



2025-2026 Parent & Student Handbook

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WELCOME

Welcome to Zion Lutheran School! We are truly blessed that we are able to provide an outstanding educational experience and share God's Word each year as a Lutheran school. We have been given the honor and joy to teach His children, lead His families, and share His word. We believe that God has called us to serve Him through teaching.

Please read through this Parent & Student Handbook thoroughly with your student(s) as it contains important information to help lead to a successful school year. We will be glad to answer any questions you may have. Blessings to you as we share in this journey together!

Zion Lutheran Pastor Pastor Jason Taylor

Associate Pastor Pastor Brady Gurganious

Principal Mrs. Suzanne Dunkin

Assistant Principal Mrs. Lindsay Ruth

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MISSION & VISION

Mission

To teach the message of Jesus Christ to children in our community, within an environment of high academic standards, equipping them to serve Church and Society.

Vision

Our vision is to provide a quality, Christian education that provides a strong academic foundation to prepare all students for the demands of living as a Christian in today's secular world. Our vision is that

our students will become responsible, Christ-centered citizens who make good decisions and witness their faith to others.

We strive to achieve our vision by creating successful partnerships with the following groups:

- Faculty
 - Our professional educators will be well prepared to teach students and have a great understanding of Christian doctrine and practice. The Board of Christian Education and administrative staff share in the responsibility to ensure that adequate staff development is provided to keep teachers professionally prepared to offer 21st Century education in a digital age.
- Parents
 - Developing trust and collaboration among parents, teachers, and the school family plays a vital role in the education of students. Teachers show Christ's love by accepting the various learning needs of students and appreciating that not all students will have the same talents, skills, or aptitudes. Being flexible and adapting to meet the individual needs of students is critical to the academic success and spiritual development of all students. Parents will also be cooperative and supportive of the efforts of our faculty and staff and handle all situations with Christ-like love.
- Community
 - All stakeholders within the Zion Lutheran School Community (parents, students, faculty, and congregation) must display a positive attitude toward our school ministry. Concerns and opportunities for improvement should be addressed in productive ways through the proper channels. We rely on His Word as our guide. We look specifically to Matthew 18:15-20 for guidance. All members of the school community play the role of "advocate for the school" and should share our common mission, core values, purpose, and vision. School community members are responsible for sharing the strengths and positive components of school ministry to the people of our school, our church, and our community.

FOREWORD

Zion Lutheran School & LCMS

Zion Lutheran School believes in educating the whole child - spiritually, academically, physically, emotionally, and socially. Education should first help students to understand who they are as unique and divinely created children of God. This understanding gives rise to a need in students to fully develop their gifts and talents with which they have been blessed by our God. Teachers and others – parents, administrators, Board members and staff – aid this development by working to provide an affirming, disciplined, Christ-centered environment. Faith and learning are integrated in every aspect of Zion Lutheran School thus preparing students for servant leadership in our society.

Zion Lutheran School is a member of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). The LCMS is a mission-oriented and Bible-based denomination that confesses the historic, orthodox Christian faith in the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a faith built on “the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone” (Eph. 2:20). With the universal Christian Church, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod teaches and responds to the love of the Triune God, who created all that exists; became man to suffer, die, and rise again for the world’s redemption; and brings people to faith and new life through His Word and Sacraments. The three persons of the Trinity – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – are coequal and coeternal, one God.

LCMS congregations and schools voluntarily choose to belong to the Synod and, although diverse in many ways, all hold to a shared confession of Jesus Christ as taught in Holy Scripture. We believe without reservation that the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament are the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and of practice. In addition, the Synod accepts without reservation the writings contained in the Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Believing in the authority of Holy Scripture and that the Lutheran Confessions are a correct interpretation and presentation of biblical doctrine, our congregations agree to conform all their teaching and practice to the Scriptures and the Confessions.

The LCMS “is not an ecclesiastical government, exercising legislative or coercive powers” (LCMS Constitution, Article VII) concerning its member congregations, schools, and ministers. However, the voluntary association as a member includes an agreement to respect and honor and uphold (Bylaw 1.7.2, 1.8.1) decisions (resolutions) made by the LCMS in its national conventions regarding the understanding of the teachings of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions and practices that are consistent with such teaching. The LCMS in convention is the “principle legislative assembly” of the LCMS (Bylaw 3.1.1) and its resolutions and statements are the position of the LCMS in matters of doctrine and life. The Constitution and Bylaws of the LCMS provide specific guidance for the implementation and supervision of the teaching and practice of its members (congregations, schools, and rostered church workers).

Congregations of the LCMS, while upholding teachings and practices that are consistent with Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions and while honoring convention resolutions, are self- governed and establish policies based on local circumstance and expediency. An LCMS congregation or school ministry operates according to its own constitution and bylaws – which are required by the LCMS Bylaws to be reviewed by the District through which the congregation/school holds membership in the LCMS – and therein establishes an orderly way of making decisions and determines which individuals or entities in the congregation (e.g., the pastor, church council, board of elders) will have authority to act on behalf of the congregation/school in specific circumstances. The Constitution and bylaws of Zion Lutheran School govern our decision-making and policies. A copy is available upon request.

Statement of Beliefs

We believe that God

- is the Triune God - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19-20).
- is the Creator of the world who continues to preserve us and His creation (Gen. 1:1).
- is the Savior who loves us and, despite our sinful nature, died for us, rising again to prepare a place in heaven for all (John 3:16).

- is the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us and keeps us in the faith (I Corinthians 12:3, II Thessalonians 2:13, I Peter 1:1-2).
- makes and keeps His promises (Psalm 145:13).
- reveals Himself to us through His Word and Sacraments (II Thessalonians 2:14).

We believe that the Church

- is commissioned by God to provide opportunities for all people to grow in their Christian faith through worship and service (Matthew 28:19-20).
- is a community of believers called to reach out to others and share the love of Christ (Acts 1:8).
- responds to God's love by providing Christian education opportunities for people of all ages.

We believe that the Christian School

- is a partnership of parents, teachers, and the Church sharing in the Christian education of the whole child.
- integrates all instructions with the inspired Word of God, the Bible (Psalm 119:105).
- provides an environment where children can share and practice their faith.
- is an excellent and effective way to support the education of young people in the faith.
- in conjunction with Christian parenting, provides a solid foundation for children to develop into servant leaders for the Church, the community, and the world.

We believe that children

- are a gift from God and are uniquely gifted by God (Psalm 127:3, Romans 12:6).
- need training in living the Christian life (Proverbs 22:6).
- learn at different rates and in a variety of ways (I Corinthians 12:12).
- learn best when they are in a safe and intellectually stimulating environment (I Thessalonians 5:11).

