

Zion Lutheran School Lincoln, Illinois



Parent Handbook 2009-2010

We Live By The Spirit

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Handbook Disclaimer

This handbook is intended to describe the working relationships within Zion Lutheran School, its practices, procedures, rules and regulations. The handbook may be supplemented as necessary. The handbook should serve as a code of conduct, but in no event is this handbook intended to constitute a contractual agreement and is not intended to be binding upon Zion Lutheran Church and School or the Zion Lutheran Parochial School Board. If you cannot find answers regarding who, what, when, where, or why in this handbook, you are strongly encouraged to ask for clarification.

ZION LUTHERAN SCHOOL – WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

Our Mission Statement

Zion Lutheran School is a ministry of Zion Lutheran Church created to assist families in nurturing children through the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Our Philosophy of Education

The members of Zion Lutheran Church, as people brought to faith in Jesus Christ, have been commissioned as individuals and as a church to preserve and extend God's Kingdom. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ must be proclaimed to all. The Holy Spirit changes hearts and lives, and brings victory and comfort to people who are declared totally and unconditionally righteous through Christ's work. Changed hearts are rightly taught to apply God's Law and Gospel to all aspects of life and love and serve God while loving and serving others.

Christian education is one of the most effective means to proclaim the Gospel and teach children. Zion Lutheran School is a part of the total Christian education ministry of Zion Lutheran Church. The school's ministry centers on the following beliefs:

- All children are loved by God even though they are sinners. Through the work of God's Holy Spirit, they are brought to faith, believe in Christ, receive salvation, and live as sinners/saints.
- Each child is a unique creation of a loving God, and deserves the opportunity to develop through his/her personal learning style intellectually, socially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually.
- The home and family greatly influence a child's learning. Any Christian education ministry must work cooperatively with Christian parents and families in order to be effective.

Zion Lutheran Church exists to share Christ's love with every generation. Zion Lutheran School assists the church in its ministry within the school setting through Christian education, worship, evangelism, fellowship, and service.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION prepares a child for life. Proverbs 22:6 says, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." Parents are responsible for the Christian training of their children. Zion Lutheran School was created to assist families in nurturing their children's faith.

The truths of God's Word are woven into every subject area and classroom situation so that the Holy Spirit may nurture children's faith in Christ and so that children may see the world around them from a Christian viewpoint. Those children who are not Christians hear God's Word proclaimed so that the Holy Spirit might plant faith in their hearts. A staff-developed, up-to-date curriculum presents a challenging and comprehensive course of study.

Our goal is that children are taught the Biblical truths of Lutheran Christian doctrine expressed in the demands of God's law and in the comfort of the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. They receive encouragement and instruction to live in service to Christ and others.

Our goal is that children are taught by Lutheran teachers who are academically prepared to teach a full academic curriculum from a distinctly Christian viewpoint. Children are taught how to develop and use their God-given abilities and how to strive for excellence in further schooling and adult life.

WORSHIP occurs throughout the day in classroom devotions or chapel, singing, and silent prayer. John 4:24 says, "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." Training and experiences in Christian worship are an integral part of every day at ZLS. Children are taught to develop a personal devotional and prayer life and to pray with others.

Teachers serve as models for the role of worship in the life of a Christian. Students become leaders in worship activities. They experience the richness of Lutheran worship tradition using hymns and liturgy, as well as more contemporary worship settings and music.

EVANGELISM focuses on children and their families. The great commission in Matthew 28:19 says, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations . . ." Zion Lutheran School is one of the front-line evangelistic ministries of the church where the Holy Spirit works to make disciples.

Children hear the Word of God daily and see the witness of teachers in word and lifestyle. Using the witness of teachers as a model, children are trained to articulate the Gospel and effectively share it. They learn to lead Christian lives as a witness to their faith.

FELLOWSHIP is shared by teachers, students, and families. 1 John 1:7b says, "we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. Zion Lutheran School provides a loving environment in which children may be themselves and express their Christian faith in an atmosphere of love and joy and grow in Christian fellowship.

The mix of Lutheran children, children of other Christian denominations, and the unchurched provides a unique opportunity for interaction, understanding, and witness. The use of God's Law and Gospel influences all relationships.

SERVICE is a natural part of school life at Zion. Galatians 5:13b says that we are to, "serve one another in love." Many opportunities for Christian service are available at Zion Lutheran School. Children are encouraged to seek opportunities to help others in the school, in the community, and in the world. Compassion and love for all people are modeled, encouraged, and practiced.

By proclaiming the Gospel to children and by training children in Christian living, Zion Lutheran School serves children and assists parents so that God's Kingdom may be enlarged and so that our world may be blessed by the influence of our students.

WHAT IS A LUTHERAN SCHOOL?

Many think of education in America solely in terms of the system of public education. Private and parochial schools, however, have played a dynamic role in shaping education in the nation and continue to do so.

Congregations of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod have a long and impressive history of providing quality education in this country. Beginning in the 1830's, Lutheran immigrants began establishing grade schools, high schools, colleges, and seminaries to provide Christian education for their children. Many Lutheran schools predate the public schools in their community and it was not unusual for a new congregation to build a school building before building a church. Today, the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod operates the largest Protestant school system in the nation. Zion Lutheran School has been serving the Lincoln community since 1973.

Why Lutheran Schools?

The reason Lutheran schools exist is to provide quality education while sharing the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ with young hearts and minds. This purpose goes well beyond the daily instruction in God's Word, for it influences and permeates every activity from history class to recess, from recognizing achievement to disciplinary measures.

Without the Gospel of salvation there would be no reason for Lutheran schools. With it, there are as many reasons as there are children who need to learn of Jesus Christ, have their faith in Him nurtured, and be motivated to do their best.

WHO ADMINISTERS ZION LUTHERAN SCHOOL?

Zion Lutheran School is one of many ministries of Zion Lutheran Church. Final authority in all decisions, including policy, staffing, building and grounds, curriculum, and all other areas relevant to the maintaining of a Christian school rest with the Voters' Assembly of Zion Lutheran Church. The Voters' Assembly is bound to abide by the Constitution of Zion Lutheran Church.

The Parochial School Board

Governance of the school is delegated by the Voters' Assembly to the Parochial School Board. This board consists of the Parochial School Board Chairman, six Zion Lutheran Church members elected by the Voters' Assembly, the school principal, the Pastor, the Chairman of the Congregation, and one member of Faith Lutheran Church who serves as an ex-officio member.

Parochial School Board meetings are normally held on the third Monday each month. Guests are welcome and are encouraged to contact the principal or Parochial School Board chairperson to make arrangements to speak at the meeting. Guests wishing to share concerns will be expected to follow Christian methods of problem resolution (Matthew 18:15-17).

The Principal and Assistant Principal

The principal and assistant principal, with the assistance of the school staff, serve as the agents of the Parochial School Board in carrying out policies and in administering and supervising the school.

