For the best interest of the student, the work should be done by the student, not the parent. An accurate reflection of the

student's knowledge is pertinent for the teacher to adequately prepare upcoming lessons. The desired outcome is not necessarily the 'A', but the mastery of the skill. Assignments are to be completed and handed in as per teacher policy.

If a student has not completed an assignment when it is due, the student may receive an academic detention to be served either after school or during free periods during the school day. An academic detention is a required time dedicated to rectifying academic delinquencies. Special circumstances such as doctors' appointments or other urgent family needs would be exceptions to the after school detention. Students will not be detained beyond 4:15 PM. All late assignments received in the 3rd -8th grades will automatically receive, at minimum, a **10%** deduction from the original score. In the event that there are assignments missing, students may forfeit the privilege of field trips and/or extra-curricular activities.

Cheating and plagiarism are different yet are strictly prohibited. Utilizing Chat GPT or any AI to complete a student's work is akin to seeking aid from a friend. Even if Chat GPT is credited, it still constitutes cheating if work not originally theirs is employed. AI technology is only to be used if a teacher has explicitly given permission. While some assignments may permit AI usage, our principal goal is to foster creative thinking and intellectual abilities.

Care of Property

Marking on or in any way deliberately harming or destroying school property, property of another person, or one's own property is wasting God's gifts. Disciplinary steps will be taken and the student/parent will assume responsibility for damages.

Behavior

St. John students will strive to be safe, respectful, and responsible. Bullying and cyber-bullying will not be tolerated.

Each student will:

- Show respect for God and all of His creation
- Show respect and concern for themselves and others
- Show respect and obedience to teachers and other adults
- Use acceptable language
- Obey all rules and procedures adopted for students at St. John

Consequences of Misconduct

Depending on the severity and consistency of misconduct, consequences may include isolated lunch, detention, in-school suspensions, and intervention meetings with students, parents, and staff. Repeated offenses may result in expulsion.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Sexual harassment of or by any student shall not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary and/or legal action, including possible expulsion. Sexual harassment has the purpose or effect of creating a negative impact on an individual's performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment and includes but is not limited to:

- Verbal conduct such as derogatory comments, unwanted sexual advances, sexual jokes, etc.
- Visual conduct such as derogatory cartoons, drawings, pictures, gestures, etc.
- Physical conduct such as leering, assault, blocking normal movement, touching an individual's body or clothes in a sexual way, etc.
- Threats or demands to submit to sexual requests.
- Retaliation for reporting a violation or participating in an investigation.

Anyone at St. John Lutheran School who is subject to or witnesses sexual harassment should immediately report such conduct to the teacher, the principal, secretary, or one of the pastors.

GENDER IDENTITY AND FACILITY USE

We believe that God created people in His image, and we strive to honor and value each individual as a unique creation of God. In alignment with the Holy Bible and the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, the following policies have been established to reflect our commitment to uphold these values in our school community.

- **Creation and Identity:** We believe that God created each person intentionally and with purpose, as male or female. We value and respect the way He created each individual.
- **Restroom and Locker Room Use:** Students are expected to use restrooms and locker rooms that correspond to their gender assigned at birth. This policy is intended to respect the privacy and comfort of all students while maintaining a safe and respectful environment.
- **Participation in Sports:** Students are to participate in sports according to their gender assigned at birth. This policy aims to ensure fairness and safety in athletic activities.

We emphasize that God loves everyone unconditionally and created each person with a unique purpose. Our policies are designed to reflect our faith and respect for each individual's God-given identity. We are committed to supporting and caring for all students as they grow and develop into the individuals God intended them to be.

We recognize that these policies may require understanding and dialogue. We are committed to providing a supportive environment where every student feels valued and respected. Our aim is to foster a community that reflects God's love and purpose for each person.

DISCIPLINE

Rules have been established for each shared space to ensure students are safe, respectful and responsible. St. John Staff aims to pre-teach expectations to ensure students know what is required.

Misbehavior/Disrespect

The system is created to be a guide that will be adapted for each grade level upon teacher discretion.