We believe that parents

- are the first teachers of the child (Deuteronomy 6:6-9).
- have the responsibility to train the child in Christian living, service, and worship (Proverbs 22:6).

We believe that teachers

- are called by God to the ministry of the Lutheran church and school (Ephesians 4:11-13).
- are to be instruments of God in reflecting His love and care to the students, families, and others in their personal and professional lives (I Corinthians 11:1-2).
- are mentors and coaches who facilitate learning so that it becomes a life-long skill.

As Lutheran Christians, we believe that

- God is the Creator of all people and the source of all of their gifts.
- education must include spiritual teachings and training. Individuals will recognize their lives and gifts to the glory of God.
- Zion Lutheran School is an avenue for gaining disciples for Jesus Christ and nurturing those who are His.
- school exists primarily to extend the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ and work through the ministries of Zion Lutheran Church to extend and build up the Kingdom of God.

- the school's purpose is fulfilled through the teaching of God's Word, resulting in the correction by the use of God's Law and, most importantly, the proclamation of Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord.
- Zion Lutheran School is a place in which all subjects are taught from a Christian perspective and where teachers and instruction reflect the Spirit of Christ.
- our school is to be an extension of the training established within the Christian home.
- a Zion Lutheran education promotes the growth of faith through the blessings of the Holy Spirit.
- Zion Lutheran Church operates our school to provide students instruction in all subjects in accordance with the tenets of biblical faith and principles within the LCMS and in compliance with the guidelines provided by the Indiana Department of Education and the National Lutheran School Accreditation Commission.

We believe that in relationships

- God wonderfully and purposefully creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27).
- God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.
- any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).
- in order to preserve the function and integrity of Zion as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model Zion Lutheran Church and School members and the community, it is imperative that all students attending and employees of Zion Lutheran Church and School in any capacity agree to respect and act according to this statement concerning relationships (Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14-16; 1 Thess 5:22).
- God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Cor 6:9-11).
- every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the behavior expectations of the Zion Lutheran School community.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Our school ministry intentionally equips students in spirituality, academia, and character. Below are the outcomes for students upon 8th grade graduation:

Spiritual

Zion will prepare students to

- know the Bible and the importance and relevance of its teachings.
- possess a solid foundation of faith.



- actively seek the will of God.
- consistently demonstrate positive Christian behavior.
- understand they are forgiven children of God through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- gain a desire to participate in worship services, youth events, and other aspects of church life.
- be effective Christian witnesses.
- be equipped with confidence to put faith into action.

Academic

Zion will prepare students to

- be academically responsible.
- possess good organizational and study skills.
- be well-prepared for high school.
- demonstrate problem-solving skills.
- be confident and effective communicators.
- be proficient in current applications of technology.
- utilize skills obtained through a diverse academic experience.
- possess the knowledge to function well in the 21st century world.
- be life-long learners.

Character

Zion will prepare students to

- respect others.
- recognize their strengths and weaknesses.
- see the value of being a positive role model.
- confidently make good choices even though they are not popular.
- possess the skills to choose friends wisely.
- demonstrate high integrity.
- live healthy lifestyles.
- live a balanced life.
- use good judgment and common sense.
- value service to others.
- be compassionate toward all people.
- develop a positive attitude toward teachers, school, and learning.
- build a sense of trust, autonomy, and initiative in the children.

School Responsibility:

The School Ministry of Zion Lutheran offers up-to-date learning and teaching materials. Students receive support, encouragement, and instruction to prepare them to live a servant life. The educational program offers a balanced and comprehensive curriculum. The program supports a nurturing and supportive learning environment, which aids students in developing positive self-esteem and self-worth. Zion Lutheran strives to bring parents and children closer together through Christian activities.

Parental Responsibility:

The home is and always will be primarily responsible for the Christian training of a child. While Zion Lutheran shares the responsibility for Christian upbringing, student enrollment does not diminish

parental obligation. The family is encouraged to maintain a Christian lifestyle, which includes regular church and Bible class attendance and devotional prayer life. If the home and the school are both Christ-centered, the child is receiving the best education possible. Therefore, it is important that the school and the home work together.

ORGANIZATION & ADMINISTRATION

Administration

Zion Lutheran School is maintained by Zion Lutheran Church. In order to achieve greater efficiency and ease of administration, the congregation's representation, the Church Council, has established the following administrator(s):

Board of Christian Education: This Board is composed of at least six lay members of Zion Lutheran Church, including the elected chairman, with the Principal serving as an ex-officio member. The Board of Christian Education establishes school policies and guidelines.

Principal: The Principal is responsible for the administration of board-established school policies. The principal presents a monthly report to the Board of Christian Education. As administrator of the school, the principal will oversee the procedures and daily running of Zion Lutheran School.

Pastor: The Pastor of Zion Lutheran Church is called as the spiritual leader of the church and school. He is an active participant in the daily life of Zion Lutheran School. He provides spiritual guidance and leadership to the principal, faculty, and staff of Zion Lutheran Church and School.

Accreditation

The National Lutheran School Accreditation (NLSA) accredits Zion Lutheran School. NLSA has established rigorous national standards that demonstrate school quality and continuous improvement. An accredited school must confirm that they conform to required standards by completing an exhaustive self-study. Even after a school has been accredited, school leaders must organize and implement a school improvement process for ongoing improvement. The evidence-based procedure involves a comprehensive self-study followed by an onsite visit for the recommendation of accreditation. The state of Indiana recognizes NLSA as a partner in accreditation.

ENROLLMENT & ADMISSIONS

Enrollment Policy & Procedures

- It is the objective of Zion Lutheran School to provide a full-time Christian education. Candidates for admission to Zion Lutheran School must acknowledge that Zion is a ministry of the LCMS. We teach the doctrine and practices in accordance with the LCMS.
- Zion Lutheran School, a non-profit 501(c)(3) elementary school, accepts students both within Zion's church congregation as well as those who are not.
- Zion accepts students of any race, color, nationality, disability, or ethnic origin with all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality, disability, or ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies, athletic and other school-administered programs.
- Parents must apply for each student each year for admission.
- Admission to Zion Lutheran is reliant on the availability of the appropriate educational program that fits the needs of the student. Zion Lutheran does not have specialized facilities to cater to students with significant learning differences. We will assess students on a case-by-case basis to find the appropriate learning environment geared for success. We reserve the right to deny admission to students that we cannot properly service in our educational setting.
- Zion Lutheran School reserves the right to evaluate students to determine their grade-level readiness.