Concerns relative to school policy or procedures should be directed to the principal. Questions about individual classroom procedures should initially be directed to the teacher. If the problem is not resolved, the principal may be contacted.

The State of Illinois

Zion Lutheran School conforms to the applicable regulations of the Illinois State Board of Education, making it a state-recognized school. Zion Lutheran School is visited on a regular basis by representatives of the State of Illinois as the school's recognition is renewed.

Although not required by the State, all teachers at Zion Lutheran School hold State Teaching Certificates or comparable credentials.

The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

Zion Lutheran Church is an autonomous body not under the governance of any national church group. The church, however, is pleased to be associated with the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.

Zion Lutheran School receives guidance and advice from the educational offices of the Synod, the Lutheran Education Association, the Lutheran teacher-training universities, and the Central Illinois District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. Annual visits by the District Education Executive assist the school staff and the Parochial School Board in improving Zion Lutheran School.

Zion Lutheran School is nationally accredited by the National Lutheran School Accreditation Commission.

WHO WILL TEACH MY CHILD?

Zion Lutheran School is staffed with professional educators who have dedicated their lives to the service of children in a Christian setting. The faculty of Zion Lutheran School is both experienced and enthusiastic.

Any concerns or questions relative to a teacher or classroom should first be brought directly to the teacher before contacting the principal. Only if the situation cannot be resolved should the principal be contacted so that parent(s), teacher, and principal may work the situation out together.

The teaching staff should be viewed as partners in the child's upbringing. They should be treated as you would like to be treated yourself. Please refer to Matthew 18:15-20.

Zion is also blessed with support staff serving as secretary, janitor, classroom aides, and hot lunch coordinators. Volunteers complete the picture and enrich Zion Lutheran School and its students.

WHAT WILL MY CHILD LEARN?

The Scriptures teach that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Proverbs 1:7. Therefore, all curriculums are developed and taught in the light of God’s revelation to us in the Bible.

Central to the program of instruction at Zion Lutheran School is the study of God’s Word and its application to life today. Our teaching is based on the scriptures and their explanations in the confessional writings of the Lutheran Church. Each student will participate in the formal Lutheran religion program of instruction.

The scriptures permeate and give perspective to all other subjects. Only through the application and integration of God’s revealed truth can subjects such as history, science, or literature be taught and understood fully.

Curriculum Development

Curriculum is developed and adopted by the Parochial School Board upon the recommendation of the school staff and other advisors. Each year a portion of the curriculum is reviewed and improved and new textbooks adopted. Textbooks are recommended by the faculty and approved by the Parochial School Board. Materials from both Christian and secular publishers are used.

Every effort is made to provide a complete curriculum as defined by the State of Illinois and the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.

Subjects

<i>Bible</i>	Bible study and life application, doctrine, church history, worship, missions, stewardship, Bible memorization
<i>Language Arts</i>	Reading, literature, English grammar and composition, spelling, vocabulary, handwriting
<i>Mathematics</i>	Arithmetic, problem-solving, algebra, geometry
<i>Social Studies</i>	History, geography, U.S. and Illinois constitutions
<i>Science</i>	Life, physical, and earth science
<i>Music</i>	Choral music (grades 6-8), instrumental music (grades 4-8), classroom music (grades K-8), hand chime music (grades 7-8)
<i>Physical Education</i>	Physical fitness, gross motor development, team and individual sports, health, safety
<i>Art</i>	Variety of mediums of art, study of artists, and creative expression
<i>Computer Education</i>	Keyboarding, word processing, literacy, internet use
<i>Spanish (7th-8th)</i>	An introduction to the Spanish language

HOW IS A STUDENT ENROLLED AT ZION LUTHERAN SCHOOL?

Zion Lutheran School welcomes the opportunity to provide a quality academic education and share the Good News of Jesus Christ with the children of Zion Lutheran Church and the community.

Families wishing to enroll a new student in the Kindergarten through 8th grade need to meet with the principal for an interview before the child may be enrolled. Children may be enrolled in our Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten through the school office.

Children whose parents are members of Zion Lutheran Church are given priority in enrollment. We also welcome other children as space, facilities, and staff allow. The order in which enrollments will be prioritized are as follows:

1. Children whose parents are members of sister congregations in the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.
2. Children whose parents have no church affiliation.
3. Children whose parents are members of other denominations.

The Parochial School Board reserves the right to deny enrollment based on the recommendations of the professional staff and the student’s academic and behavioral needs. The motivating factors in any such decision are in the best interests of the child and the class.

Reenrollment in future years will be dependant upon space and staff availability, although every effort will be made to serve all children previously enrolled.

Families transferring to Zion Lutheran School must fill out a records request so that all student records may be transferred.

Non-discriminatory Policy

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

Age Requirements

In compliance with state regulations, September 1st is the cut-off date for enrollment in our early childhood programs. Children must have reached the following age by this date to be enrolled in the respective programs:

Kindergarten	5 years old
Pre-Kindergarten	4 years old
Preschool	3 years old

Physical, Eye, and Dental Exams, Birth Certificates and Immunizations

Illinois State Laws mandate that:

- All new ZLS students, Kindergarteners, and 6th graders show proof of a current physical examination.
- All Kindergarten students and students entering school in Illinois for the first time are required to have an eye examination before Oct. 15.

- Students entering Kindergarten, Second Grade, and Sixth Grade must present proof of a dental examination conducted before May 15.
- A certified birth certificate, displaying a county seal, and current immunization records must be on file for all students.

WHAT GOES ON AT ZION LUTHERAN SCHOOL?

The School Day

Grades 1 – 8	8:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Kindergarten	8:15 a.m. to 2:50 p.m.
Pre-Kindergarten AM	8:20 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
Pre-Kindergarten PM	12:00 noon to 2:45 p.m. Monday - Friday
Preschool AM	8:20 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Tuesday and Thursday

Students not ready to begin at the starting time are considered tardy. Parents are responsible for training children in promptness. Tardy children disrupt the rest of the class.

Doors to the school open for grade school students at 8:00 a.m. Arrangements may be made for participation in the Early Arrivers Program by contacting the school office. Band students must be ready to begin at 7:30 a.m. on band days.

Early Dismissals

Zion Lutheran School dismisses students at 11:30 on the second Wednesday of most months to allow the staff to work on faculty and in-service activities.

School Closings and Emergency Dismissals

Zion Lutheran School typically follows the lead of Lincoln Community High School in determining the need for early closing or school closings due to extreme temperatures or weather.

Please establish a plan for your children to follow in the case of an early closing. Every effort will be made to ensure that each child gets home safely.

Homework

Homework is an important part of the educational process. Therefore, Zion students are expected to complete homework on a regular basis.

In the primary and middle grades, homework is typically work that has not been completed in class. In grades 5 - 8 an increased amount of work is assigned that needs to be done at home.

In all situations, parents are to encourage the completion of homework and monitor television viewing and other activities which would distract from completing school work. It is best to have a designated time and place for homework completion.