S ignal	Student is given a signal or warning for behavior
T ake a break	Student forfeits the chance to choose a recess activity, but may be allowed to walk laps in the parking lot.
E xtended Time-Out	Parents will be notified, students will receive a "think sheet" and may: --miss free time at recess and be given a modified activity, and/or --have an extended time-out in the form of an isolated lunch, and/or --receive an after-school detention.
P arent Contact	Parents and teacher will have a conference regarding behavior either via phone or in person.
YoU Conference	The student, parents and teacher will meet to discuss the issue and what needs to be done to correct the problem.
P rincipal Visit	When behavior does not reach expectations, and the teacher determines that further action is necessary, the principal will become involved. The principal will speak to the student, notify the parent, and it will be noted in the student's file. A conference with the student, parent, teacher, and principal will occur. The student may serve an in-school suspension or an out-of-school suspension to be determined by the principal. Referral to an outside agency may be considered.

As a last resort, expulsion from school may result from further offenses.

Behavior Detention/Academic Detention

A detention is an after-school period served by a student from 3:30-4:15 P.M. Detentions may be given following the Consequences for Misbehavior/Disrespect (above), or for a student in the K-8th grades with a late or unfinished assignment. Parents will be notified of detentions. Detentions will be supervised by a teacher.

For behavioral detentions, the student will be required to write the reason for the detention and submit ways in which the behavior will change. No food, drink, or talking will be allowed during the detention.

Students receiving a detention notice will serve the detention the next time it is available. In an extreme emergency, parents may make a request for a change in the detention day to the principal or teacher. If a student fails to serve a detention, the student may serve a one-day in-school suspension the next day.

Suspension

An in-school suspension involves the loss of all student contact and the loss of attending all classes and extracurricular school activities during the day. Students will remain separated from other students during the lunch period. The student is expected to turn in all assignments due that day and will receive and be able to work on class assignments for the next day. Parents will be notified of the in-school suspension and a record of the in-school suspension will be made in the student's file.

Expulsion

Students who do not cooperate and do not respond to other disciplinary action may be expelled from school. This will be done on the basis of egregious or repeated and documented use of discipline detention, suspension, and/or following consultation with the parents or guardian.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Difficulties and problems occur during normal daily life experiences. In order to improve the level of communication when difficulties arise between faculty, staff, students, and families, the passage from Matthew 18:15 (NIV), "*If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over,*" serves as our guide in resolving conflicts. Specifically, the following steps are suggested for all concerns (Each step may take more than one visit):

In all situations of conflict, it is a good idea to wait until the next day to allow emotions to calm down and to evaluate the situation. It is easy to overreact in the "heat of the moment." Waiting until the next day also allows time to pray about the situation, and also gives time to develop ideas for resolution as well. In any event, please set up an appointment with the individual with whom you have a concern. **Face to face communication is encouraged as tone of voice can easily be misinterpreted in writing.**

STEP #1 Personal Communication As identified in Matthew 18:15, it is the direction of the Holy Scripture to first communicate your grievances to the person against whom you have the grievance. Grievances or conflicts are often based on poor communication or lack of information. In this step, each party has an opportunity to clarify his/her position, more fully understand the other party's position, and begin communication to resolve the grievance/conflict.

STEP #2 School Principal If, after completing the first step, the grievance/conflict has not been resolved, the matter should then be brought to the attention of the school principal to be discussed in a private, personal conference with all parties involved present so that steps to resolve the issue can be taken.

As Christians, our goal should always be to resolve conflict in person. This means conversations should be held with those directly involved, rather than publicly or expressed online via social media.

HEALTH POLICY

Grooming

- Wash hands and face often.
- Bathe or shower regularly.
- Brush your teeth regularly.
- Keep your hair neat and clean at all times. Shampoo regularly. Hair should not cover the eyes.
- Use deodorant as needed.

Sickness

Children who are ill do not function well in school and also spread germs. Students who do not feel well are to stay home from school. Students who have a fever of 100 degrees or higher, or have flu symptoms are to remain at home and be fever-free (without fever-reducing medication) for a 24-hour period before returning to St. John Ministry Campus (school or ELC), school functions (programs, sporting events, etc.). If your child stays home from school, please call the school each day to report the absence by 8:30 that morning. If parents do not call, a call **may** be made to the home. This is a precautionary step to help home and school know the whereabouts of each child.

Medication

There will be no dispensing of any non-prescription drug, such as aspirin or ibuprofen, for any reason, by any of the staff or personnel of our school, unless provided and requested by a parent by completing the school Medication Dispensation Form.

