

Family Handbook



ST. JAMES LUTHERAN SCHOOL – HOWARD LAKE, MN

Equipping and Empowering Families and Students Through Christ

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OVERVIEW

LCMS SCHOOLS

Schools in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod serve children in early childhood programs through grade 12 in over 1,900 schools nationwide and 3 schools internationally. Additionally, colleges and universities operate to serve post-secondary and graduate students across the nation.

In a Christ-centered religiously integrated curriculum Lutheran schools meet or exceed state standards for high quality schools. Through National Lutheran Schools Accreditation (NLSA) schools complete a rigorous self-study, are reviewed by a team of peers and implement initiatives that provide a continuing program of excellence for students.

Caring, Christian teachers share the Word of God daily with children and families. Strengthening a home, school, and church partnership through an education of the whole child, students are prepared and equipped for a life of Christian citizenship and discipleship.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. James Lutheran School is to provide a Christ-centered education that EQUIPS students and their families with sound Biblical and academic training and EMPOWERS them to reach their potential as servant leaders for Jesus Christ.

FOCUS

Our Lord tells us that children are a gift of His grace, and that parents are responsible for their children in many areas, such as providing a home, clothing, food, and love. However, the most important area of parental vocational responsibility is spiritual training. God's directions to parents are clear:

- *“And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.” (Deuteronomy 6:6–7)*
- *“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.” (Proverbs 22:6)*
- *“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” (Ephesians 6:4)*

St. James Lutheran Church operates this school to assist Christian parents in carrying out their vocational directive from Christ to “Feed my lambs,” John 21:15, and “Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” Matthew 28:19-20.

St. James Lutheran Church and School is also privileged to reach out with the Gospel to others not affiliated with our congregation, and so, children who are not affiliated with our congregation may be enrolled in our school.

PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

St. James Lutheran School's philosophy is based on the eternal truths of God's Word. These truths include the sure knowledge that:

- *"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness." (2 Timothy 3:16)*
- *There is one true, triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 3:16-17)*
- *Humans by nature are sinful, fully deserving God's wrath. (Psalm 51:5)*
- *The same holy and just God "so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)*
- *All who through the work of the Holy Spirit believe that Jesus is their Savior receive the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16:16)*
- *God in His grace has given us different talents and gifts. (Romans 12:6-8)*
- *Believers will strive to use those gifts in ways that will give God the glory and show love for Him and all people. (Psalm 96:3)*
- *Believers will desire to gain a greater knowledge of the Holy Scriptures that they might be able to tell those who ask the reason for their hope of eternal life. (1 Peter 3:15)*
- *Believers will look for opportunities to proclaim the good news of salvation to all people. (Mark 16:15)*

As these truths are imparted to children, the Lord will guide them in faithful development of the spiritual, physical, and mental abilities He has given them.

OBJECTIVES

- *Teach God's Word faithfully in its purity*
- *Support the vocation of Christian parent and home life, thereby strengthening the base of human society*
- *Foster a rich devotional life as a source of spiritual strength in our students*
- *Nurture the dedication to God of time, talents, and treasures in a life of faithful stewardship*
- *Promote Christian citizenship grounded in obedience to God and His Word*
- *Strengthen Christ's Church in general through the training of Christians*
- *Teach the elementary and middle-school curriculums with faithful excellence*
- *Foster Christian fellowship as a means of building character and integrity while living upon the foundation of loving God and loving others*

SCHOOL DOORS

All doors are locked throughout the school day. Doors are open from 7:00 – 8 am for arriving students and again from 2:30 to 3 pm for students to be picked up from school. Any visitor to the school will come to the main entrance of the school to be welcomed.

STUDENTS ARE NOT TO OPEN DOORS FOR ANY ADULT OR STUDENT DURING THE SCHOOL DAY unless given permission by a teacher/staff member.

SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Before School Care:	7:00 am
School doors open:	7:00 am
School day begins:	7:50 am
School day ends:	2:45 pm (11:00 am for Preschool)
After School Care:	2:45 – 5 pm (11:00 – 5 pm for Preschool)
Wednesday Chapel:	8:15 am (All are welcome to attend throughout the year.)

DROP-OFF PROCEDURES

The main school doors open at 7:00 a.m. each morning. Students are not to arrive sooner. No student is to be left unattended outside of the building prior to this time.

All students (and any accompanying parent/guardian) will enter through the main doors of the school. Students arriving before 7:40 am will wait in the entry area until the 7:40 am bell rings.

If parents/guardians have a need to come into school with their student(s), they should park in either the school or church parking lot, rather than along the curb in front of the school.

PICK-UP PROCEDURES

No student will be permitted to leave the campus unless prior arrangements have been made with a parent/guardian and school administration.

Students riding the bus will be released first. Once the bus has left the front of school, the remaining students will be released to their parent/guardian.

Parents arriving early to pick up their student(s) should not park along the curb in front of the school until after the bus has arrived and departed.

SCHOOL CLOSING/DELAYED START

School closings/delayed starts are determined by the HLWW Superintendent. Upon notification of such happening, messages will go out to teachers/staff followed by School Messenger (Phone), FastDirect (email/text), and Facebook. Local media channels will also have updates as available. Parents/Guardians do well to make sure the school office has updated contact information.

VOLUNTEERS

Parents/guardians or relatives who are able to volunteer to help at school are encouraged and welcome. Volunteers will be required to complete a background check before having access to the students.

Some ways to help: greet visitors, correct papers, assist in the classroom for special activities, accompany students on class trips, help when student pictures are taken, assist with book fairs and fund raisers, supervise recess and/or lunch, and in many other ways help to enrich our school program.

Volunteer support is a vital link in achieving an effective school atmosphere and developing the best possible school program for the students.