Enrollment Requirements for Returning Students

- Parents must submit a copy of each child's birth certificate, current Immunization Records, complete online application, Financial Agreement online form, Home Language Survey for incoming Kindergarten students, Payment Options form, Background check, and t-shirt form.

Enrollment Requirements for New Students

- Parents must submit a copy of each child's birth certificate, current Immunization Records, complete online application, Financial Agreement online form, Home Language Survey, Payment Options form, Background check, and t-shirt form.
- For new students enrolling in grades K-8, parents must complete an application for enrollment, present the last report card, previous testing results and all other standardized test records, and other educational records/testing from the school previously attended. Enrollment is not considered final until the child's school records are received and reviewed by the school.
- Behavior, conduct, and attendance records from previous schools are required prior to admission.
- If a student has been expelled from a previous school, he/she will not be eligible for admission for the current school year or until the required days out of school have been met.
- All new students will be assessed prior to admission.

- All new families enrolling students in grades K-8 will meet with the Principal for an interview prior to admission.
- Zion Lutheran reserves the right to admit students on probation or conditional status. All new students enrolled will be on a probationary period for the first semester. Anytime during the nine weeks, the teacher, principal, and parents/guardians will go over academic performance and behavioral expectations determined by the school administration. Students who do not meet these requirements will be asked to seek educational arrangements other than Zion Lutheran School.
- The Admissions Committee reserves the right to make the final decisions regarding enrollment.
- Families are required to meet with the Admissions Committee prior to final enrollment.

Age Requirements for Enrollment

- Preschoolers for the 3's class must be age 3 on or before August 1st.
- Preschoolers for the 4's class must be age 4 on or before August 1st.
- All Kindergarten children must be age 5 on or before August 1st.
- All children entering 1st grade must be age 6 on or before August 1st.
- Zion will not offer a waiver concerning set state dates as provided by the State of Indiana Department of Education.

Admissions Priority

It is the objective of Zion Lutheran School to provide full-time Christian education to as many children as possible. However, limitations of facilities and student needs dictate that a system of priorities is necessary. Students will be generally accepted in the following order:

1. Children in membership of Zion Lutheran Church.
2. Children already enrolled from the previous year and their siblings.
3. Children of community congregations that do not have a school.
4. Children of the community.

Early Registration Process

- Returning Student registration begins in January.
- New Student registration begins in February.
- The early Registration period concludes mid February.
- If enrollment exceeds a class size, a waiting list will be established.
- After the priority enrollment period, all future enrollments will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.



ACADEMICS

Curriculum

Recommendations from the General Course of Study for Lutheran Elementary Schools and the Indiana Department of Education College and Career Ready Standards form the foundation for the curriculum at Zion Lutheran School. These guides set the standards of preparation for graduates of Zion. Students are well prepared for secondary education at Lutheran High School of Indianapolis or public high school instruction in Hancock, Marion, and Shelby counties.

Two components of the overall curriculum are recognized at Zion Lutheran School: those courses of study that are intellectual in nature, and those subjects that appeal to the senses of emotion, beauty, and maturity. Each and every subject, academic or aesthetic, is taught from a traditional Bible-based point-of-view. Upon the foundation of God's Word, young Christians are best prepared for meaningful citizenship at home, in church, and for their future pursuits and endeavors.

The faculty and principal review and choose the curriculum for Zion Lutheran School. All students of Zion Lutheran School will follow the chosen curriculum for their grade level. The content of the curricular studies at Zion Lutheran School includes but is not limited to:

- Religion and Memory Work
- Character Building
- Language Arts - English, Phonics, Reading, Spelling, Writing, Handwriting
- Mathematics
- Social Studies
- Fine Arts - Art, Music, Band, Handbells, Choir, Recorder
- Science
- Physical Education
- Grade-level packets are available for an in-depth look at specifics taught in each grade.
- Chapel: All students of Zion Lutheran School will attend weekly chapel. The Pastor, Principal, or faculty member leads the worship service, or a person designated by the principal. An offering is collected each week in support of the mission project chosen by Zion Lutheran Church and School. Parents are invited and encouraged to attend each week for Chapel.
- Confirmation: A two-year period of special instruction on the fundamentals of Christian Doctrine is presented to all students of Zion Lutheran School in the seventh and eighth grades. It is intended as a preparation for confirmation into church membership and is under the direction of the pastors of Zion Lutheran Church. The Confirmation Class meets twice weekly during the school year. All students of Zion Lutheran School in the seventh and eighth grades are required to take part in this course, but are not required to become members of Zion Lutheran Church. Students who are members of Zion Lutheran Church will be confirmed at the Rite of Confirmation during their 8th grade year.



Instruction

Students will learn through various teaching styles of each individual teacher. Teachers will communicate with parents on a regular basis. Each teacher, allowing students to have a variety of learning styles, will present varied instruction styles.

Resource Services

Some students require special services to reach their full academic potential. Zion provides a Resource Development Director and Instructional Assistants. While our resource teacher time is limited, trained volunteers may assist students in allowing for more opportunities. Various models are used, most often incorporating an inclusion model of instruction. Zion will offer push-in or pull-out instruction for students when deemed necessary. Zion works with Southern Hancock Community School Corporation to provide additional assistance to students. Individual Service Plans (ISP) and Section 504 Plans are initiated when necessary for the student's growth and learning.

Homework

Students are required to prepare their work neatly, accurately, completely, and on time. It is requested that parents check in with their students on a daily basis about what assignments are to be completed, what they involve, and when they are due. Though students are given opportunities during the day to complete many daily assignments, special projects and homework will be a natural part of school life. Classwork assigned during the school day that was not able to be completed by the students during class time is considered homework. If your student is bringing home large amounts of homework on a daily basis, you may wish to discuss this with the classroom teacher.

- **Leveled**
 - As children progress through the years, homework amounts will increase. Homework provides practice, review, and preparation opportunities for the students on a regular basis. Each classroom teacher will provide guidelines for homework.
- **Expectations**
 - Completing assignments completely, accurately, and on-time is a skill that student learners must achieve. Many learning areas are covered through homework and project activities. Work must be completed each day prior to the start of the school day. Each student is responsible for his or her own work and the process of turning in the assigned work.
- **Homework Help**
 - Students are encouraged to ask for assistance when homework is difficult. The time allotted during class gives students an opportunity to be prepared when completing the work at home or after class. Students may also ask for help at home; however, having someone else complete the school work does not allow for learning.