The following will be permitted:

- Any medication prescribed by your doctor when accompanied by a prescription container or a prescription signed by your doctor, along with a Medication Dispensation Form signed by a parent.
- Long and short-term medication that is ordered by your doctor. It must be registered and stored in the office. Such prescriptions will be noted in the student's permanent file. Only the staff of St. John Ministries shall administer these medications. The parent or guardian shall discuss the details of the administration of the medication with those staff members. Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality

All unauthorized medication will be confiscated and destroyed.

Food Allergy Guidelines

St. John has students with varying levels of food allergies—specifically an allergy to nuts. All staff, families, and friends of St. John are to support the following guidelines out of Christian love for and in service to these students and their families:

- All school staff (teachers, secretary, aides, pastor and volunteers), students, and families will be aware of the students who have a food allergy.
- All school staff will be trained in the locations and use of the Epi-Pen.
- Teachers will be conscientious of food allergy items used during the teaching of lessons.
- Snacks during snack time in a classroom where an airborne food allergy student is present, should be "allergy free".
- **Snacks, during snack time in a classroom where a food allergy student is not present will not be "allergy free".** In this classroom, a student who eats an allergy related food will wash their hands and also the surface on which they were eating.
- During lunch there will be no sharing of any kinds of foods.
- The lunchroom will not be allergy-free and the students will continue to abide by other lunchroom procedures.
- All special occasion snacks (birthday treats, etc.) to be handed out to a group that includes a student with a food allergy, should be pre-packaged (unless the parent/student who made it received permission directly from the parent of the student with a food allergy). These parent conversations will be reported to the principal by a parent of the student with the food allergy prior to the snack food being brought to school.
- If a pre-packaged snack or food is to be handed out during the lunch period is not allergy free, a substitute snack that is allergy free should also be brought for the student with the allergy to enjoy. Staff will also have such snacks available if needed.

Head Lice

Should a student contract head lice, it is important that the school office be notified and the student be treated at home as soon as possible. Students are to be **nit-free** before returning to the classroom.

SAFETY POLICY

Student Pick-up

To ensure the safety of our children, parents picking up students must either drive through the pick-up line in the south school parking lot or park the car, and then escort their child back to the car. Children will not be allowed to walk or ride bicycles through the parking lot unattended. Bicycles must be walked while on school property. **Parents are to communicate after-school plans in advance with the homeroom teacher.**

When picking up students, parents may wait outside the south school entrance, in the parking lot, or inside the first set of doors. Please do not meet them in their classroom.

School Security

For the safety of the children, we need to be aware of those entering and exiting the building. When entering the building during school hours, ALL visitors must first report to the school office window. No one will be allowed to enter the building unless they are coming into the school office. We request that parents do not go to the classrooms or lockers. Our goal is to ensure student safety and limit classroom disruptions that may interrupt classroom learning.

School Closing

If the school is to be closed because of adverse weather conditions, an announcement will be made over radio stations WJAG, KNEN, KEXL, and US92. St. John Lutheran School dismisses ten minutes prior to the closing time that is announced on the radio for Battle Creek Public School due to the bus schedules. You may also get notification via St. John's mass messaging system. If Battle Creek Public closes due to weather, St. John closes. We also follow the Battle Creek Public delay schedule, which is generally a 10:00 a.m. start.

Drugs and Alcohol

St. John Lutheran School absolutely prohibits the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs or alcohol on school premises or at any school-related activity. This includes during school hours, after hours during school-sponsored activities, off-premises school-related activities, and while traveling to and from activities.

Conduct prohibited at places and activities as above described will include, but not be limited to the following:

- Possession or distribution of any controlled substance (prohibited by law).
- Unlawful possession of any prescription drug.
- Use of any illicit drug.
- Use of tobacco, vaping products, look-alikes, synthetic drugs, inhalants, or marijuana.
- Use of any substance in an unlawful manner.
- Distribution of any drug or controlled substance when such distribution is unlawful.
- Possession, use of, or distribution of alcohol except for the celebration of Holy Communion.

Violation of any of the above will result in disciplinary sanctions being taken within the bounds of applicable law, up to and including short term suspension, long term suspension, expulsion, and referral to appropriate authorities for criminal prosecution.

In the event of any disciplinary proceedings against a student for any violations pertaining to drug or alcohol, appropriate school personnel shall confer with the student and parents or guardians concerning available counseling, rehabilitation, and re-entry programs that would be beneficial.