PARENT TEACHER LEAGUE

The Parent Teacher League (PTL) is organized to support the education of the students of St. James Lutheran School through volunteer involvement and the fostering of relationships among school teachers, administrator(s), staff, school board, and parents. All parents and teachers/staff are considered to be members of the PTL and are encouraged to be active through attendance at regular monthly meetings, planning, and functions. The PTL reports to the Board of Elementary Education. More information and contact information for PTL leadership can be gotten from the school office.

ADMINISTRATION

PRINCIPAL/LEAD ADMINISTRATOR

The primary responsibility for the daily administration of St. James Lutheran School is given to the principal/lead administrator. He/She is responsible for providing supervision for all activities and functions of the school both within the school day and during extra-curricular activities outside of normal school hours according to the by-laws, policies and procedures, and philosophy formulated by the Board of Elementary Education. He/She reports to the Board of Elementary Education of St. James Lutheran Church.

BOARD OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

The Board of Elementary Education is responsible for setting the policies for St. James Lutheran School and ensuring that all policies are carried out.

Board meetings are held the third Monday of the month at 7 pm and may be attended by any member of St. James or any school student parent/guardian except when the board elects to go into executive session. Observers should notify the principal/lead administrator or board chairman prior to the meeting, to ensure that the time and location of the meeting have not changed.

Individuals wishing to address the board are asked to contact the principal/lead administrator or board chairman prior to the meeting and state the reason for their desire to address the board. If appropriate, that matter to be addressed will be placed on the meeting agenda. It is not appropriate to share comments or concerns about students or staff at the board meeting unless the person attending has followed the dispute resolution policy of the school as laid out below.

If the board needs to go into executive session, all non-board members will be dismissed. Only board members, the principal/lead administrator, senior pastor, and vicar may attend executive sessions. Items discussed in executive session are confidential. The board will determine what is to be recorded in the minutes to protect confidentiality and privacy of personnel or students.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION POLICY

St. James will not be conflict free. As individuals live in a Christian community, parents/guardians, students, teachers, and staff should remember that when problems

develop, we seek to resolve the conflict out of our love for God and others using the principles in Matthew 18:

1. Resolve the conflict with the parties involved, i.e., teacher, coach, staff, etc.
2. If there is still a problem, speak to the principal/lead administrator and he/she will set up a time for you and the teacher or staff member to meet and discuss the concern together. If the conflict involves the principal/lead administrator, speak to the Board of Elementary Education chairman.
3. If after serious efforts have been made, the problem has yet to be resolved, the parent may request to speak with the Board of Elementary Education and/or the principal/lead administrator at the next regular board meeting. If the conflict involves the principal/lead administrator, then the pastor or a member of the Board of Elders may be involved.

ENROLLMENT

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

St. James Lutheran School admits students of any race, color, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities available. St. James Lutheran School does not discriminate based on race, color, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, student aid, athletic, and other school-administered programs.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ENROLLMENT

All students entering preschool or kindergarten must meet the following requirements:

- 3-year-old preschool: Must be 3 years old by September 1st of the year entering the program and must be potty trained.
- 4-year-old preschool: Must be 4 years old by September 1st of the year entering the program and must be potty trained.
- Kindergarten: Must be 5 years old by September 1st of the year entering the program.

If a student is currently serving a suspension from another school, he/she will not be allowed admittance at St. James until the time of his/her suspension has been fulfilled in full.

When any student is enrolled in a Lutheran school, it is not only the student who is enrolled but the family as a whole; the family is enrolled in the sense that the parents/guardians are the first educator of the child and a vital part in the collaborative process of Christian education. The parents/guardians must actively and fully support the school, teachers, and policies set forth by St. James Board of Elementary Education.

SCREENING

New students will be screened by the principal/lead-administrator and appropriate teacher to ensure we can provide for the student's needs. We reserve the right to review previous school records for academic and behavior issues before formal enrollment is completed. If it

is determined that St. James Lutheran School cannot provide the educational setting that is best for a student, suggestion to pursue other options may happen.

As a part of the screening process, incoming Preschool students will be assessed using the Daberon Screening for School Readiness. Incoming K – 8th Grade students will be assessed using the STARS assessment. If possible, these assessments will occur before the student’s first day of school.

IMMUNIZATIONS

The Minnesota Department of Health requires schools to have on file an updated record of the enrolled students' immunizations. Students must be up to date, in the process of becoming up to date, or have a letter on file explaining why immunizations are not current. Students not in compliance with these immunization requirements are not to be allowed in school according to state law.

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition at St. James Lutheran School does not cover the full cost of educating each child. The actual cost of educating each child at St. James is above \$7000. St. James is blessed by regular support and generosity of St. James’ church members whose weekly offerings help to keep tuition well below cost. The congregation believes in the Lord’s command to “let the children come” and strives to keep tuition costs as low as possible, while still adhering to excellent educational standards. St. James Lutheran School therefore relies upon the commitment of parents/guardians to pay tuition along with further support from the Howard Lake and surrounding communities. St. James administration acknowledges that families have many choices when deciding to send their children to school, and recognize the responsibility and privilege given them by enrolling families.

Enrollment Fee:	\$125 for new and returning K-8 families paid by June 1 st \$250 for returning families paid after June 1 st
Non-member Tuition:	\$2255 annually
Member Tuition:	\$1600 annually
5-Day Preschool:	\$1600 annually
4-Day Preschool:	\$1300 annually
3-Day Preschool:	\$1000 annually
Childcare:	\$125/week – 5 days, \$75/week – 3 days, \$50 for Tues/Thurs mornings, \$30/day – Drop-in
Before School Care:	\$5/day (7 – 7:40 am)
After School Care:	\$8/day (2:45 – 5 pm)
Athletic Fee:	\$30/sport
Band Fee:	\$10/month for ensemble instruction Individual lesson costs paid directly to the band teacher

TUITION ASSISTANCE

The opportunity to equip and empower families and students through Christ is important to St. James Church and School. As such, St. James wishes that a decision to enroll not hinge upon financial matters. Tuition assistance is available upon application for such. Tuition assistance is handled in two ways:

- 1) Apply for assistance for partial or full amount of tuition
- 2) Apply for a payment plan stating the conditions that suit the family situation

Tuition assistance requests are reviewed by the Tuition assistance committee in a confidential manner. Awards will be communicated to the family within a month of application.