Grading System

Evaluating the work of each student and providing feedback is an important component of the learning process. Each classroom teacher will provide specific guidelines for the level they are teaching. Primary grades will make use of standard-based grading where progress on specific topics will be communicated throughout the year to show student progress on key concepts. Letter grades will also be used especially above the primary grades. The letter grading scale at Zion is as follows:

A	100 - 92
B	91 - 83
C	82 - 74
D	73 - 65
F	64 - 0

Report Cards/Records

Students are evaluated on a regular basis. Student report cards are distributed regularly at the end of each quarter. Parent conferences will take place in the fall for all grades. Parents are required to attend these conferences. Additional conferences may be arranged for individual students when appropriate. Parents may access student progress on the parent online information system. Records are kept for students while enrolled at Zion.

Testing

Standardized tests are given each year at Zion. The students in grades Kindergarten through Eight will complete a battery of testing during the school year. Students in upper-level courses will participate in appropriate state tests. Students in grades K-2 will complete NWEA testing and grades 3-8 complete Indiana iLearn testing. Grades 2 & 3 will complete the IREAD testing. Other testing will be completed during the school year that may include additional NWEA, Dibels, and other assessments.

Music

Your child's participation in designated school-sponsored events is an indication of the strength of our partnership and your support of Zion Lutheran School. Events typically include participation in musical performances in the evenings and during services. Please mark those dates on your calendars as the children are expected to participate when their group performs. Excuses from these events should be made to the teacher or the person in charge of the event at least two weeks prior to the event. Please note that non-participation in these events can impact student grades.



Physical Education

Gym attendance is required for all students except by doctor's or parental excuse. There is a one-week limit on parental excuses, and they must be for health reasons only. Students excused from gym classes are responsible for all concepts and written work. Any prolonged injuries or medical excuse may require students to do research on related physical education topics. Those students excused may be given other responsibilities or reassigned to other programs at the discretion of the teacher. No equipment is to be used unless permission is given and supervision is available.

SCHOOL PROTOCOLS & PROCEDURES

Attendance

Attendance

Regular attendance is a vital factor in any student's academic progress. The responsibility for attendance rests with the parent. Absences must be called into the office (317-861-4210 Ext. 3) on the day of the absence by 8:45 a.m. It's acceptable for parents to inform the child's classroom teacher about the absence as well, but it is still required that parents call into the attendance line. Notes from doctors will be collected and included in the child's records.

Absences

The State of Indiana recognizes the following as legal:

Excused Absences from School:

- Personal Illness/Injury Verified by Parent/Guardian.
- Medical or Dental Appointments with a note from Physician
- Death or Serious Illness Involving Immediate Family Members
- Court Ordered Appearance
- Family Funeral
- Military-Connected Families (deployment and return)

Exempt Absence:

- Educationally Related Non-Classroom Activity
- State Fair Participation
- Participating in Election

Unexcused Absence:

- Vacations
- Parades, Local Activities, Events non-school related
- Day of Rest



If your child must miss school for one of the listed reasons, the student will assume responsibility for making up the class work he/she missed. The classroom teacher will provide written assignments explaining the work collected and assigned on the missed day.

During the school year there are days with no classes. Families are encouraged to use these times for vacations. Students planning to be gone for a vacation and/or a planned absence must notify the office in writing at least a week in advance, requiring consent from the classroom teacher and principal. Teachers may not be able to give work ahead of time. Any extended absence from school may lead to academic loss due to the absence. This loss is much greater with some students than others, so vacation absences must be treated with attention to the needs of the individual student. However, should extended vacations occur during the school year, parents **MUST** assume full responsibility for the academic progress of their children.

If possible, try to make appointments with doctors or dentists at times other than school hours. However, if the child has a doctor's appointment or dentist appointment, the child will be excused. Please remember, once a child misses a lesson that has been taught, he/she will never understand the lesson as fully as if he/she were in the classroom.

Excessive absences will lead to interaction with the Principal. At five unexcused absences, a letter will be sent by the office. Students may not miss more than ten unexcused days per school year. Parents will be required to meet with the principal to determine a better plan for attendance upon the ten unexcused absences. Being present in school is the best way for students to learn and succeed. Students who are not in attendance for twenty consecutive days must be reported to the State of Indiana. Twenty or more total absences constitutes serious absenteeism that may result in the student not being promoted to the next grade.

Tardiness

Tardiness can interfere with a child's progress in school. Tardiness also interferes with classroom activities and instruction during the day. Children should arrive at least **TEN** minutes before the start of the school day to prepare for the day's planned events.

If a child is late, a parent or guardian MUST sign a Tardy Form at the office before the child is permitted to go to their classroom. The child will then be given a pass. Students arriving after 11:00 a.m. or who leave prior to 12:30 p.m. will be marked ½ - day absent.

If a student acquires five tardies in a quarter, parents will be required to meet with the Principal. Note: Three or more tardies in any given semester negates perfect attendance. Similarly, any two-hour absence during the school day will be counted as a half day of school.

Leaving Early

A child who needs to leave at any point during the school day must be signed out by a parent/guardian at the school office. If a student needs to leave early please notify the classroom teacher as well as the office, so that the student will be ready to leave when the parent arrives for the early pick up.

Participation in Special Events

Students are expected to participate in all school special events such as the Advent Worship services, singing at worship, Fine Arts Festival, class trips, grade-level programs, etc. These events are considered to be part of the regular school program. Excuses from these events should be made to the teacher or the person in charge of the event at least two weeks prior to the event.

Participation Eligibility

If a student participating in an extra-curricular activity fails to perform (attitudes, grades, behavior) to his/her known potential, he/she is subject to probation and/or suspension from that activity. The decision will be made in conjunction with the parent, homeroom teacher, coach/athletic director, and principal. If a child is absent from school for three or more hours on a practice or game day, he/she may not participate in that afternoon's or evening's activity without permission from the athletic director. Absences and tardies will be reported to the athletic director.

Chapel, Church, & Sunday School

Chapel

Chapel services are usually held Wednesday mornings in the church sanctuary at 9:45 am, although times may vary for special services. The purpose of this service is to offer students an opportunity to worship and praise God as a school family. Each class, along with the school choirs, will have an opportunity to lead a service. Parents, relatives, and friends are invited and encouraged to attend. Chapel offerings go toward various mission projects. Students are required to attend chapel every week of the school year.

Church & Sunday School Attendance

Attendance at Church and Sunday School is vital to your child's total education at Zion Lutheran School. In keeping with the program of Christian education and training in the church, families are expected to attend worship services and Sunday school for the majority of Saturdays/Sundays each month. Teachers keep a record of student church attendance to help monitor and encourage regular church attendance. Out of Christian love and concern, families with poor church attendance will be contacted by teachers or by other members of the Zion staff.