Weapons in School

Possession or use of a firearm or weapon or an item that resembles a weapon in a school building or on school property is prohibited. A student found to be in possession of a firearm or weapon on school premises before, during, after school, or at any other school sponsored activity off school grounds, or on school transportation, is subject to administrative and legal action.

A student in possession of a firearm shall:

- Have the firearm confiscated without a warrant.
- Be expelled from school or referred to the Board of Education.
- Have appropriate charges filed against him/her with local law enforcement.

ASSESSMENT POLICY

Reporting Student Progress

Monitoring graded papers which are sent home gives a general indication of your child's progress in the classroom. Grades are also available online through the FACTs Management.

Report cards are handed out four times a year, at the end of each nine-week period. A parent-teacher conference will be held twice a year. Parents and teachers are encouraged to hold other conferences throughout the year as the need arises.

- Report cards for grades 1 and 2 will break down specific expectations for each subject. The following scale will be used for grades for these grade levels:

1	Exceeding Expectations
2	Developing Appropriately
3	Beginning to Develop
4	Area of Concern

- The following letter/numeric grading scale will be used for grades 3-8:

A+	100	Superior work
A	97-99	Superior work
A-	93-96	Excellent work
B+	90-92	Good work
B	87-89	Good work
B-	85-86	Good work
C+	82-84	Average work
C	80-81	Average work
C-	78-79	Average work
D+	75-77	Fair work
D	72-74	Fair work
D-	70-71	Poor work
F	Below 70	Failing work

This grading scale will be used with the understanding that assignments, projects, and tests are not standardized and may vary in difficulty. For this reason, individual teachers are trusted to curve grades to accurately reflect student achievement.

- In addition to the letter/numeric grade scale, report cards may also include the following:

+	Exceeding Expectations
✓	Meeting Expectations
-	Not Meeting Expectations

Achievement Tests

All students in kindergarten through eighth grade will take the Internet-based MAPS (Measures of Academic Progress) testing 2 times per year. Testing multiple times in the year allows us to track growth and adapt accordingly. They likewise enable us to pinpoint opportunities for growth in our program and materials, and locate areas requiring more attention for individuals or groups. These tests are computer adaptive. As a test is taken, it adjusts to the individual student's ability range. The result is a precise level of competency. Outcomes from the test are immediate and are compared locally and nationally. The results are kept on file in the child's permanent record and are shared with parents.

It is very important during these testing days that students have adequate rest, a good breakfast, and a positive frame of mind to do their best.

Retention/Promotion

Students who achieve passing credit in all subject and skill areas are eligible for promotion to the next grade level. Students who fail to achieve passing credit in one or more subject or skill areas may be promoted provisionally or may be subject to retention or discontinuation of enrollment. Initial recommendation will be made by the teacher; final determination will be made by the principal.

Every effort is made so that a student succeeds at St. John Lutheran School. Retention is to be avoided if at all possible. The following criteria may be considered when determining retention:

- Grade point average remains below a C average for three of the four quarters.
- Less than 10% improvement in grades during the fourth quarter.
- Remedial work such as Title I services, summer school, or tutoring are refused.
- Diagnostic Testing for learning disabilities have been completed.
- Light's Retention Scale has been considered.
- Achievement tests have been taken into consideration.

Students may be considered for retention on the basis of behavior or maturity. In the case of a student who willfully and persistently refuses to do the work necessary to succeed, it may be suggested that the student enroll at a different school.

The final decision whether or not to retain a student or to discontinue a student's enrollment on the basis of grades will be at the discretion of the principal. Notification regarding retention will normally be made within two weeks of the last day of the academic year, but the decision to retain may be arranged earlier with the parent's consent.

Honor Roll and Awards

Seventh and eighth grade students can earn an honor roll status for outstanding scholastic achievement.

All subjects graded using the letter/numeric scale will be counted toward the honor roll. Two categories will be reported: A average for each subject, and B average for each subject. Students who earn a D or F in any quarter will not be eligible for the honor roll awards.

Students in grades four through eight will receive awards at the closing chapel service for achieving "A Honor Roll" (A Average) and "Honorable Mention" (B average or better) for the year. **All subjects graded using the letter/numeric scale will be counted toward the honor roll.** Students who earn a D or F quarterly grade in any class will not be eligible for the honor roll awards. A student with a C in any class will not be eligible for the A average honor roll.