FASTDIRECT

St. James uses FastDirect School Information System for administrative matters such as registration, tuition, grades, and communication. Each family will receive instructions on how to use the system. FASTDIRECT WILL BE THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF COMMUNICATION FROM THE SCHOOL OFFICE.

ACADEMICS

ACCREDITATION

St. James Lutheran School is accredited by the National Lutheran Schools Association, an agency of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. This is a nationally respected agency and meets the expectations of states for the purpose of recognition and approval of the school's program.

National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) serves as the accrediting body for Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod schools across the United States and the world. NLSA has been accrediting schools in the LCMS since 1978, and accreditation decisions have always been based upon a school's compliance with national standards for Lutheran schools that reflect the essential qualities that are expected of Lutheran schools.

CURRICULUM

St. James' curriculum meets and exceeds the requirements for an approved school in the state of Minnesota. Our curriculum includes all the experiences of the student for which our school accepts responsibility. It provides for the spiritual, intellectual, social, and physical needs of every student. St. James' faculty evaluates portions of the curriculum each year with the purpose of providing the best instruction possible. The scope and sequence of the curriculum can be viewed upon request.

The Word of God is the most important subject in our school curriculum. It is not only taught as a separate subject, but is also incorporated, when appropriate, in all subjects of the curriculum. It is our intent that students learn to connect and apply God's Word to every aspect of their lives as they learn to love God and love others.

The curriculum consists of the following subject areas:

RELIGION: Instruction centers on Biblical teachings and use of God's Word. Instruction also includes church history, missions, memorization, liturgy study, and Luther's Small Catechism. All students of St. James shall attend religious and catechesis instruction regardless of church home or affiliation. Memory work consisting of Scripture and the Small Catechism is assigned to all students as a means of the nurturing of faith and building a solid foundation for their lives as Christians.

LANGUAGE ARTS: A complete language arts program is taught with instruction in Reading, Spelling, Phonics, English and Creative Writing.

MATHEMATICS: A transitional program of a thorough study from basic operations to major concepts essential for success on the high school level.

SCIENCE: Instruction includes concepts in life, physical, and earth sciences presented from a biblical perspective.

MUSIC: Music instruction includes music theory, music history, band, and choir.

SOCIAL STUDIES: A complete program of societal development involving history, geography, and government is taught with a distinct Christian perspective.

ART: Art instruction includes creative arts and crafts.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION/ HEALTH: A structured program of instruction developing strength and skills, rhythm, recreation, health, and safety.

TECHNOLOGY: Tablets and Chromebooks are used in the classrooms for various assignments. Computer awareness, proper use of the computer, and the ability to use word processing, and other pertinent programs are taught.

GRADING SCALE

St. James School uses the following grading scale:

Grade	Percentage	GPA
A	95 – 100	4.0
A-	93.5 – 94.5	3.5
B+	91.5 – 93	3.25
B	87 – 91	3.00
B-	84.5 – 86.5	2.75
C+	81.5 – 84	2.50
C	77 – 81	2.00
C-	74.5 – 76.5	1.75
D+	71.5 – 74	1.50
D	67 – 71	1.00
D-	64.5 – 66.5	0.75
F	64 – 0	0

In addition, the following scale may be used for some subject areas:

- E: Excellent
- S: Satisfactory
- N: Needs Improvement
- U: Unsatisfactory
- I: Incomplete

HONOR ROLL

An Honor Roll system has been established to recognize outstanding work in academics. Honor Roll certificates are given to students at the end of each school quarter in grades 5-8 who achieve one of the two following levels:

A Honor Roll: (3.50 - 4.00)

B Honor Roll: (3.00 - 3.49)

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

Though the Word of God is a foundational focus and priority at St. James, the academic achievement of students is of great importance. As it is realized that each student will vary in academic achievement, St. James wishes to instill the integrity of working faithfully and diligently as a steward of the life God has given. Each student does well to be nurtured and challenged to obtain the highest level of academic achievement of which they are capable. Further, it is expected that the family will support, nurture, and assist the classroom teacher in ensuring that the student works within the scope of their responsibilities.

Academic expectations are monitored throughout the year. Parents/guardians have access to their student's grades throughout the school year by using FastDirect. Teachers will have regular contact with parents and are willing to discuss student progress.

PROMOTION: To be promoted to the next grade requires the satisfactory completion of class assignments and must be completed prior to the final day of school.

For promotion into K-2 determination is made by the student's readiness for success at the next grade, demonstrated by consistently meeting classroom expectations at his/her current grade level.

For promotion into grades 3-8, the student's cumulative grade point average must be 1.7 or above (on a 4-point scale) in the following subjects: reading, grammar/spelling, mathematics, science, religion/confirmation, and social studies.

Eighth grade students who do not meet these requirements will not graduate.

All students in grades 3-8 who do not meet promotion requirements will be considered for retention at the current grade level.

RETENTION: The decision to retain a student in the current grade level is normally made cooperatively between the teacher(s), resource teacher(s), parents/guardians, and principal/lead administrator. The following steps are utilized:

1. The teacher and parents/guardians will regularly discuss the student's progress throughout the year.
2. If concerns persist, the teacher will notify the principal/lead administrator during the early part of the third quarter regarding success at the next grade level.
3. The teacher will then contact the parents/guardians to discuss with and advise as to what is best for the student.