When a student is absent from school due to illness, he or she will have two days for every day of absence to make up class work.

Parents are strongly discouraged from taking family trips during the school year which require missing days of school. If a student is absent from school due to vacation, all class work is due the day the student returns from the vacation and missed tests must be taken that day.

Students in grades 5 - 8 are required to use an assignment book and will have graded homework returned on Tuesdays. Notice of missing work will be sent home. The parent must sign and return the notice the next school day with the completed work attached.

Academic Honesty Policy

All ZLS students are expected to adhere to a high degree of academic honesty. Forms of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, plagiarizing (purposely offering the words or ideas of another person as one's own), copying homework, using another student's paper, copying answers during a test, and engaging in any other action that would be considered inappropriate in terms of academic honesty. The consequences for such conduct will be severe. They will include one or more of the following: (1) contacting parent/guardian, (2) a zero for the particular piece of work, (3) detention(s), (4) redo the work. (5) additional assigned work, (6) exclusion from extra-curricular activities. Other consequences may apply. The teacher and principal will determine the penalty(ies).

Honor Roll

Students in grades 3-8 are eligible for Zion Lutheran School Honor Roll recognition.

Letter Grade Scale For Tests And Homework

A+	100	B+	90-91	C+	81-82	D+	72-73
A	94-99	B	85-89	C	76-80	D	67-71
A-	92-93	B-	83-84	C-	74-75	D-	65-66

Honor Roll Point Value For Report Card Grades

A+	12	B+	9	C+	6	D+	3
A	11	B	8	C	5	D	2
A-	10	B-	7	C-	4	D-	1

Honor Roll Subject Point Values

The following five subjects are worth one point for students in grades 3-8: Math, Science, Social Studies, English/Language Arts, and Literature/Reading.

These subjects earn a ½ point value for grades 3-8: Bible Memory, Handwriting, and Spelling.

Religion earns a ½ point value for grades 7-8.

Band grades have a ½ point value in for students in grades 4-8 who elect to participate

Physical Education has a ½ point value for students in grades 6-8.

Subjects that are not included in the honor roll computation are: Religion (Grades 3-6 only), Art (Grades 3-8), Classroom Music (Grades 3-8), and Physical Education (Grades 3-5 only).

Point Values For Individual Grades

Third Grade: Math (1), Science (1), Social Studies (1), English/Language Arts (1), Literature/Reading (1), Bible Memory (1/2), Handwriting (1/2), and Spelling (1/2) = 6 ½ points

Fourth Grade: Math (1), Science (1), Social Studies (1), English/Language Arts (1), Literature/Reading (1), Bible Memory (1/2), Handwriting (1/2), Spelling (1/2), and Band (Optional) (1/2) = 6 ½ points or 7 points if in Band

Fifth Grade: Math (1), Science (1), Social Studies (1), English/Language Arts (1), Literature/Reading (1), Bible Memory (1/2), Handwriting (1/2), Spelling (1/2), and Band (Optional) (1/2) = 6 ½ points or 7 points if in Band

Sixth Grade: Math (1), Science (1), Social Studies (1), English/Language Arts (1), Literature/Reading (1), Bible Memory (1/2), Handwriting (1/2), Spelling (1/2), Physical Education (1/2), and Band (Optional) (1/2) = 7 points or 7 1/2 points if in Band

Seventh Grade: Math (1), Science (1), Social Studies (1), English/Language Arts (1), Literature/Reading (1), Bible Memory (1/2), Handwriting (1/2), Spelling (1/2), Physical Education (1/2), Religion (1/2), and Band (Optional) (1/2) = 7 1/2 points or 8 points if in Band

Eighth Grade: Math (1), Science (1), Social Studies (1), English/Language Arts (1), Literature/Reading (1), Bible Memory (1/2), Handwriting (1/2), Spelling (1/2), Physical Education (1/2), Religion (1/2), and Band (Optional) (1/2) = 7 1/2 points or 8 points if in Band

Honor Roll Categories

High Honor Roll	All scores must be 10 or higher (All A's)
Honor Roll	Average of 9.5 or higher
Honorable Mention	Average between 8.0 and 9.49
B.U.G. Award	Bring Up Grades (B.U.G.) Awards are earned by students who bring up at least one grade, with no grades lower than the previous quarter.

Student Of The Month

The purpose of the ZLS Student of the Month Award is to recognize those students in grades 7-8 who have exhibited exemplary qualities, both academically and socially. These students have positively influenced the Zion Lutheran School community through academics, commitment, service, role model behavior, leadership, and/or church involvement.

Nominations will be submitted by the end of the month by the Jr. High teachers. Jr. High teachers will select one student per month.

The presentation of each award will take place during the first chapel service of each month. Parents will be notified before the service.

Qualifications - The following criteria must be met in order to be considered for Student of the Month: 1. Must show excellent behavior. 2. Must currently have a minimum of an 8.0 (B) grade point average. 3. Must have good attendance. 4. Must exhibit good character traits and a strong work ethic.

Rewards – Students who receive the Student of the Month Award will be awarded the following: 1. A Certificate of Excellence. 2. A \$10 gift card. 3. Recognition in the Lincoln Courier and Lincoln Daily News. 4. Picture will be placed in the ZLS entrance area.

Special Services

Zion Lutheran School works in cooperation with West Lincoln – Broadwell School to provide speech and learning assistance services to qualified Zion students. Educational and psychological testing may be requested by parents and teachers in an attempt to aid students with learning problems.

Health Services

Zion students receive the services of the Logan County Health Department. Students in Preschool through 3rd grade, 5th grade, and 7th grade have their eyes and ears checked by the Logan County Health Department annually.

Chapel

Weekly chapel services are conducted at Zion Lutheran School. These services are led by local Lutheran pastors, classroom teachers, and groups of students.

Chapel services integrate worship into the school routine and bring students closer to their Lord. Chapel families consisting of students from several grades develop a sense of family in school that crosses age and grade lines. Chapel also provides student leaders with opportunities to share their faith boldly before their peers.

Offerings are collected each week. Charitable organization recipients are designated by the faculty or students. Guests are encouraged to attend and participate in chapel services whenever possible.

Library

The library at Zion Lutheran School is available for student use on a regular basis. Students may check out books for one week at a time. Children are encouraged to read on a regular basis and to treat the books with care. Reference materials, videos, filmstrips, magazines, and computers are also available.

Athletic Program

Zion Lutheran School offers extracurricular athletics to all interested students in grades 5–8. Zion competes in track and field, girls and boy's basketball, girl's volleyball, and boy's baseball. Fourth graders may be allowed to participate in some sports. Teams compete in games and tournaments with public, parochial, and other Lutheran schools. A cheerleading program for girls in grades 6-8 is provided.

A grade point average of 4.0 (C-) without an “F” must be maintained for continued participation. Please refer to the Athletic Handbook for more information regarding eligibility.

The athletic program is carried out under the guidelines established in the athletic policy (available in the school office) and is administered by the athletic directors.