Communication & Involvement

Active cooperation and communication between parents, teachers, students, and principal is necessary for the proper development of the child. Parents are invited and encouraged to visit the school for conferences on matters pertaining to their child's progress and welfare. Proper communication encourages positive relationships and reduces misunderstandings. Parents seeking clarification on classroom activities should contact the respective classroom teacher.



There are a number of methods to foster communication as well as involvement opportunities including:

- ***Weekly Newsletter:*** A weekly school newsletter will be shared via email. This newsletter will include important information, reminders, and upcoming dates. Please review these newsletters carefully each week.
- ***Skyward:*** Skyward is our online student information system. Parents are expected to use Skyward, an online parent-teacher communication tool, as a way to stay informed about the academic progress of their children. Updated grades will be posted on Skyward weekly. Parents are expected to be on Skyward at least two times per week. Parents will be able to see the teachers' bulletin board, check grades, and find out the necessary information. Parents are urged to communicate to the teacher any incidents occurring in or out of school that may cause the child's attention or learning attitude to be negatively affected.
- ***Remind:*** Remind is a texting application used to communicate with parents and Zion Lutheran. Each classroom teacher will set up a Classroom Remind Group. The school will set up a School Remind Group.
- ***Classroom Newsletters:*** Individual teachers will send out weekly classroom newsletters. Teachers will communicate with families the format for these newsletters as well as how they will be distributed.
- ***Parent-Teacher Conferences:*** Parent-Teacher Conferences are required for all parents at the end of the first quarter. Schedules will be arranged for these conferences. Other conferences may be scheduled as needed throughout the year by either the parents or the teacher. Parents are asked to come to the school and discuss with the student's teacher the progress the student is making. The objectives of these conferences are to promote understanding in the home/school relationship, strengthen the mutual interest of the parent and teacher in the student's welfare, give the parent information about the student's progress, assist the parent and teacher in finding ways to work together for the good of the student. Middle School students will attend and assist in leading the Parent-Teacher Conference. This conference procedure provides an opportunity for the student, parents, and teacher to partner in the learning and development of the student's progress and goals.
- ***Parent-Teacher League (PTL):*** The purpose of this group is to help the home and school work together for the welfare of the students and families. Every parent who has a student enrolled at Zion Lutheran School is a member of PTL. Additionally, Zion PTL provides fundraisers and family activities to enhance our school ministry. Parents are encouraged to help direct this group by serving as an officer of the group, volunteering, or donating when asked. This organization charges no dues, but it needs the support of every parent and teacher through their attendance at meetings, activities, and fund-raisers. To provide for our students and activities, the willingness of each parent to do their part is important.



General Information

Field Trips

Field trips may be conducted at various times throughout the year. These will be under the supervision of the classroom teacher. Field trips are educational outings to enhance and build on the child's learning. Teachers may schedule up to one field trip per month.

Parental consent forms must be completed by the parent and returned to school before the child may participate in a field trip. These forms will be sent home by the teacher prior to the field trip.

Parents who sign up to drive must be willing to take other students in their vehicle. Teachers will assign the drivers and riders for the trip.

Per Indiana state law, students who are under eight years of age must be properly restrained in a child safety seat or booster seat according to the child restraint system manufacturer's instructions.

Parents who chaperone field trips may not bring other children in their family along on the field trip. Chaperones are expected to give their full attention to the supervision of the students in the respective class attending the field trip.

Children should wear clothing as determined by the teacher and should conduct themselves in such a way that reflects their Christian background. Their behavior should be a positive example to their Lord, their school, and themselves.

The privilege of participating in a field trip may be denied for lack of a consent form or poor behavior. The teacher and/or the principal reserve the right to withhold the privilege of participating in a field trip from any student with just cause.

Special Class Trips

- Fourth-grade students enjoy a day in Corydon, Indiana. Parents are able to attend the trip.
- Sixth-grade students enjoy an overnight outdoor education experience in a camp setting. Parents are encouraged and able to attend the trip if space allows.
- Seventh and eighth-grade students travel to Washington D.C. or St. Louis on alternating years. Parents are encouraged to attend the trip with their students. Fundraising throughout the year will help defray the cost of the trip. These trips are contingent on good behavior during the course of the year on the part of the students. All students are expected to participate in these educational experiences. Students not attending the trip due to disciplinary reasons will be expected to be in school during the trip.

Lockers

Locker Assignment - Lockers are assigned to students by the school administration at the beginning of the academic year. Students must use only the locker assigned to them and should not share their locker with others.

Locker Security - Students are responsible for keeping their lockers locked at all times. Students will need to provide their own locks for their lockers. Please note that if a student forgets their combination or administration needs to access the locker, the lock may be cut off the locker.

Locker Usage - Lockers are to be used for storing school-related items such as books, supplies, and personal belongings.

Locker Maintenance - Students are expected to keep their lockers clean and free of food, beverages, and perishable items. Stickers, decals, and other permanent alterations are not allowed on or inside lockers. The outside of the lockers may be decorated with school-related items. Examples include decorations for members of school teams or groups. Personal decorations should not be added to the outside of lockers. Personal decorations MAY be added to the inside of the lockers if they follow the guidelines of being non-permanent and/or easily removed.

Locker Inspections - Lockers are the property of Zion Lutheran School and may be inspected by school officials at any time without prior notice.

Lunch

A hot lunch program is served on a daily basis at Zion Lutheran School. Students may order hot lunch or bring their own lunch in the cafeteria. Lunches from home should contain healthy options for students. Please refrain from sending soda, coffee, and other sugary drinks for students.

The cost of each lunch will be determined each year to cover the costs of food and milk and includes the choice of either chocolate or white milk. Milk may be purchased separately for those who do not wish to have a hot lunch.

The hot lunch will be similar to the public-school students. Our lunches are prepared at Zion and served by our Lunch Coordinator. The menu will be published on Skyward. Multiple options are available on a daily basis.

Each morning, the classroom teacher will take a lunch count for that day's meal. The day's lunch count must be phoned in by 8:45 a.m. **If your child is tardy, you must phone the school by 8:45 a.m. to order lunch for the day; otherwise, it is the parent's responsibility to provide lunch for the child.**

Lunch accounts may be reviewed online via Skyward. Parents may pay for lunches in the school office or on your Skyward account. Under the National School Lunch Program, free and reduced-price lunches are available for those families that meet eligibility guidelines. Please contact the School Office for an application.