4. If a parent/guardian wishes, they may ask for a conference with the teacher(s), resource teacher(s), and the principal/lead administrator to discuss their student's progress and possible interventions that can be put into place.
5. If after these meetings, there is not an agreed upon plan for retention or promotion, the principal/lead administrator may inform the parents/guardians that in order for the student to remain at St. James, that student will be retained in the current grade.

The principal/lead administrator and teachers reserve the right to make a final determination on retention if agreement with the parent/guardian is not possible, especially when the advancement of the student would have a significant negative impact on their developmental wellbeing and the dynamics of the rest of the class.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Participation in any extracurricular activity at St. James School is a privilege. A student must demonstrate faithful use of his or her God-given talents in classroom relationships, attendance, assignments, and all other school requirements, to participate.

Students must maintain a 1.75 (C-) grade point average (GPA) if they wish to participate in any extracurricular activity at St. James School. A GPA of less than 1.75 or receiving an "F" in any subject will make the student ineligible to participate. Participation in extracurricular activities may resume once the necessary responsibilities have been completed to bring the GPA above 1.75. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to consider this policy for outside extracurricular activities as well.

STUDENT SERVICES

Student services as prescribed by federal law are provided to parochial school students on an equal basis with public school students which include speech, health, and special education services for eligible students. Close contact is kept with the public-school special education department. Referrals for these services are made collectively by the teacher and/or principal/lead-administrator in consultation with the parents.

ACADEMIC ASSESSMENTS

Students in grades K – 8 will be assessed 3 times during the year (once for kindergarten) using STAR Assessments, a product of Renaissance. These assessments gauge student progress, aid in curriculum adjustment and planning, and provide information needed to ensure our school is promoting and achieving academic excellence. Results of the assessments are available for parents to review upon request.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled after the end of the first and third quarters. Parents/guardians are encouraged to attend these opportunities as part of their vocational responsibility and invested interest in the education of the student. Conferences foster the student's parents/guardians and teacher(s) to have the opportunity to discuss, face to face, the progress of the student spiritually, academically, emotionally, and physically. It also affords a wonderful opportunity to set improvement goals for the student.

Parents should feel free to bring any concerns to the teacher and seek to schedule a special conference at any time during the school year if necessary. Teachers may also schedule special conferences with parents throughout the school year as needed.

ASSIGNMENTS

Students should be able to complete most of their schoolwork during the time they are at school. However, this may not always be the case, especially in the upper grades. Parents/guardians play a vital role in being aware and supportive of a student's responsibilities in completing their assignments. The following is an "in the least" policy that may vary slightly depending on the teacher in certain circumstances. Parents/guardians and students are responsible for knowing the teacher's policy concerning assignments.

LATE/MISSING ASSIGNMENTS: Assignments are to be turned in when due. It should be expected that the student's grade will reflect late/missing assignments. Late/Missing assignments are to be completed and turned in within a day of the due date. (This timing may vary slightly by grade and teacher.) It will be at the teacher's discretion whether the student will need to make the assignment up during free time, recess, or other times during the school day.

Late/missing assignments due to absence should be completed and turned in no later than the number of days plus one of the days absent. (For instance, if a student is absent 2 days, then they will have 3 days to complete the assignments.)

Parents and students are encouraged, however, to make attempts to keep current with assignments in the event of an absence to ensure the student stays on pace with the class learning.

CHEATING

Cheating is defined as:

- Plagiarism – "to steal and pass off the ideas or words of another as one's own: use another's production without crediting the source." (Webster's Dictionary)
- Copying another student's work including but not limited to assignments, reports, projects, and tests.
- Allowing another student to copy work.
- Working with other students as a group when the activity given was an individual assignment.

Consequences for cheating:

- First offense: A two grade reduction will be given for the assignment and parents/guardians will be informed.
- Second offense: A zero will be given for the assignment, parents/guardians will be informed, and a detention will be served.
- Third offense: A zero will be given for the assignment, parents/guardians will be informed and one day of in-school suspension will be served.

TECHNOLOGY

As a means of “Equipping and Empowering Families and Students through Christ” students at St. James School become proficient, reflective, and ethical users of digital tools for learning and life. We are to act in the digital world guided by the same high moral standards and values of our Lutheran community.

St. James encourages the judicious use of information technology to assist staff and students with academic success, preparation for the workplace, and lifelong learning. St. James provides access to information technologies to support learning, facilitate resource sharing, increase communication, enhance student engagement, and assist staff and students in acquiring innovative skills.

The scope of the policies includes the St. James domain, network, school grounds or at/during school functions, use of St. James accounts, and St. James school issued devices. School issued devices include but are not limited to the following: Chromebooks, tablets, classroom computers, and any other device issued by the school.

With digital access to people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be, or is definitely not, of educational value in the context of our Lutheran School setting. Precautions to control access to controversial material have been taken with appropriate internet filtering and monitoring software and hardware. Still, it is impossible to control all digitally accessed materials, and an industrious user may discover controversial information. We firmly believe, however, that the benefits of the valuable information and interaction available on the network far outweigh the risks that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of St. James School.

St. James administration and teachers monitor the use of the school’s network to protect the integrity and optimal operation of all computer and system networks. There is no expectation of privacy related to information stored and transmitted over the St. James network. The information on the network in general files, St. James Google domain files, email, and third-party devices brought into the school building by students is not private and is subject to review to substantiate inappropriate activity and to comply with requests of law enforcement agencies as part of their investigations. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the system may lead to discovery that a user has or is violating the St. James Technology Responsible Use Agreement.

At any time and without prior notice, Saint James reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store any and all usage of technology devices, digital resources, and network infrastructure, along with information technology as well as any information sent or received in connection with this usage. Staff and students should not have any expectation of privacy regarding such materials.