Sports physicals (valid for one year) must be on file in the school office prior to beginning practice or play.

Music Program

Zion offers an instrumental music program in addition to classroom music and Christmas and spring music programs.

The band program allows students in grades 4 – 8 the opportunity to become familiar with a musical instrument and play it as part of a group. Small group lessons and advanced band are offered.

Students in grades 6–8 may participate in the school choir. Students in grades 7 and 8 also may participate in the hand chimes choir.

Academic Competitions

Zion students in grades 5-8 participate in a school Science Fair and History Fair in alternating years. Eligible history projects progress on to the regional and state history fairs.

Upper grade students also have the opportunity to participate in the National Geography Bee, the Logan County Spelling Bee, and a Spelling Bee, Math Bowl and Bible Bowl at Lutheran High School in Springfield.

Field Trips

Field trips are provided to broaden the classroom learning with first-hand experience and observation. Children must have a signed permission slip to participate in any field trip.

The sixth grade class spends three days at Camp CILCA in Cantrall, IL for its outdoor education program each fall. The eighth grade class takes an annual class trip in the spring.

School Pictures

School pictures are taken in the fall. Information regarding packages available will be sent home. Whether or not pictures are purchased, every child will be photographed for inclusion in the school records and the school yearbook.

Yearbooks

A school yearbook is published in the spring for distribution in August of the following school year. It contains pictures and information on all the classes and activities during the school year. Parents and students are encouraged to submit photographs for use in the school yearbook.

Lunch

A refrigerator is available for lunches. Please mark lunch boxes or sacks with the student's name. Fast food lunches, food needing heating, glass containers, and soda pop should not be brought to school by students. Drinks containing high levels of caffeine and/or sugar are prohibited.

An optional hot lunch program, with food prepared by Lincoln Community High School, is available. Prices are available at registration. Individual lunches may be purchased daily, weekly, or monthly.

Zion Lutheran School participates in the National School Lunch program, offering free and reduced price lunch benefits to qualifying low-income families. Families interested in applying for these benefits are encouraged to pick up an application in the school office. Applications are held in strict confidence and no differentiation among students is made in serving lunches or receiving payments.

Milk

Half pints of milk are available for purchase by students. Milk cards may be purchased at registration or in the school office. The cost of milk is determined at the beginning of the school year and is announced at the time of final registration.

HOW WILL MY CHILD BE DISCIPLINED?

Discipline Philosophy of Law and Gospel

Discipline is crucial to the mission of Zion Lutheran School. It is part of the process of assisting parents in the development of their children to become productive, cooperative, self-controlled, and responsible citizens and Christian witnesses.

Discipline also allows Zion Lutheran School to carry out its mission in an environment which is safe and conducive to learning.

Discipline is not just the enforcing of rules and the assigning of consequences (Law). Rules and consequences (Law) can change behavior but cannot change a child's heart. Proper and effective discipline uses both the Law and the Gospel of the Holy Scriptures. When used correctly, the Law leads a person to recognize his/her misbehavior (sin) and to realize he/she needs God's forgiveness. The Gospel promises forgiveness as a free gift through faith in the work of Jesus Christ. As a result of being forgiven, a person then desires to please God through his/her thoughts, words, and actions. The results of discipline are described in Hebrews 12:11: "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

Everyone benefits when policies and procedures are spelled out clearly. Teachers, students, parents, and school staff are able to work within a common framework of expectations and consequences. Our school-wide policy assures uniformity in the way discipline is carried out. It also protects the rightful interests of students, teachers, parents, and school staff and encourages the proper use of Law and Gospel.

School rules for student behavior, dress, attendance, playground use, and other related issues are established by the school faculty and the Parochial School Board. When appropriate, specific consequences for breaking rules are established as well. A summary of school rules is located in this Parent Handbook under the heading, “What is expected of students?” These rules may be amended at the discretion of the school faculty and the Parochial School Board. Students are reminded regularly of the most commonly applied school rules through classroom signs and verbal reminders.

Individual teachers, in consultation with the principal, establish rules and standards for children within their classroom. These rules take into consideration the developmental level of the students, the teachers’ style, and the goals of the particular class. Appropriate consequences are attached to these rules. It is the responsibility of the teacher to regularly communicate these rules and their consequences to the students and, when appropriate, to the students’ parents.

Consequences

Consequences are crucial to the effective enforcement of rules. Whenever possible, consequences are a logical result of the rule broken and the severity of the offense. They are carried out as soon after the offense as possible. Consequences are assigned in a fair and consistent manner, considering the student’s needs.

Inappropriate consequences include assigning extra school work, meaningless repetition, withholding of restroom or eating privileges, physical tasks without purpose, inflicting embarrassment, and anything potentially physically harmful to the child. No corporal punishment in any form is used at Zion Lutheran School.

Appropriate consequences that may be assigned by a teacher or staff person include, but are not limited to:

1. Separation from the group
2. Verbal reprimands which may lead to a lunch detention. Three lunch detentions per ½ quarter may result in an after-school detention. Three after-school detentions could result in a one-day suspension.
3. Taking of privileges including, but not limited to, classroom privileges, recess, eating with the class, participation in group break times, and field trips
4. Detentions or other forms of staying after school, required early arrival or required attendance on Saturday
5. Notification of parents
6. Limitation of participation in extracurricular activities.

Handling of discipline situations includes the following steps:

1. The teacher or staff person determines the student(s) responsible for the rule infraction.
2. The teacher or staff member confronts the student(s) with a clear explanation of the offense and the consequences.
3. The teacher or staff member allows the student to respond to the allegations.
4. The student is encouraged to admit responsibility and exhibit a repentant heart.
5. Appropriate consequences are carried out (minor infractions lead to minor consequences, major infractions lead to major consequences).

6. The teacher or staff member shares and models God's forgiveness through Jesus Christ.
7. In response to God's grace, the student expresses a desire to avoid repeating the same offense.

Certain severe infractions require an immediate and powerful response. Zion Lutheran School reserves the right to suspend or expel students who commit such severe infractions. In some cases the infraction may not have occurred on school property or during a school activity and yet the nature of the infraction makes such consequences necessary.

A suspension is a removal of the student from the classroom or building for a period of at least one school day. The principal, in consultation with a teacher or staff member, may assign a student a suspension.

Typical offenses leading to a suspension including the following:

1. Possession of a weapon
2. Possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco products
3. Fighting
4. Gross or repeated disrespect to a teacher or staff member
5. Gross or repeated disobedience
6. Theft
7. Gross harassment, sexual or otherwise, of another student
8. Vandalism
9. Three detentions in a quarter.

The student and the parent(s) will be notified of the suspension and the reason for it within 24 hours. Such notification will be oral and followed by a written notice.

An In-School Suspension is for a maximum of three school days. All school work must be completed as assigned. No late work will be accepted. The student will be separated from the other students in the school for the entire day. The student will be under the supervision of a staff member.