Parties & Celebrations

Throughout the year, various scheduled celebrations will take place: Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Easter. The Room Parents, in coordination with the teacher, will assist in planning and providing for such activities. Parents will assist in providing various items for the celebrations.



Student birthdays are recognized at school. Parents may send a treat for the birthday child to be offered to the entire class during the day. Birthday parties do not take place during school hours. Inviting classmates to a child's party outside of school is acceptable. When inviting the class, it is important not to leave others out. If invitations are distributed at Zion, all students from the class should be invited. Mailing invitations is the recommended delivery.

Photos & Publicity

Various photos will be taken during the school year of various activities, learning environments, and programs. The student's photos may be used in various publications in an appropriate manner. All parents have the opportunity to sign a photo release form at the time of enrollment.

Playground & Recess

Students are provided with at least one recess period per day, supervised by staff members. Students are encouraged to use this time to visit and play with friends and classmates while practicing Christian sportsmanship on the playground. Students are encouraged to treat fellow playmates with respect. The following specific playground rules apply:

- Playground balls and equipment will be returned to the ball cage at the end of recess time.
- Playground equipment, toys, and games should be used appropriately as directed by the classroom teacher and playground supervisor.
- Students will stay between the parking area and Dani's Dreams mulch path and designated black top area during school and Extended Care hours. Students may not go beyond the outdoor cross during play times.
- Students will play without striking or disturbing classmates on the playground so as to ensure a relaxed and safe play period.
- Students will contact the supervising teachers if problems arise during play, explaining the difficulties and requesting help in solving the problem.
- Students struggling may be asked to rest and rethink options for safe play before being allowed to engage in recess activities.
- Food is not permitted on the playground unless permitted by the teacher.
- During winter months, students will be allowed to play in the snow if they have appropriate attire. Students not having appropriate attire will need to play away from the snow. A coat, mittens/gloves, hat/hood, and boots are required to play in the snow.

Privacy

The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects the rights and privacy of children and parents / guardians in the areas of personal information, health and medical history and other pertinent information. The school and all staff members adhere to the confidentiality of such information.



Restroom Usage

Teachers allow periodic restroom breaks throughout the day; students are encouraged to use the restroom at the specified times. Self-control, discipline, proper hygiene, and respect for the bathroom facilities are essential in the restrooms. Bathroom behavior is closely monitored. Improper behavior will not be tolerated in the restrooms. The use of restrooms, locker rooms, and changing facilities is to conform to one's biological sex.

Questions & Concerns

We, as Christian people, are encouraged to use the Matthew 18 "Chain of Command" for any and all concerns:

1. Parents with questions or concerns are to speak first to the classroom teacher or person with whom there is a question or concern. This step can be repeated numerous times. Please note that issues should not be discussed with teachers during the school day and should never be discussed in front of other teachers, students, or adults.
2. If this does not resolve the issue, please make an appointment with the principal to arrange a conference between the parent(s), teacher/person, and principal about your concern.
3. If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved, then contact the Chairman of the Board of Christian Education.
4. As a last step, please speak with the pastor.

For other questions and concerns, please contact the school principal. If further discussion is needed, please contact the Chairman of the Board of Christian Education.

Attendance at or requests to attend the Board of Christian Education meeting may be discussed with the Board Chairman. Please note that the Board Policy Manual does require that those wishing to add an item to the board agenda or wishing to address a topic with the board must make that request at least five days prior to the scheduled board meeting.

Schedules & Operations

Arrival & Dismissal

Students may arrive at school beginning at 8:00 a.m. through the front doors of the school. Parents will drop students off according to the Drop-Off Plan by entering the far west end of the parking lot and forming staggered lines. At 7:55 am, a staff member will signal for cars to proceed to the front of the building. Students will enter through Door #2 (by the flag pole). Students may exit the car along the sidewalk and walk to the entrance.. Parents leave the parking lot through the far east exit. Entrance doors are locked at 8:20, at which time parents must walk the students in and sign them in at the main office (at Door #2).

The speed limit in the parking lot is 9 miles per hour.

Dismissal is at 3:15 p.m. Parents will enter the far west end of the parking lot and form progressive lines that funnel to one final line leading to the back, south parking lot. Teachers will walk students to their vehicles by door #11. All students must be buckled before parents drive forward to the exit. Students not picked up by 3:40 p.m. will be taken to our Extended Care Program.

Zion will have Late Start Wednesdays. Arrival times will be pushed back one hour. Faculty will participate in Professional Development on late start days.

Daily Schedule & Operations

- Regular School Days (except for Late Start Wednesdays and Delay Days)
 - School doors open at 8:00 am.
 - School doors locked at 8:20 am.
 - Classes begin at 8:25 am.
 - Classes dismissed at 3:15 pm.
- Late Start Wednesdays
 - School doors open at 9:00 am.
 - School doors locked at 9:20 am.
 - Classes begin at 9:25 am.
 - Classes dismissed at 3:15 pm.
- Two-Hour Delays
 - School doors open at 10:00 am.
 - School doors locked at 10:20 am.
 - Classes begin at 10:25 am.
 - Classes dismissed at 3:15 pm.
- Office Hours
 - School Year: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. daily
 - Summer Hours 9:00 - 12:00
- Extended Care
 - Before School (Regular) - 7:00 - 8:00 am
 - Before School (Two-Hour Delays) - 9:00 am - 10:00 am
 - After School - 3:15 - 5:30 pm
 - Extended Care is not offered for Elementary students on early dismissal days.
- Lunch Orders
 - Lunch orders must be placed with the school office no later than 8:45 am.
- K- 8 School Chapel Services
 - Each Wednesday starting at 9:45 am.

Delayed Start

Each Wednesday throughout the school year, Zion Lutheran will operate with a delayed start time. School doors will open at 9:00 am and be locked at 9:20 am. Classes will then begin at 9:25 am. The purpose of this delayed start is to provide valuable time for faculty and staff professional development in order to continue to grow to serve our students and families.



School Closings & Weather Delays

In the event of bad weather, WRTV Channel 6, WISH TV Channel 8, and WTHR Channel 13 will broadcast this information. Please look for “Zion Lutheran School - New Palestine.” Information will be posted on Skyward and Remind. In the event of a 2-hour delay, preschool students will follow a pre-arranged schedule distributed prior to inclement weather. In the event of a 2-hour delay, classes for grades Kindergarten – Grade 8, doors will open at 10:00 a.m. Classes will begin at 10:20 a.m., with dismissal at 3:15 p.m. Skyward and Remind messages will be sent to all families at the time of delay/closing/early dismissal. For late start Wednesdays, the 2-hour delay runs at the 10:20 start time. The purpose of a delay or closing is to provide safety for students and families.