Special Services

Learning challenges can develop at any grade level. Sometimes the school and home have difficulty in finding the proper approach to help a child. A psychological testing and counseling program is available to our students through the public school system. **Lutheran Family Service is available onsite for those needing mental and emotional care.** Our students are also eligible for speech therapy, reading enrichment classes, and for special instruction. Please contact the school office or your child's teacher for more information about the services.

If students are in need of targeted instruction, a Student Assistance Team (SAT) may convene to address specific deficits. This team brainstorms adaptations and interventions specific to the students' needs.

If efforts from the SAT do not yield satisfactory results, pending approval from Battle Creek Public School, testing will be done upon the recommendation of the teacher or by request of parents. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) may be recommended for each individual child who qualifies for service. There is no cost to the family for this service.

Title I is a reading remedial service for students in the lower grades who do not receive Special Education services. Teachers have more information regarding this service

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Instrumental Music

Students in grades five through eight who desire to take instrumental lessons and have parental permission are given lessons from the public school instrumental music instructor. Students are given released time and attend band lessons at the public school. Students in most cases are asked to provide their own instruments. These may be rented from one of the music stores in Norfolk or may be owned by the students.

Music in Worship

Throughout the school year (beginning of the year, Lutheran Schools Week, et al), all students will have the opportunity to give thanks and praise and share their musical gifts with the congregation during the regular weekend worship services of St. John Ministries. Attendance is expected of all students on their scheduled day to sing in worship.

The Word of God in many instances encourages us to " Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing!" (Psalm 100:1-2). Students regularly join in praise and worship through our weekly chapel services and students gifted in music are encouraged to use their gifts to the glory of God.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Students at St. John Lutheran School have the opportunity to participate in various activities throughout the school year.

Please see the Athletic Handbook for policies and expectations regarding athletics.

FUNDRAISING POLICY

Permitted Fundraising

- As a **501(c)(3) nonprofit religious organization**, St. John is committed to financial integrity and compliance with IRS regulations. Fundraising conducted under St. John's name must serve the mission of St. John Ministries rather than benefit individual families.
- St. John may fundraise to support St. John expenses, including: Staff travel costs (hotel, food, mileage) when they are fulfilling official duties.

Prohibited Fundraising

- IRS regulations prohibit using nonprofit fundraising to cover personal expenses, including individual family travel costs, even if parents are chaperones.
- This restriction is not just a legal requirement—it is a matter of **stewardship and integrity**. St. John relies on over **\$1 million in annual donations**, and maintaining donor trust requires that we operate

above reproach. Any appearance of personal benefit from nonprofit fundraising could jeopardize our tax-exempt status and damage our ministry's credibility.

Personal Fundraising

Families may choose to raise funds on their own for their personal travel expenses, provided that:

- It is **clearly stated** that funds go toward personal family costs and **not St. John**.
- Donations **are not tax-deductible** and will not be processed through St. John.

By adhering to these guidelines, we honor both the law and our commitment to **integrity, fairness, and faithfulness to our mission**.

DRESS CODE

Clothing and the way one dresses is a powerful witness, both positively and negatively, to values and personality. Students are representatives of their family, of St. John Lutheran School, and of Christ.

Modest clothing is a witness.

"That's the nature of being salt and light. We show ourselves to be set apart— distinct. We are a walking testimony of a holy God who has also called us to be holy (1 Peter 1:15–16). Our clothing plays no small part. It's often the first thing people notice, and it sends a message, just like our conversation and our attitude."

Clothing may seem a small matter, but if we name the name of Christ, the world around us is watching. When we embrace a standard that is not of this world — or tweet about it — it shines."

desiringgod.org

Appearance guidelines:

Parents and students should display appropriate Christian judgment when selecting school clothing. The dress code also is in effect for PE class and field trips.

- Clothing should be clean, neat, comfortable, appropriate in a classroom setting, and weather appropriate.
- All students must wear gym shoes while playing in the gym, unless otherwise instructed by the teacher. Gym shoes should have non-marking soles.
- Clothing that brings undue or inappropriate attention or becomes distracting, disruptive, or unsafe should not be worn.
- Any clothing which promotes alcohol or an unchristian message is not allowed.
- Appropriate clothing covers the body in a modest manner. Clothing which exposes the waist when a student stands, raises his/her arms, or bends over is not allowed. Shorts or skirts should be of fingertip length or longer as the student stands.
- **Clothing with rips and/or holes above fingertips length is not appropriate--no exposed skin or undergarments should be visible.**
- **Racer-back tops and crop tops are not allowed.**
- Low cut shirts or spaghetti straps are not allowed.
- No undergarments should be showing.
- Tank tops should have a two-finger width at the top of the shoulder.
- **No pajama pants are allowed. Blankets may not be brought to school.**
- All shorts/pants will be worn at the waist.