An Out-Of-School Suspension is for a maximum of ten days. All school work must be completed as assigned. No late work will be accepted. The student must be under parental or other adult supervision during the suspension. Failure to provide supervision could cause child welfare authorities to become involved. The student may not return to the classroom until a conference is held with the student, his/her parent(s), the teacher or staff person involved, and the school principal.

An Expulsion is a permanent removal of the student from the school for at least the remainder of the school year. Expulsions may only be carried out under the direction of the Parochial School Board in consultation with the school principal.

Typical offenses leading to expulsion include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Threatened use or use of a weapon
2. Use or distribution of alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco
3. Continued or very severe commission of any offense usually resulting in suspension.

Students and parent(s) will be notified in writing and orally, if possible, of a pending expulsion and the date and time of the Parochial School Board meeting at which such a decision will be made. Written notification will either be hand delivered or sent by registered mail. A formal hearing before the Parochial School Board will be held. The parent(s) and the student will be able to hear the reason for the potential expulsion. The parent(s) and student will be allowed to present their side. If the Parochial School Board chooses to expel the student, the parent(s) will be notified orally as soon as possible and then will be formally notified by registered mail.

Parents are a school's most important ally in carrying out effective disciplinary procedures. While teachers are encouraged to handle most discipline situations within the classroom, repeated or severe misbehavior calls for parental notification and involvement. The teacher may contact the parent orally or in writing. Parents are counted on to do the following:

1. Recognize that the common goal of teacher and parent is the best interest of the child
2. Support the teacher and cooperate in developing a response
3. Take concerns directly to the teacher (Matthew 18)
4. Follow through by correctly using Law and Gospel at home

PARENT-TEACHER CONVERSATIONS

Zion's faculty and staff desire to work with parents toward common goals for their children. Parents wanting to speak to a faculty member after school may do so by calling the teacher or the office to set up an appointment. Faculty members are, as a rule, not available during school hours and often have plans/activities during after-school hours. They may not be available on the day the parent calls. When setting up the meeting time, parents should give the teacher time to fit the meeting into his/her after-school schedule.

Parent-faculty meetings should be approached in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect. Verbal abuse of Zion faculty and staff will not be tolerated. Yelling at, swearing, or threatening a faculty or staff member may be grounds for immediately expulsion of the student.

PARKING LOT PROCEDURES

To keep children safe at Zion Lutheran School, all parents and those providing transportation for students must follow these parking lot procedures:

- Traffic flows in a counter-clockwise direction. Please enter the parking lot at the second (north) entrance only.
- Children are allowed to enter properly parked vehicles only.
- Please pull into parking spaces (head in only) while leaving room for students to walk in the marked path.
- Please back out of parking spaces. Do not drive across the white lines.
- Children are to walk in designated paths only
- Additional parking is available along the playground and in the back of the school

- Children may be dropped off at the curb in the morning, however do not block the crosswalk
- Do not leave cars parked alongside the curb
- Do not leave the motor running in unattended vehicles.
- Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten students must be brought to the classroom door and picked up there as well
- Please be sure your child knows each day how he or she will be getting home from school. If it changes, please send a note to your child's teacher

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF STUDENTS?

A SUMMARY OF SCHOOL RULES AND PROCEDURES

Comings and Goings

- The school doors open at 8:00 a.m. for grade school students. Early arrivers may enter the building prior to 8:00 a.m., using the back door. *Early arrivers must go directly to the cafeteria until 8:00 a.m.* Parents will be charged a fee of \$1.00/day for participation in the Early Arrivers Program. Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten students should not arrive more than 15 minutes before the class session begins.
- A grade school student is considered tardy if the student is not seated and ready to go by 8:15 a.m. A fourth tardy in a five-week period may result in an after school detention. Each subsequent tardy during this period will also be a detention. Notifying the school that a student will be late does not nullify the fact that the student is tardy.
- Students are not allowed to leave the school building during school hours. Exceptions for doctor's appointments and emergencies may be made with written notification to the school. Individuals picking up children must sign them out and sign them back in at the school office.
- Students at school for after-school activities are not allowed to leave the school grounds on their own unless they have a note from a parent.
- The playground is not to be used before or after school by students unless they are under the direct supervision of a parent.
- Students may cross Highway 10 only with a parent or parental permission.
- Students will not be released to persons other than their parents or other designated persons unless parent/guardian notification is supplied.
- Absences are extremely detrimental to student progress. Habitual absences may result in a report to the truancy office.

School Visitation By Parents/Guardians

All parents/guardians are invited and encouraged to visit Zion Lutheran School. Parents/guardians must contact the teacher in advance to schedule the visit. The amount of time in the classroom may be limited, depending on the class's schedule.

School Visitation By Other Adult Guests

Adult relatives or friends are welcomed and encouraged to visit Zion Lutheran School. Parents must make arrangements with the teacher in advance for anyone to sit in on a classroom. The amount of time in the classroom may be limited, depending on the class's schedule.

Taking Students Out For Lunch

Parents/guardians may take their children to lunch off campus if prior arrangements are made with the child's teacher. Students must return to school when classes begin or they will be marked tardy.

Adults Joining Students For Lunch At School

Parents/guardians may eat with their children at school during the lunch period. The parent's hot lunch order must be made in the school office at least one day in advance. Abuse of this privilege, or distractions during lunch, could result in losing this privilege.

High School Students Visiting ZLS

High school students are not allowed to visit classrooms during the school day, except by invitation by faculty members, and for the exclusive purpose of academic enrichment.

Cell Phones

Students are not permitted to have cell phones in their possession during school. Students will have access to school phones when necessary. If a child is found in possession of a cell phone, without written permission from their parents, the phone will be held in the office until a parent picks it up. Failure to comply to this rule will result in an after school detention. If special circumstances require the child to have a phone at school, the child's teacher must be notified in writing and the phone will be kept in the office during school hours.

Clothing and Hygiene

- Students in grades K-8 will wear a special polo shirt on Chapel days (Wed.). The shirts are included on the student supply lists and are available for purchase locally.
- Parents should assist students in making appropriate decisions based on weather conditions and appropriate modesty.
- Students are to arrive with clean hands, faces, and clothing.