Use of the computer network and Internet is an integral part of research and class work, but abuse of this technology can result in loss of privileges. Students who use technology devices, digital resources, and network infrastructure or any information technology inappropriately may lose their access privileges and may face additional disciplinary or legal action. The length of time for loss of privileges will be determined by building

administrators and/or other staff members. If the user is guilty of multiple violations, privileges can be revoked. Expenses from excessive damage to or loss of technology devices will be the responsibility of the student's parents/guardians.

All parents and students will sign a form acknowledging receipt and understanding of this policy.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips will be planned occasionally during the school year to extend students' learning experiences. Field trips enable students to grow culturally, expand their awareness of their home state, motivate them to engage in further study, and offer a pleasant break from the normal classroom routine. Attendance on field trips is a privilege based on good academic standing and proper classroom conduct. While costs are usually covered, there may be times a fee is necessary. Parents may be called upon to volunteer to serve as chaperones for field trips. Parents must sign a consent form for these trips at start of each school year.

ENSEMBLE OFFERINGS AT WORSHIP

The purpose of the various ensembles St. James students participate in is to praise our Lord with the gift of music. Members of these groups will be given extra opportunities to share that music in regular church services and on special occasions throughout the school year. Parents/guardians are asked to make every effort to have their student in attendance.

ATTENDANCE

IMPORTANCE OF REGULAR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Regular daily school attendance by students is necessary for the welfare of the academic development of those who are enrolled in our school. Daily attendance is emphasized because:

1. It is essential to academic growth and the nurturing of relationships.
2. It is required by the laws of the State of Minnesota.
3. God has asked us to use our talents and abilities to His glory in loving Him and loving others.

All students must attend school daily to maintain good academic achievement and more importantly, growth in their knowledge of Scripture and nourishment of saving faith.

REPORTING ABSENCES

Planned absences for appointments and other various happenings that cannot occur outside of the school day are to be communicated to the school office and teacher at least one day prior to the absence.

In the event of an unplanned absence, please call the school office (320-543-2630) between 7:15 and 9:00 a.m. If a call has not been received by 9:00 am, the school secretary or principal/lead administrator will contact parents/guardians at home or work to verify the reason for the absence and to ensure the welfare of all students. Prolonged absences must

be called in to the school daily, unless a specified number of days can be identified for the absence.

Please do not send your student to school with:

- Rashes: If the student has a rash of unknown origin, it needs to be evaluated by a health care provider. Students should not come to school with rashes that are spreading, itching, or open/draining.
- Vomiting/Diarrhea: Students need to remain home until 24 hours after the last episode.
- Fever of or greater than 100 degrees F: Students should stay home until 24 hours after the temperature returns to normal without the use of fever reducing medication.

Excused Absence: Notification from parent/guardian that the student will be absent.

Unexcused Absence: No notification given from parent/guardian that the student will be absent.

Teachers will have assignments available for pick-up at the school office by 3:30 pm of the day of the absence.

ABSENTEEISM/TRUANCY

If a student has accumulated 10 excused absences in a quarter, parents will be asked to have a meeting with the principal/lead administrator to discuss solutions for improving school attendance. Further absences will require a written note from a medical practitioner to be considered excused. Extreme circumstances otherwise will be determined by discretion of the principal/lead administrator.

If a student has accumulated 5 unexcused absences in a quarter, parents will be asked to have a meeting with the Principal/Lead administrator to discuss solutions for improving school attendance. If an agreement is not able to be accomplished, St. James administration reserves the right to refer truancy matters to Wright County and/or withdraw the student from the school.

HEALTH EXTENDED ABSENCES

Upon an extended absence because of a known long-term illness, surgeries, or other known medical conditions, the teacher and school administration will work with the parents/guardians to provide necessary educational and reasonable opportunities for the student.

VACATIONS AND PLANNED ABSENCES

Since education is more than doing assignments and working through textbooks, it is strongly advised that students NOT be taken out of school during the school year. If, however, a parent chooses to take their student on a scheduled business trip, vacation, or other personal matter, the teacher should be notified in advance. **It is not always possible for teachers to have assignments prepared before leaving.** If the teacher is unable to have

homework prepared before departure, the students are allowed a day for each day absent plus one to make-up homework.

PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

A student with an unexcused absence will not participate in or attend an extracurricular activity on the same day or evening that he/she was absent. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the principal/lead administrator.

TARDIES

ALL STUDENTS: Though typically outside of the control of the student, it is important to instill the integrity of being on time for responsibilities. If a family/student is running late, please contact the school office.

Students who arrive after 8 am without communication from parent/guardian will be counted as tardy. After the 5th tardy (during the school year), a conference will be scheduled between the parents/guardians and the principal/lead administrator to discuss solutions for getting the student to school on time.

5th – 8th GRADE: Students are expected to be in their next class before the end of a 3-minute passing period. If there is a need to attend to a matter that will take longer than 3 minutes, it is the responsibility of the student to ask for permission to attend to the matter. Students who are not in the class at the time of the passing period bell unexcused will be marked tardy. After the 5th tardy (in one quarter), a conference will be scheduled between the student and principal/lead administrator to discuss solutions for getting to class on time. If the student continues to be tardy to classes, a detention will be assigned with the principal/lead administrator.

STUDENT LIFE

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT AWARD

The Christian Encyclopedia defines the Fruits of the Spirit as: Effects produced in man by the indwelling Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering (patience), gentleness (kindness), goodness, faith (fidelity), meekness (gentleness), temperance (self-control).

As a Lutheran school, it is good and important for us to look not simply to the academic achievements of our students, but also to the whole person as a child of God. We wish to instill a fine education but further, and perhaps more importantly, wish to guide the growth of our students' relationship with God and others through their daily living out of their Baptismal identity. In so doing, this award seeks to recognize a student in our outgoing 8th-grade class who has exhibited the Fruits of the Spirit as a reflection and example of good character among teachers, staff, and students. This award is given based on nominations from teachers, staff, and 5th – 8th grade students.