Appearance guidelines (continued):

- For safety purposes, all footwear must have a strap around the back of the foot/ankle, or be of closed-heel style. **Per the recommendation of the State Fire Marshal, all sandals must have a strap that goes around the back of the foot.** Shoelaces must be tied at all times. (Dressing up for sporting events is an exception.)
- All sleeveless shirts must be hemmed. No cut-off shirts are allowed at school, church functions, or sports practices.
- Hats, **hoods**, and caps must be removed when entering school.
- The only acceptable type of body piercing is pierced ears for girls.
- No tattoos may be visible.
- Coats and sunglasses are not allowed in the classroom.

Additional dress code requirements for grade 5-8

- **Skin-tight clothing** is inappropriate for school days, including PE.

Students who arrive at school wearing inappropriate clothing will be given the opportunity to call a parent to bring a change of clothing. The student will remain out of the classroom until the parent arrives. If a parent is not available, the student will be provided with a change of clothing to wear for the day.

CHRISTIAN FAMILY LIFE

Church Attendance

As Christians alive in Christ's love, parents will be certain to be with their children at divine worship services every weekend and on special church festivals, setting a living example for them. Church attendance is recorded and reported on the report card. Certificates will be given out at the closing chapel service to those who achieve either "perfect" (100%) or "faithful" (75%) church attendance during the school year.

Chapel Offerings

Weekly chapel services are held at 8:30 a.m. in the church each Wednesday that school is in session. Parents, relatives, and friends are welcome to attend. Our chapel service provides opportunity for Christian worship as well as continued instruction in doctrine, liturgy, stewardship, and proper church behavior. Children are encouraged to get in the habit of giving offerings at chapel. Offerings are given to various mission projects each month. Offering envelopes are provided for each child.

Daily Life

Parents and guardians are the primary educators of children and determine the children's values, standards, and attitudes. During the child's school years, Christian parents will attempt, with God's help, to:

- Maintain a desirable adult image for their child.
- Foster cooperation in accomplishing tasks.
- Develop feelings of security in the child and in themselves.
- Love the child for who he/she is rather than what he/she does.
- Help the child to develop appreciation for their unique gifts and talents.
- Form joyful worship habits and use religion lessons as devotional materials.
- Allow forgiveness, that is ours in Christ, to motivate all their actions.
- Encourage the child to complete all assignments and tasks to the best of his/her ability.
- Encourage creative expression, thinking, and experimenting.
- Expose children to appropriate literature, music, and art.
- Monitor social media to ensure respectful Christian witness and behavior.

MISCELLANEOUS

Class Parties

Parties may be planned to celebrate various occasions. Teachers may use volunteer parents to help organize and bring food items (donated by room parents or other parents). There will be no student birthday parties; however, students may bring a treat in honor of their birthdays. Please be mindful of students' allergies when planning. We do encourage children to realize that it isn't necessary to bring treats. Each class plans its own activities with the aid of volunteer parents.

Parents may be called upon to assist at class parties, make phone calls, or assist the teacher at special events.

Field Trips

Field trips are a privilege and may occur throughout the year. These trips are to help students become acquainted with community resources and to provide an educational experience that will enhance classroom learning activities. Parents will be notified of these beforehand and must complete the permission form provided by the teacher before a child is allowed to participate. Parents may be asked to drive or act as chaperones. **Parents who chaperone or transport students for field trips must have a background check completed.** Those driving must have a copy of their driver's license and insurance card on file in the school office. Fees may be required to offset the cost of field trips.

Distractions to Learning

- No gum chewing is allowed (K-4).
- Breakfast, snacks, and drinks are only to be consumed during specified times.
- Beverages other than water are not allowed during school hours.
- Any items, especially toys, fidgets and other nuisance items, that may hinder the learning of a student are not permitted. Such nuisance items include, but are not limited to, electronic devices, toys, comic books, magazines, and card collections. Nuisances will be confiscated. The first time this happens the item can be picked up by the student at the end of the day. On a second offense, the item may be retrieved by the parent upon request.