- Boys will wear a collared shirt on chapel days and girls will wear a collared shirt, blouse, or dress. Chapel day clothing must be worn throughout the school day, not just during chapel. Sweatshirts and “hoodies” should not be worn to chapel. If appropriate clothing is not worn to chapel, students will be required to wear clothing provided in the office, or parents may be contacted to bring appropriate clothing to school.
- Torn or ripped clothing should not be worn to school.
- Shorts of reasonable length (shorts that are no shorter than fingertip length when students are standing straight with hands down at their sides) and Capri pants are permitted from the first day of school until October 15 and from April 15 until the end of the school year.
- T-shirts or other items with messages that are crude, disrespectful, blasphemous, or that promote alcohol, drugs, or unseemly characters will not be worn to school.
- No “attitude” shirts will be allowed.
- It is impossible to evaluate secular musicians on an individual basis to approve T-shirts or other clothing. Therefore, clothing promoting secular musicians and music should be left at home.
- Clothing should be safe and suitably modest, with ample room. Examples of immodest clothing for school would be tank tops, spaghetti straps, shirts that are low cut and show cleavage, short shorts, and clothing that bare the midriff (including shirts that bare the midriff when arms are raised to shoulder height).
- Sleeveless tops must cover the shoulder and underarm area.
- Low rise jeans are inappropriate unless worn with a shirt that comes well over the buttocks.
- Both male and female students are allowed to wear earrings. A maximum of three earrings per ear is allowed. Students and parents are encouraged to use discretion and act in moderation. Additional earrings may not be worn to school. All earrings must be removed for physical education and sports events.
- No students may wear jewelry requiring a piercing of any other part of the body besides the ear.
- Students are not allowed to have permanent tattoos.
- Hats are not to be worn in the building during, before, or after school.
- Students in Preschool-Grade 2 are encouraged to wear socks at all times. Socks or stockings should be worn with sandals or any open-toed shoes. Socks are not required with crocks or ballet flats.
- Revealing clothing will require students to wear their PE shirts or other clothing.

- Parents are asked to aid in supporting this code by closely supervising the appearance of their own children before sending them to school.
- Collared or polo shirts are recommended to be worn, daily.
- Pajama style pants are not to be worn during school.

Violation of dress code consequences

- A first violation will be dealt with by the homeroom teacher in consultation with the principal. The student will be asked not to wear the offensive or inappropriate item again. The student may be asked to call home for alternate clothing or proper clothing may be provided by the school. A note will be sent home to be signed and returned by the parents/guardians.
- A second violation of the code will be dealt with by the homeroom teacher and the principal. Parents will be asked to bring a change of clothes and the student will sit in the office until the parent arrives.
- A third violation will result in a conference between the principal and the parents/guardians to review and identify the problem and to work together to find a solution.

Other Rules

- Wholesome and God-pleasing relationships among our students are encouraged. Zion Lutheran School is neither the time nor place for inappropriate public displays of affection. Teachers or sponsors who observe any public display of affection that they feel is contradictory to the goals of ZLS will talk with the students involved and request that their actions stop. A referral to the office will result in parents being notified of the situation. This policy is for school hours or any school related function.
- Students may bring cell phones to school. Phones must be properly put away during school hours and are not to be taken out or used inside the school building.
- Bathrooms and locker rooms are to be used for their intended purpose and not as a gathering place.
- The principal's office and the faculty lounge are off limits to students unless under a teacher's supervision.
- Students are not allowed to enter the supply room or janitor's room without permission.
- Students are to use the gymnasium only as part of organized activities or under adult supervision.
- Children are to stay in their seats and talk softly in the lunchroom.
- Throwing of an object anywhere in the school building, except as part of an approved, organized activity, will not be tolerated.

- Gum is not to be chewed in the school building during school hours.
- Foul or hurtful language will not be tolerated. The tongue should be used to build people up and to focus on what is good, right, and pure.

Use of Equipment, Supplies, and Furniture

- Damage to any school property caused by the negligence or vandalism of a student will not be tolerated. The student may be required to repair or replace the property at his/her own cost and may be assigned additional related tasks.
- Students are to sit with all four chair legs on the floor and not lean back on their chairs.
- Students' desks should be kept neat and orderly. At the end of the day, desk tops are to be cleared and all belonging put away properly.
- Playground equipment is to be used as it was designed to be used. For example, swings are to be used by one person at a time to swing forward and backward.
- The copy machines are only for the use of adults or under adult supervision.
- Telephones are only to be used by the students for only after receiving teacher permission.

Personal Property

- Coats, boots, and other clothing should be kept in their proper place and marked with the student's name.
- Toys, video games, stereos, and similar valuable items that can be distracting, lost, or stolen should be left at home.
- Lockers are to be kept locked when not in use in order to protect personal belongings.
- Students who lose school supplies are to replace them as soon as possible.
- No one has the right to use another person's possessions without permission.
- All students are expected to have the proper clothing and shoes for participation in physical education classes and recess.
- Confiscated items may be retrieved by a parent.

Participation

- Students are expected to go outside for recess whenever the class goes. A written note must be submitted if the child is not to participate due to health reasons.

- Participation in physical education classes is required. Children may be excused only with a doctor's or parent's note, and only due to illness or injury.
- Children are expected to participate in field trips, concerts, programs, and other school sponsored activities. Students must have a permission slip signed by a parent/guardian to attend trip.

Absences

- Please notify the school office between 7:30 and 8:15 a.m. if your child will be absent.
- Extended or habitual absences are very harmful to children's education. Too many absences also may legally force the school to report parents to local social service agencies for neglect. Please make sure your child is in school!
- Make-up work will be provided to students. It remains the student's obligation to make sure that all work missed is completed.

Excessive Absenteeism

There is a close relationship between student attendance and academic success. School personnel and parents must work together to ensure that students attend school every day, unless there is a valid reason for not attending.

The following guidelines will be followed to encourage students to attend school daily. The guidelines are intended to maintain an open line of communication between the school and parents of students who are absent from school more often than would be reasonably expected. This is not to indicate that a child's absence is not legitimate. Each student and situation must be handled on a case-by-case basis due to different and varying circumstances, but the overall guidelines on how student absences are handled must be clarified and understood by all parties involved.

Attendance reports will be reviewed regularly. Once a student has missed the tenth day, parents are informed by letter, and concern is shared about their student's lack of attendance.

If a student misses fifteen enrolled days during the school year, a conference will be held with the student's parent(s) and school administrator(s). The purpose of the meeting will be to communicate and work together to assure that the student is in attendance. A referral to the Parochial School Board and disciplinary action will take place if there is no resolution to the repeated absences.

Lost And Found

Lost and found items are kept at school. Parents are urged to have their children regularly check for missing items. Unclaimed items are given to local charities at the end of the school year.

KEEP US INFORMED

Emergency Numbers and Change of Address

The school office must be notified immediately when any of the following occur:

1. A change in family address
2. A change of family, work, or emergency phone number
3. A change in day care provider or authorized transporter.

Illness

- Let us know if your child is sick or absent for any reason. Students should not be in school if they are ill.
- Students must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school after an illness.
- Let your child's teacher know of any physical or emotional difficulty your child is facing that may impact school performance.

Medication

- If your child will need to take prescription or non-prescription medication at school:
 1. Complete and sign an authorization form in the school office
 2. Send all medication in the original container, clearly marked with child's name, dosage (provide a dosage cup or dropper), and name of medication
 3. All medication, including Tylenol, cough drops, etc., must be kept in the school office.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Attending Zion Lutheran School does not substitute for church and Sunday School attendance. Church attendance is important to a child's spiritual development. Therefore, we encourage faithful attendance at Zion Lutheran Church or the church of the family's choice.