CHAPEL

Worship is a vital part of a Christian's life. It is for this reason that we gather each Wednesday in the church at 8:15 a.m. to worship our Lord in Word and song. Chapel services are led by the pastor, vicar, or other visiting pastors. Worship in Chapel is an

extension of the worship life of the church, and therefore follows the same liturgical and reverent practice as Sunday morning worship. Weekly chapel is a public worship service and therefore, parents and visitors are always welcome to join us.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

God reminds us in his Word, “I rejoiced with those who said to me, let us go to the house of the Lord.” Psalm 122:11. The very nature of our school would suggest that church attendance is a concern of both the home and school. The classroom teachers will encourage the children to worship regularly. This is as God would have us do as he reminds us in Hebrews 10:25, “Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another - and all the more as you see the day approaching.”

SCHOOL PICTURES

Individual student pictures will be taken by a professional photographer near the beginning of the school year. If parents/guardians would prefer to not purchase pictures, students will still get their picture taken for school use (records, yearbook, etc.). This will be of no cost to the parents/guardians of the student. The date of picture day will be posted on the school calendar.

SCHOOL LUNCH

St. James provides hot lunch in partnership with the Howard Lake/Waverly/Winsted (HLWW) school district. Payment for lunches will be handled through the online system provided by HLWW or through the St. James School office. Application for free and reduced lunch can be made through the St. James School office.

Cost for lunch is as follows:

Preschool – 4 th Grade:	\$2.50
5 th – 8 th Grade:	\$2.75
All Adults:	\$5.00
Second entrée (5 th – 8 th Gr.):	\$2.00
Second milk:	\$0.50

Unpaid lunch expenses during the school year will be collected by HLWW. Unpaid lunch expenses after the school year will be collected by St. James.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Electronic devices not issued by the school are expected to be turned off before the start of school. If a teacher/staff member sees or hears an electronic device, it will be removed, and students can collect their device at the end of the day. If this becomes a consistent problem, a parent meeting will be set to discuss the situation.

Electronic devices are not to be brought on field trips unless special permission from the teacher has been given. Even so, electronic devices will remain off until needed for use as designated by the teacher.

Though it is convenient to communicate directly to your student via text or other messaging on an electronic device, please refrain from doing so during the school day. If there is an emergency message necessary, please call the school office and a message will be delivered to the student. Students will be allowed to turn their devices on at the end of the day.

WEAPONS

Possession of a weapon on school property, in school buildings, before, after, or during school, or at school-sponsored events is strictly prohibited except for those who are legally certified to publicly carry a weapon. This includes any firearm, whether loaded or unloaded or any device designed as a weapon or through its use can produce bodily harm or death. Other explosive or flammable weapons such as matches, fireworks, etc., are included in this policy. If a student is suspected of possessing a weapon of any sort, searches of the person or personal property will ensue. Disciplinary action may include contacting the local police department as well as suspension or expulsion as outlined in the School Office Referral section on page 22.

LOCKERS

5th through 8th grade students are provided with lockers. A periodic locker check may be made by the principal/lead administrator or teachers. Locks will not be used on student lockers. Valuable items should be kept with the student in the classroom. There is no expressed or implied expectation of privacy for items in the lockers. Reasonable locker decorations are permissible. St. James is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, and OTHER DRUGS/ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

There shall be no alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs/substances including undisclosed prescription medication on school campus outside of the Board of Christian Education approval for legal consumption at special functions and activities. A student found to be in possession of alcohol, tobacco, and/or other drugs/substances will be escorted to the office and a search of the person and personal property will ensure. Disciplinary action may include contacting the local police department as well as suspension or expulsion as outlined in the School Office Referral section on page 22.

MEDICATION

At no time may a student dispense his/her own medication. A teacher/staff member is to administer medication while the student is at school. Teachers will not be able to dispense prescription medicine without a doctor's written permission. A teacher will need written permission from a parent to dispense nonprescription medication. This includes cough syrup and cough drops.

BIRTHDAY TREATS

On their birthdays, students may bring a birthday treat for their classmates and teacher. Parents must contact the teacher for suggestions (including allergy restrictions within the classroom) and scheduling prior to sending treats to school. Those who have summer birthdays may make special arrangements with the teacher to set aside a day to share

birthday treats, typically on their half birthday. Please do not have items such as flowers and balloons delivered to the student during the school day.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

As Christians, we are guided by God's Word. "Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight." 1 Peter 3:3-4

Each student will dress in a manner that will not interfere with an orderly, wholesome, and productive school life. In addition, one of the responsibilities of maturity is to dress in a manner that is fitting to the occasion. General principles to be followed are Christian modesty and neatness. Students should dress in conformance with common expectations for their birth gender.

These expectations are to be followed during school hours and all school related functions. St. James teachers/staff and Principal/Lead Administrator reserve the right to enforce these expectations if clothing is deemed inappropriate. In that case, students will be provided the opportunity to cover or change inappropriate clothing. If no alternative clothing is available, parents/guardians will be contacted and asked to bring a change of clothes.

While it is impossible to provide an exhaustive list of proper and improper attire, the following are the common guidelines:

HAIR/HEADWEAR: Various hair styles and coloring is acceptable so long as they are not a distraction. Spray coloring is not allowed.

Headwear is not allowed other than special occasions where permission is granted. When headwear is allowed, it may have writing and pictures on it as long as it does not glorify or pertain to profanity, alcohol, drugs, sex, or anything else that is contrary to our Christian values.

TOPS: Tops may have writing and pictures on it as long as it does not glorify or pertain to profanity, alcohol, drugs, sex, or anything else that is contrary to our Christian values. The following are to be followed:

- No bare midriff
- No mesh/sheer/see-through
- No cut-out or cut-off areas
- No tank tops/spaghetti straps/strapless tops/halter tops
- No exposed undergarments including sports bras
- No hoods worn indoors

BOTTOMS: Bottoms worn should be modest and neat. The following are to be followed:

- No rips or holes/cut-out/cut-off areas above the knee unless covered with a patch or leggings underneath
- Skirts, shorts, and jumpers are to be modest in length. (Typically finger length when arms held down to the side)

- Skin tight leggings/tights/spandex athletic pants may be worn under shorts, skirts, jumpers, or long shirt/sweaters
- No sheer/see-through
- No exposed undergarments

SHOES: Appropriate shoes for the various activities of the day should be worn. Shoes are to be always worn.