Money in School

Children who bring money to school are responsible for it. We would encourage children to bring money only for their lunches, milk, books, chapel offerings, etc. Please send money in a sealed envelope with the child's name and amount and purpose for the money clearly marked.

Parent-Teacher League

All parents are automatically members of the PTL and encouraged to attend and make decisions for the best interests of their children. Dates for the meetings will be announced in the newsletter. The PTL is a St. John organization, which plans fundraisers, provides help with special school activities, and provides fellowship opportunities for St. John families.

Personal Invitations

Permission must be received from the teacher before handing out invitations in school. Personal invitations handed out at school must include all classmates or those of the same gender in that grade. If not, please distribute them at some other time.

Technology Devices

Students are not allowed to use personal devices throughout the day unless prior permission has been granted by the teacher. In 5th-8th grades, all devices are to be checked in with the teacher at the beginning of the day. Devices include but are not limited to tablets, cell phones, smart watches used with smart functions, or laptops. Failure to comply will result in having the devices confiscated and stored in the office. On the first offense the student may pick up the device from the school office at the end of the day. On the second offense the parent may pick up the device and the student may have to turn the device in to the school office each morning when they arrive and then pick it up at the end of the day. If students must be contacted during the day, it must be done by calling the

school office and not via personal devices. Smart watches that are utilized as a communication device will be treated as such.

Telephone Calls

During school hours, staff members answer the phone. Students may use the phone with the permission of a staff member for emergencies ONLY (forgotten homework, papers, books, gym clothes, etc. are NOT emergencies). Emergency use includes: illness, necessary medication, or needing to arrange homeward transportation. It is not usually convenient to speak to a student or teacher over the phone while he/she is in class. Students will not be allowed to take personal phone calls or text messages during the day.

Visiting School

Parents are allowed to visit school at any time during the school year. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher prior to your visit. It tells your child that you are interested in his/her school and his/her work. There are some times during the school year that are not ideal times for visitation: the first three weeks of school, whenever achievement tests are given, the three weeks just before Christmas, and the last three weeks of school. You may use your own judgment regarding the length of the visitation. Your concern and cooperation are appreciated.

Children who are not enrolled at St. John are not permitted to attend school unless they are prospective students touring the school, or it is cleared ahead of time by the teachers and principal. Any children showing up at school who are not registered at St. John will be dismissed.

St. John Lutheran School reserves the right to amend this Handbook or vary the policies and procedures, as necessary.

St. John Lutheran School takes reasonable measures to protect your personal information in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

St. John Lutheran School unapologetically preaches God's Word and Truth regarding all matters, including social matters. Our full statement of belief is available in the office upon request.



St. John Lutheran School 2026-2027 Calendar

August

3 - 4 Teacher Meetings
 4 Registration
 12 Staff Meetings & Opening Chapel
 13 1st Day of School

September

7 Labor Day – No School
 28 No School - P-T Conferences

October

1 1:20 Dismissal, P-T Conferences
 2 No School – Fall Break
 15 End 1st Quarter
 16-20 No School – Staff Development
 23 No Buses & No Hot Lunch

November

25-27 No School – Thanksgiving Break

December

1 No PM Buses
 18 1:20 Dismissal - End of 1st Semester
 21 No School – Christmas Break

January

4 No School - Staff Development
 5 School Resumes
 18 No School – Staff Development
 24-29 Lutheran Schools' Week
 29 1:20 Dismissal from Picnic

February

8 No Buses and No Hot Lunch
 15 No School - Winter Conference
 19 No Buses and No Hot Lunch
 22 No School – P-T Conferences
 25 Parent-Teacher Conferences
 26 No School

March

5 No School
 6 IGNITE
 11 End of 3rd Quarter
 12 No School
 25-29 No School - Easter Break

April

6 No PM Buses
 20 No PM Buses
 23 No School - Staff Development

May

11 Field Day
 11 Students' Last Day 12:00 Dismiss
 12 No School – Teacher Work Day
 12 Closing Chapel
 17-19 Teacher Meeting

Quarters	1	2	3	4
Days	42	38	43	36

Nebraska requires 1032 Hours
 St John will have 1095.5 Hours
 63.5 Hours (9.4 Days) > Requirement