Studies reveal that when both parents attend church with a child, there is a much higher probability that the child will continue to grow in his/her Christian faith as an adult. Parents serve as role models for their children.

Zion member families sign a member-in-good-standing policy that indicates their church attendance responsibilities.

Church and Sunday School attendance are taken weekly in class and recorded on quarterly report cards.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Zion Lutheran School is maintained by the membership of Zion Lutheran Church as a response to God's love, and is evidence of the congregation's concern for children and their families.

The costs of operating Zion Lutheran School are substantial. Tuition payments do not come close to covering the cost of educating a child. Parents are asked to remain current in their payments so that the ministry may not be hindered. They are also encouraged to seek opportunities to provide volunteer services.

Families who are more than 60 days late in tuition payments may have an additional fee of 1 ½ % per month added to their balance due.

All families are encouraged to use the free electronic tuition payment service provided by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. This service is available to all Zion Lutheran School families at no charge. Contact the school office for more information.

THE PARENT-TEACHER LEAGUE

All parents are members of the PTL, whose purposes include fellowship, inspiration, education, and service. One objective of the PTL is to provide help and guidance to parents as they train their children in a God-pleasing manner.

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

Parent Teacher League Fundraisers

The PTL has two major fundraisers. One is the monthly Market Day program. Order forms are included in the Tuesday Note. Proceeds are divided between PTL and the Lutheran Layman's League of Zion Church. In February, the PTL runs the Annual Pancake and Sausage Meal.

Every Zion Lutheran School parent is encouraged to participate in these activities. Funds from the PTL fundraisers provide books, videos, and magazines for the school library, science equipment, scholarship funds, and money for special projects.

ZLS Scrip

All families are encouraged to use ZLS Scrip. Profits from scrip purchases are divided equally between the family who purchased the scrip, to be used for tuition, school lunches, etc., and ZLS. This is a wonderful school fundraiser that benefits the families and our school at no additional cost to our families.

Other Fundraisers

The annual magazine subscription drive allows students the opportunity to raise money for special projects at the school.

Other fundraisers may be conducted for the 8th grade class trip and for special charities such as CROP Walk, Muscular Dystrophy, and the American Heart Association.

Challenge Committee

The ZLS Challenge Committee raises thousands of dollars annually to support the ministry of Zion Lutheran School. Support of the committee fundraisers is very much appreciated.

Annual Fund

Zion Lutheran School conducts an Annual Fund campaign. Funds contributed are used for designated needs and purposes.

HOW DO FAMILIES STAY INFORMED?

Tuesday Note

A weekly newsletter, which includes a calendar of events, information on school activities and parenting tips, is sent to your home on Tuesdays via email. The *Tuesday Note* is also posted on our school website. Hard copies of the newsletter are available upon request. Please be sure that the school office has your current email address. Email addresses will not be shared without your permission.

Home Visits

Teachers visit students in their homes when the student is new to the teacher's classroom. These visits generally take place before the school year starts and are designed to inform the students about expectations in the classroom and to establish a solid home-school relationship.

Report Cards

Progress reports for grades K – 8 are issued quarterly. Mid-quarter reports, which come home after about five weeks of each quarter, are estimates of a child's progress in order to catch problems before the end of the quarter.

Parent Teacher Conferences

A parent-teacher conference is scheduled at the end of the first quarter. Parents or teachers may request a conference at any time during the school year.

Email Newsletters

School news is sent via email to our families and friends. Please make sure that we have your current email address.

ZLS Website

Important and interesting school information can be found on our school website at www.zlslinc.org.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

These guidelines are designed to help volunteers who have sustained contact with students at Zion Lutheran School. They are intended to make volunteering a valuable experience for the students and well as for the volunteer.

PLEASE SIGN IN AND OUT

For the safety of the students, it is important that we know who is in the building. Please sign in at the office when you arrive and out when you leave.

BACKGROUND CHECK

It may be necessary to conduct a Criminal Background Check depending on what degree of contact the volunteer has with students. You will be notified if you need the background check.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteers are one of the most valuable assets our students enjoy; their time is highly valued and greatly appreciated. Volunteers enhance the learning of students by assisting in a variety of ways, such as:

- hosting class parties
- chaperoning on field trips
- working with individual students and/or small groups of students,
- putting up classroom and hall displays
- preparing materials and/or resources
- assisting in the Gym, Library, or Computer Lab

VOLUNTEER QUALIFICATIONS

- must be approved by the administrator and/or classroom teacher
- must set good example with dress, behavior, language, professional conduct and lifestyle
- must sign the Volunteer Guidelines agreement form
- must refrain from tobacco and alcohol use when involved with any school activity.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Volunteers assist the teacher and take their direction from the teacher or staff person in charge of the activity, recognizing that instructing, supervising, grading, and disciplining students are school staff responsibilities. If for some reason a volunteer cannot meet his/her commitment, the teacher should be informed as soon as possible so the day's schedule can be adjusted.

INTERACTING WITH STUDENTS

Volunteers must acknowledge that each student comes with different attitudes, interests, skills, habits and behaviors. Each individual is blessed with different gifts from God. This individuality is a very precious thing. Positive reinforcement, direct and sincere assurance of student efforts is expected of all volunteers. Difficulties or concerns should be directed to the teacher as soon as possible.

DISCIPLINE

Volunteers working in the classroom are expected to assist students in following established classroom rules. The classroom teacher should handle disciplinary situations. Students rarely have behavior problems while working with volunteers. However, if this does happen, please make the teacher aware of the situation.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is a critical part of any school environment. Never discuss any child's progress or personal matters with anyone, including your own children or family. Parents interested in their children's progress must be directed to speak with the classroom teacher rather than with the volunteer. Speak positively about staff members, other parents, students, or other volunteers. Volunteers who have concerns about what they've observed should discuss their concern with the teacher or the administrator as soon as possible after the situation arises. Only the professional staff should contact parents regarding a student.

DRIVING FOR FIELD TRIPS

Field trip volunteers must have:

- a valid driver's license
- proof of insurance
- legal seat belts or child restraint seats for each passenger
- copies of permission slips with all emergency information for each child in their vehicle

QUESTIONS? CALL!

The principal, assistant principal and school secretary are available to answer any questions you may have.

Teachers welcome any questions or comments related to your child or the classroom. Teachers may be contacted at school before or after classes. Teachers make their home and cell phone numbers available as well.

The family directory published every fall lists the telephone numbers of the teaching staff and the names of Parochial School Board members.

INSURANCE

Optional student insurance is available at registration. It is assumed that all children are covered under family insurance policies.

ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION

As required by law, Zion Lutheran School is notifying students, parents, and staff that asbestos-containing materials (ACM) exists in the school building. None of these materials are a significant risk to the occupants of the building. A management plan for making sure that the materials do not become a risk is available for inspection in the principal's office. (Inspection date: 3/28/01)

TRESPASSING/SAFETY

The safety and well-being of everyone at ZLS is a high priority. Unauthorized personnel on campus may be asked to leave school property. Police may be notified if a suspicious or unauthorized person enters school property. All entrances to the school, except the front doors, remain locked.