OUTERWEAR: Coats and jackets are to be hung in the class's designated area. Outerwear can be worn indoors if necessary and permission is given. Outerwear may have writing and pictures on it as long as it does not glorify or pertain to profanity, alcohol, drugs, sex, or anything else that is contrary to our Christian values.

ACCESSORIES: Accessories such as jewelry and other adornments while unnecessary in the school setting may be worn so long as they are not a distraction. Accessories may have writing and pictures on it as long as it does not glorify or pertain to profanity, alcohol, drugs, sex, or anything else that is contrary to our Christian values.

MAKE-UP: If make-up is worn it should be modest, neat, and not a distraction.

ALTERNATIVE DRESS DAYS: On alternate dress days, students must still abide by certain dress code rules, including wearing proper footwear, shorts or skirts of proper length, clothing in good condition without rips or holes, and clothing that is appropriate for our Christian environment.

DISCIPLINE

The foundation for discipline of behavior at St. James school is upon God's good and gracious will found in the Ten Commandments. Summarized by the love of God and the love of others, it is the purpose of St. James to provide nurture and correction in love and care for our students. Through consistent application of the rules and regulations that follow, we strive to teach our students to deal with each other in a Christ-pleasing manner as taught through God's Word.

As a Lutheran school, we believe in the appropriate use of Law and Gospel. Our first priority is to maintain a Christ-centered, safe, nurturing, and learning atmosphere. When students do not act appropriately, it takes away from other students' experiences and classroom focus. As such, the goal and purpose in discipline is to correct poor or sinful behavior and, once repentance takes place, assure the student of the forgiveness that they have through Jesus Christ.

Depending on the nature of the incident and the age of the child, violations of expectations or rules may result in the following: Bible study/writing, behavior mentoring, detention, required conference with parents, suspension from school, and expulsion from school.

RESPONSIBILITIES

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY: Out of love for God and love for others, students are expected to respect all people with whom they come into contact in the school, in the church, on the playground, and throughout the community. Bullying of any kind, whether in person or over

technology, will not be tolerated. Students are to show respect for school/church property, and responsibility for the care of their own possessions, as well as the possessions of others.

TEACHER/STAFF RESPONSIBILITY: Out of love for God and love for others, all teachers/staff are to model respect and Christian living among others for their students along with carrying out discipline of all students in the school. Teachers/staff members shall establish good relations with students by reinforcing positive behavior that encourages, rather than discourages, the child. As each student is blessed with various traits and characteristics, it is vital that teachers/staff remember that each person is a beloved child of God who may simply need help with misused gifts.

The teacher must create a disciplined environment by setting reasonable limitations that are fair and consistent. Teacher supervision in the classroom, hallways, playground, and church shall maintain the desired learning environment.

There are a variety of teaching styles that can effectively fulfill these responsibilities. We respect the teachers'/staffs' right to use procedures for maintaining discipline that are most effective for them if the procedures are consistent with the expectations described above.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITY: Out of love for God and love for others, the responsibility of educating a student is twofold, belonging first to the home and then to the school.

The parent/guardian is expected to be supportive of the policies of St. James Lutheran School and to foster respect in the student for the rules of the school. Since the parents/guardians are those entrusted by God with the responsibility of raising their children, the teacher will actively communicate with parents/guardians regarding student behavior in school. If a teacher, in consultation with the principal/lead administrator, deems it necessary, they may require parents/guardians to attend a meeting to discuss behavior issues of the student.

PRINCIPAL/LEAD ADMINISTRATOR RESPONSIBILITY: Out of love for God and love for others, the principal/lead administrator is responsible for establishing and maintaining a disciplined environment in the school, according to the expectations described above.

SCHOOL OFFICE REFERRAL

While it is encouraged that involved teachers/staff work through behavior and discipline issues within the classroom or other setting, there may be times an office referral is necessary. Those referrals are done in the following manner:

GREEN LIGHT: Green light referrals are for highlighting good behavior such as demonstrating fruits of the Spirit, modeling appropriate behavior, safe behavior, or helping without prompting, etc. Green light referrals give an opportunity to report to parents/guardians positive matters about their children.

YELLOW LIGHT: Yellow light referrals are for addressing behavior that is less than desirable, disruptive, and against the school moral and behavior code. These behaviors could include dress code violations, aggressive behavior, placing hands on others, disrespect, foul language, not completing schoolwork, etc.

Handled by:

Principal/lead administrator

Possible Disciplinary Action:

Verbal warnings
Bible study/writing
Detention

Possible Examples:

Inappropriate behavior
Disrespecting teacher or other students
Unauthorized use of technology
Inappropriate use of/possession of personal belonging or school supplies
Name calling/teasing
Cheating of any kind
Inappropriate physical contact
Vandalism, writing, or defacing school property
Theft
Lying

RED LIGHT: Red light referrals are for addressing serious matters that need immediate attention such as fighting or causing harm, cursing, stealing, extreme unsafe behavior, harassment, bullying, etc. Red light referrals likely result in immediate contact of parents/guardians.

Handled by:

Principal/lead administrator

Possible Disciplinary Action:

Bible study/writing
In-School suspension
Out-of-School suspension
Expulsion

Possible Examples:

Repeated yellow light referrals
Fighting/Physical aggression
Possession of matches/lighter
Weapons
Defiance
Leaving school/campus without permission
Destruction of property

The family of any student who willfully damages school property will be assessed the value of the replacement or repair, or be required to satisfactorily repair the damage, if such a task is reasonable. As a result of the willful damage, the student may be suspended or expelled at the discretion of the principal/lead administrator.