SEXUAL HARRASSMENT AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Our school maintains a firm policy prohibiting all forms of discrimination based on sex. Sexual harassment and sexual violence against students or employees is discrimination. All persons are to be treated with respect and dignity. Sexual violence, sexual advances or other forms of personal harassment by any person, male or female, which create an intimidating, hostile, anti-gender, or offensive environment, will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

ZLS abides by the statutes of the State of Illinois regarding mandatory reporting of incidents that come under the heading of child abuse as outlined by the state laws. You should be aware of the procedures that are mandated for the school, because some of these procedures run counter to the normal level of communication that parents have come to expect from ZLS and its teachers.

If circumstances that suggest possible child abuse come to the attention of the teacher or other school personnel, we are required by state statute to make a report to local welfare or police department. The mandated procedures prohibit the school from carrying out an investigation or assessment of the situation, and we are prohibited by statute from informing the family that a report has been filed. The local official agency (welfare or police) is the party that is charged with making the first contact. Until such time as the investigation/assessment has been completed, the school cannot discuss the case with the parents.

Should we fail to follow these procedures and the school does not file such a mandated report, the teacher(s) with knowledge of the situation are subject to conviction of a misdemeanor in our state.

Certainly, these statutes are designed to protect a child from a harmful situation, but the process unfortunately also shuts down the communication between the school and the home. Until the laws are changed to modify these procedures, we will abide by them as they currently read. Please understand

that should such an occurrence involve you, the school is not trying to keep you “out of the picture” or deliberately go behind your back. We have no option but to follow the mandated guidelines.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Respecting Others

Zion Lutheran School exists to instill the highest Christian values, one of which is Christian love. God has extended His love to us all in His Son Jesus Christ. Jesus commanded, “Love one another as I have loved you” (John 13:34) and, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (Matthew 7:12). John wrote, “If anyone says, ‘I love God’ yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen” (I John. 4:20).

Christian love does not allow for verbal or physical bullying, making fun of, shunning, or maliciously teasing other students. As Christians we are to love and respect others regardless of race, economic status, or physical appearance. This Christian love and respect is to be evident during school hours and after, in the classroom, locker room, and on the playground. It should be evident whether a teacher is present or not.

Students should report bullying or other disrespectful behavior to a teacher. Bullying will not be tolerated and will lead to disciplinary action. Our goal is to provide a safe, fear-free learning environment for everyone at Zion.

A Statement of Faith

At Zion Lutheran School we acknowledge that children are entrusted to our care. With that care comes the responsibility of providing a safe environment so that physical, social, emotional, intellectual and spiritual growth can take place. The mandate to care for one another comes from our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus commands us to love God and to love one another.

Bullying - A Definition

Bullying is aggressive behavior that is intentional and that involves an imbalance of power or strength. Typically, it is repeated over time. A child who is being bullied has difficulty defending him or herself.

Bullying Misconceptions

Misconceptions regarding bullying behavior create problems in providing a safe environment and in restoring peace to the classroom. We are committed to naming bullying for what it is and to avoiding the excuses that are often given for bullying behavior.

Impact of Bullying

The presence of bullying has a broad range of effects on the learning environment and on relationships. We acknowledge the effects of bullying and are committed to providing a safe learning environment for ZLS students by discouraging and holding accountable those who engage in counterproductive behaviors such as bullying.

Procedures for Addressing Bullying

1. *Zion Lutheran School will actively deal with bullying. Teachers will actively and consistently teach and model positive behavior, and deal with aggressive or harassing behavior.*
2. Students demonstrating bullying behaviors will be subject to the discipline process as summarized below:
 - A. Address the situation with appropriate apologies given
 - B. Loss of privileges: (recess, free time, etc.)
 - C. Visit the principal's office
 - D. Inform parents
 - E. Parent/ Teacher/ Principal/ Student conference
 - F. Referral: counseling as recommended
 - G. Suspension-due to repeated bullying or refusal of counseling
 - H. Dismissal- to an alternative education program that is best suited to meet the student's individual needs.
 - I. Proper authorities will be notified when criminal intent is obvious or when the situation warrants such action.

Strategies for Teachers and Staff

1. Make expectations clear.
2. Consistently confront inappropriate behaviors and consistently recognize appropriate conduct.
3. Teachers and staff receive ongoing training in anti-bullying and assertiveness skills.
4. Model good behavior by using good communication, anger management and conflict resolution skills
5. Help students learn how to express themselves in positive ways.
6. Each teacher or staff member needs to examine his/her own behavior.
7. Recognize the importance of supervision in reducing bullying behavior(s).
8. Listen, validate, and intervene when bullying occurs.
9. Report bullying when it occurs.
10. Consistently enforce consequences for bullying behavior(s).
11. Give attention to the target and witness as well as to the bully when addressing bullying behavior(s).
12. Help the student take ownership for his/her behavior(s) by helping him/her accept responsibility, by fostering growth in self-discipline, by encouraging a Christian model of repentance and forgiveness.
13. Teach assertiveness skills to all children.

Strategies for Students

Bully will learn strategies to:

- Accept responsibility for his/her behavior
- Change his/her thinking
- Develop personal insight or self awareness
- Understand why he/she bullies others
- Know what to expect as consequences of bullying behavior
- Manage anger
- Identify with feelings of the target
- Explore positive ways to feel powerful
- Gain strength and confidence (self worth)

Target will learn strategies to:

- Stick up for himself/herself (assertiveness skills)
- Respond immediately to bullying
- Report bullying incidents immediately
- Differentiate between “reporting” and “tattling”
- Identify friend(s) for support
- Gain strength and confidence (self worth)
- Learn and strengthen bullying resistance skills
- Build social skills
- Plan ahead to avoid potential problems
- Report bullying

Witness will learn strategies to:

- Recognize bullying behavior
- Differentiate between “reporting” and “tattling”
- Read the emotional cues of a target
- Know when and be empowered to intervene
- Help to physically remove target from situation
- If bullying is physical, get attention of others immediately
- Report: I saw _____ I heard _____ I did this _____

Strategies for Parents

1. Each parent needs to examine his/her own behavior. Relationships of parents to staff and parents to parents need to be addressed.
2. Consistently confront inappropriate comments, jokes, and gestures.
3. Obtain information regarding anti-bullying and assertiveness skills.
4. Model good behavior by using good communication, anger management and conflict resolution skills.
5. Help own children learn how to express themselves in positive ways.
6. Make expectations clear.
7. When children are present, recognize the importance of supervision in reducing bullying behavior(s).

8. Respond immediately to incidences of bullying by first visiting with the appropriate staff person. Follow up with administrator(s), if necessary.
9. Help children take ownership for their behavior.
10. Empower children to report bullying.
11. Differentiate between “reporting” and “gossiping”. Reporting is necessary to conflict resolution. Gossiping prevents conflict resolution.

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