Serious threat/intimidation of others
Bullying
Inappropriate internet sites/content or print material
Smoking, drugs, or alcohol use
Sexual behavior/harassment

DEFINITION OF DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

DETENTION: Time assigned by the teacher/staff or principal/lead administrator that removes the student from recess or other activities and/or requires them to stay after or come in before the school day.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION: The temporary removal from the classroom environment due to an infraction of school rules. The principal/lead administrator, having conferred with the teacher/staff involved, shall have sole authority to assign in-school suspension and may determine the length of suspension depending on the severity of the infraction of no more than 3 days.

Any student who has received an in-school suspension will be excluded from class trips and in-school and after-school activities. Any suspension will be reported to the Board of Elementary Education in its next regularly scheduled meeting after going into executive session. If a parent/guardian chooses to appeal the in-school suspension, they may do so in writing to the Board of Elementary Education. The findings of the Board will be final. In the event that the decision is made to overturn a suspension, the student's record will be cleared of such and replaced with a lesser agreed upon disciplinary action.

SUSPENSION: The temporary removal from the school environment due to a serious infraction of school rules. The principal/lead administrator, having conferred with the teacher/staff involved, shall have sole authority to suspend a student from school and may determine the length of suspension depending on the severity of the infraction of no more than 5 days.

Any student who has received a suspension will be excluded from class trips and in-school and after-school activities. Any suspension will be reported to the Board of Elementary Education in its next regularly scheduled meeting after going into executive session. If a parent/guardian chooses to appeal the suspension, they may do so in writing to the Board of Elementary Education. The findings of the Board will be final. In the event that the decision is made to overturn a suspension, the student's record will be cleared of such and replaced with a lesser agreed upon disciplinary action.

EXPULSION: The permanent removal from the school. The authority to expel a student belongs to the principal/lead administrator with approval from the Board of Elementary Education. Notice of expulsion will be given to the parents/guardians at least 5 school days in advance of expulsion.

Parents/guardians may choose to appeal this decision in writing to the Board of Elementary Education. After review, the decision of the Board is final.

Any student who has been expelled may not be on the school grounds at any time. This includes any school function or activity. In the event that the decision is made to overturn a suspension, the student's record will be cleared of such and replaced with a lesser agreed upon disciplinary action.

BUS DISCIPLINE MATTERS

Students who ride the public-school bus are expected to adhere to the behavior policies of the bus company. All disciplinary matters will be handled by the bus driver and/or bus garage. Appeals and questions about disciplinary matters on the bus should be directed to the bus garage. The bus garage phone number is: 320-543-4650

ANTI-BULLYING

As a Christ-centered school, out of love of God and love of others we strive to treat each other with respect and refuse to tolerate bullying of any kind. St. James is committed to making our school a safe and caring environment for all students.

- John 13:34: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another."
- Ephesians 4:2 "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love."

Bullying is when someone habitually hurts, frightens, threatens, manipulates, or controls another person, or leaves someone out on purpose.

Bullying behaviors, which may be face-to-face or through electronic means (such as email, texts, or other media) include the following:

- Hurting others physically by hitting, kicking, tripping, biting, or pushing.
- Stealing or damaging another person's things
- Ganging up on another student
- Teasing in a hurtful way
- Insulting or making fun of others
- Spreading rumors or lies about others
- Leaving individuals out on purpose, or trying to get other students not to play with others

Students at St. James Lutheran School will do the following things to prevent bullying:

- Treat each other with love and respect
- Refuse to watch, laugh, or join in when someone is being bullied
- Try to include everyone in play, especially those who are often left out
- Report bullying to an adult

Upon notification of a concern of possibly bullying, the teacher and/or principal/lead administrator will speak with the students involved seeking clarification on the behavior. Appropriate means leading to reconciliation of the relationship will be implemented. Behavior between those involved will be monitored by the classroom teacher.

If the behavior continues and/or is severe enough, disciplinary action by way of in or out-of-school suspension may occur.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, whether verbal or physical, including but not limited to, insulting or degrading sexual remarks or conduct; threats or suggestions that a student's submission to or rejection of unwelcome conduct will in any way influence a decision regarding that student; conduct of a sexual nature which substantially interferes with the student's learning, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning environment, such as the display in the educational setting of sexually suggestive objects or pictures.

Sexual harassment will not be tolerated among students in the school. Any form of sexual harassment is forbidden, whether by faculty, students, individuals under contract with the school, or volunteers who come in contact with students or staff. Students are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful and courteous to employees, fellow students and to the public.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES: Victims of sexual harassment are encouraged to report such claims promptly to the principal/lead administrator. Complaints will be investigated promptly, and corrective action will be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality will be preserved, and no reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith charges of sexual harassment.

If a student believes that he/she is being or has been harassed, that person should immediately inform the harasser that his/her behavior is unwelcome, offensive, in poor taste, unprofessional or highly inappropriate.

As soon as a student feels that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment, he/she should speak with the principal/lead administrator or teacher immediately. At such time, the student will be asked to write down details of their concerns and give them to the principal. The detail should include:

- Name of individual filing the complaint
- Date of complaint
- Date of alleged harassment
- Name(s) of alleged harasser(s)
- Location of alleged harassment
- Detailed statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged harassment

All complaints are to be submitted to the Principal/Lead Administrator, unless that individual is the subject of the complaint, in which case the complaint should be forwarded to the Board of Elementary Education Chairman.

Depending on the nature of the complaint, the Principal/Lead Administrator shall immediately contact the student's parents (where applicable), share the appropriate information, and begin an investigation. The principal shall share with the Board of Elementary Education the allegations and findings in a timely manner.