Technology

Students in grades Kindergarten through 8th will have access to technology. All students and parents have signed an Acceptable Use Policy detailing the expectations of technology use in the admission packet at the beginning of each school year. Copies are available by request. Zion Lutheran School will provide students with iPads for educational purposes. Any repairs or replacement of the school-owned device due to misuse or damage is the responsibility of the parent (see DAMAGES). Students are expected to adhere to appropriate use and care of all devices whether personal or school-owned.

Visitors & Volunteers

Visitors

Teaching and learning are the priority at Zion. Excess people in our building during the school day often get in the way of teaching and learning. Please contact the teacher prior to such visits. Parents may make an occasional visit during lunch. Space is limited in our lunchroom. Parents visiting for lunch will be directed to a table in the Gathering Area. The parents may bring lunch for their own students, not for other students. All visitors and guests will have a completed background check prior to visiting.

Volunteers

Zion welcomes adult volunteers in many situations, both in and outside of the classroom. Adults attending field trips or working with our students is acceptable. Teachers may utilize volunteers in the classrooms as needed. Volunteers will not act contrary to the Statement of Belief of Zion Lutheran Church. Please look for announcements of dates and times for these volunteer opportunities.

Background Checks

All parents, guardians, and responsible adults of a student enrolled in Zion Lutheran School will be required to have a background check completed at the start of the current school year. Parents will have opportunities to be involved in education at Zion Lutheran Church and School.



HEALTH & SAFETY

Illness

Parents should not bring sick children to school. If a child has been placed on medication, the parent should make certain the child has been on the medication for at least 24 hours before bringing the child to school. The child must be free of fever and symptoms for 24 hours (without the aid of medicine) before returning to school. This is for the benefit and protection of other children and school staff. If a child has a communicable disease (i.e. hand, foot, and mouth; ringworm; chicken pox; etc.) they must be cleared by a physician or be under the treatment of medicine. A fever is defined as a person when he or she has a measured temperature of 100.0° F or greater.

If a student becomes ill at school, parents or guardians will be contacted. Parents are encouraged to update their emergency information if there is a change in phone number, address, contact person, etc.

Notifications for Absence Due to Illness

Absences must be reported to the classroom teacher through Remind. Absences should be called into the office (317-861-4210 Ext. 3) on the day of the absence by 8:45 a.m. Notes from doctors will be collected and included in the child's records.

Immunizations

State law prescribes certain immunizations to be given at various ages. When Students are enrolled in a school for the first time or any subsequent time and at any level, their parents must show either that they have been immunized or that a current medical or religious objection is on file. Parents are requested to provide the school with complete immunization records prior to the beginning of each school year.

Immunization records will be required for ALL students within the first ten days of school. Each student is required by law to have a complete and updated immunization record at the beginning of each school year. Records may be obtained from your child's physician or County Health Department. There is typically no charge for these records. Students will not be admitted to class after the third week of August, without a completed immunization record.

First Aid & Injury

Simple first aid will be administered for minor injuries at school. Zion does not have a nurse on staff. In the case of major injuries or what is thought to be a major injury, the ambulance will be called, and parents will be notified. An Incident Report will be on file and sent home with the student/parent.



Allergy Management & Prevention

All children with allergies must have a completed health form submitted prior to the first day of school. All teachers and staff will be made aware of students with allergies. A doctor's note stating the allergy and severity should be given to the office. Staff cannot make accommodations for undiagnosed allergies, sensitivities, or intolerances. Teachers and staff are trained on how to use an Epi-pen and recognize signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis. Teachers will carry an emergency bag containing a first aid kit, emergency contact forms, Epi-pens, etc. in case of an emergency. We ask that parents of students with allergies provide a safe alternative treat to have on hand during the school year for treats brought in by other students or special snack days.

Medication

Any necessary prescription or over-the-counter medication, including cough drops, must be in its original container and delivered to the school office. A parent must also complete a medication form in the school office.

School Safety

As part of the church and school security plan, surveillance cameras are located at key areas of the building. The footage can only be viewed by specifically designated people for security reasons.

All doors are locked during the school day and require permission to access the building through our camera and doorbell system. All visitors must check in through the main entrance.

An emergency action plan for the school developed using the guidelines and best practices as detailed by the Indiana School Safety Specialist Academy is in the principal's office. It is regularly reviewed and updated.

Zion faculty and staff will attend safety training as required by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE). Training will include CPR, Suicide, Human Trafficking, Child Abuse, and Individual School Safety Plans. Zion faculty and staff will be required to have the Expanded Criminal Background Check as determined by the Indiana Department of Education. Additional required training for staff will be provided as necessary.

Students will participate in school safety drills and age-appropriate safety education. The IDOE requires this type of training. Training is required for students in K-8 each school year.

Seclusion and Restraint Plan Notice: Zion Lutheran School believes a safe and healthy environment should be provided in which all children can learn, develop, and participate in instructional programs that promote high levels of academic achievement. As an Indiana-accredited non-public school, state law requires that our school have a Seclusion and Restraint Plan. The purpose of the plan is to ensure that all students and staff are safe in school, and that students who may have behavior crises are free from inappropriate use of seclusion or restraint. Parents can access a full copy of our school's plan by request in the school office.



Substance Use/Weapons

Using, possessing, participating in any form of distribution of any controlled substances (including alcohol, cigarettes, prescription medicine, performance-enhancing drugs and/or all mind or mood altering substances) constitutes substance use. Students may not possess any item that constitutes a weapon on school property (guns, knives, etc.) If any above substances or weapons are present or accessible to students they will be subject to disciplinary action. Zion Lutheran Church and School is a smoke-free campus.

Search & Seizure

Schools may conduct reasonable searches motivated by reasonable suspicion; such searches may be targeted toward a specific student or group of students. School officials may search student lockers and desks since lockers and desks are the exclusive property of the school. The school officials, too, may search student clothing and book bags if “reasonable suspicion” exists. The school officials may search electronic tools that belong to the student or school with any “reasonable suspicion.”

Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting

Child abuse and neglect are complex problems that are not confined to any race, social, economic, or religious group. Various forms of abuse are physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional abuse. State law mandates teachers to report suspected cases of child abuse to the Child Protection Services of the County Department of Public Welfare. Procedures and guidelines will be followed to ensure prompt, professional treatment of the reported case.



STUDENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS & DISCIPLINE

Behavior Expectations

Christ's perfect example of love defines and supports the conduct expectations for students at Zion Lutheran School. Specific guidelines of respect, responsibility, and safety foster an atmosphere intended to lead students toward linking their Christian faith and own choices. Reflection of choices, past and future, help all students grow and mature as disciples of Christ and future leaders in the community.

Scripture shapes and supports our school discipline guidelines. Printed below are the Core Bible verses upon which our behavior expectations and interventions are built.

Psalms 111:10

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow His precepts have good understanding. To Him belongs eternal praise.

Colossians 3:12

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.

Hebrews 12:7-11

Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of spirits and live! They disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, in order that we may share in his holiness. 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.

Romans 12:2

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

1 Corinthians 4:21

What do you prefer? Shall I come to you with a rod of discipline, or shall I come in love and with a gentle spirit?

Job 5:17

Blessed is the one whom God corrects; so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty.

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Our behavior expectation policy can be expressed with three specific guiding principles:

RESPECT - I will respect God, others, myself, boundaries, and property.

RESPONSIBILITY - I will accept responsibility for my choices.

SAFETY - I will choose to protect the safety of myself and others.

While these three guiding principles are the bedrock of our behavior expectations and how we will communicate those expectations succinctly, we also recognize that providing specific details in this handbook provides clarity for students, parents, and staff.

The following are strictly forbidden and will not be tolerated:

1. Displaying aggressive behavior, engaging in horseplay, fighting, making threats, or using violence and/or force against students, school or church staff, or visitors, as determined by the supervising teacher or administration.
2. Using force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance or other comparable conduct to interfere with school purposes, or urging other students to engage in such conduct.
3. Possessing nuisance items such as toy guns, gaming devices, unnecessary fidgets, and other toys. Such items will be confiscated.
4. Students may not carry or use cell phones, smart watches, or wireless headphones on school grounds without permission from the teacher. Such items will be confiscated if they are seen or heard and returned to the student's parent/guardian.
5. Engaging in inappropriate expressions of affection as determined by the supervising teacher or administration.
6. Engaging in speech or conduct which is profane, indecent, lewd, or vulgar to school purposes as determined by the supervising teacher or administration.
7. Possessing dangerous weapons such as firearms, knives, fireworks, and lighters or matches. This includes any "look-alike" weapons or toys resembling weapons.
8. Possessing and/or being under the influence of dangerous or addictive items such as alcohol, medication (prescription or otherwise), illegal drugs, vape devices and/or paraphernalia, and tobacco products.
9. Deliberately damaging school property or that of other students.
10. Stealing school property or that of other students.



11. Displaying gang symbols/hand gestures including wearing any gang-associated clothing or accessories.
12. Failing to comply with directions of staff during any period of time when the student is properly under their supervision, where the failure constitutes an interference with school purposes or an educational function.
13. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, or wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.
14. Engaging in harassing behavior. The term "harassment" includes, but is not necessarily limited to slurs, jokes, or other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, sex, national origin, age, or disability. Any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment.
15. Bullying by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the other student through overt, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communication transmitted, and/or physical acts committed or any other similar behavior is prohibited. This rule also applies when the student(s) are using property or equipment provided by the school. Please see the following section for more detail.
16. Engaging in an activity forbidden by the laws of the state of Indiana.

Bullying Prevention & Response

Zion Lutheran School strives to provide a safe, secure, and respectful learning environment for all students in school buildings, on school grounds, and in school-sponsored activities. Bullying has a harmful spiritual, social, physical, psychological, and academic impact on bullies, victims, and bystanders. Recognizing that home is where the foundation is laid, Zion Lutheran partners with parents/guardians in providing a reflective model for behavior. Zion Lutheran School consistently and attentively addresses bullying so that there is no disruption to the learning environment and process.

John 13:34-35

Jesus shares these words with us; “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this, all men will know that you are My disciples if you love one another.” Bullying goes against God’s Word.

Definition

The State of Indiana defines bullying as overt, repeated acts or gestures, including: verbal or written communications transmitted; physical acts committed; or any other behaviors committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the other student.

Bullying may be a frequently repeated behavior and involves an imbalance of power, resulting in the inability of the victim to defend himself or herself. The behavior may be motivated by an actual or



perceived distinguishing characteristic, such as, but not limited to, age; national origin; race; ethnicity; gender; physical attributes; physical or mental ability or disability; and social, economic, or family status.

Examples of Behavior

Possible examples of bullying behavior include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Physical (e.g., assault, hitting or punching, repetitive actions, kicking, theft, threatening behavior)
- Verbal (e.g., threatening or intimidating language, teasing or name-calling, racist remarks, repetitive words, verbal taunts, or put-downs)
- Cyberbullying is harassment via text, email, voicemail, instant messaging, photo messaging, social media, or any other electronic form or device (e.g., spreading cruel rumors, intimidation through gestures, social exclusion, and sending insulting messages or pictures by mobile phone or internet)

Preventative Actions

- Education & Awareness
 - All Zion Lutheran faculty, staff, students, and parents will be issued the most current version of the bullying policy at the start of each new school year as included in the Zion Lutheran School Parent & Student Handbook.
 - Zion Lutheran will conduct bullying identification, prevention, and reporting education with all students. Lessons will be conducted so as to be appropriate for each grade level.
 - Students and families will receive education on how to report incidents of bullying to trusted adults so they can be properly addressed by the school.
- Staff Actions
 - All faculty and staff will receive regular comprehensive training on recognizing, preventing, and addressing bullying incidents and behaviors.
 - Teachers will establish classroom practices and integrate elements into the curriculum intentionally designed to create an environment free from bullying.
- Supervision & Monitoring
 - Staff members will monitor situations and conditions where bullying is more likely to occur including lunch breaks, restroom breaks, recess, and classroom exchanges.

Responsive Actions

1. Those who believe they have been subjected to bullying should report the incident to school administration. Students may report the incident to any adult or staff member with whom they feel comfortable discussing the situation. The adult shall document and report the incident to school administration. It is very important that bullying incidents be reported so that the appropriate steps can be taken.
2. An online bullying reporting process is also available and can be accessed at this link: bit.ly/zionbullyreport.
3. All reported incidents will be thoroughly and promptly investigated by administrative staff members to determine if the incident is verified. **As a reminder, school staff cannot share any information regarding the discipline of another child with anyone other than his/her parent or guardian.**



4. Upon determining and/or substantiating bullying behaviors as defined by the State of Indiana, school administration will inform the person conducting the bullying that the behavior is offensive and unwelcome at Zion Lutheran and must stop immediately. The school administration shall document the incident and determine an appropriate consequence (please see Tier 2 behavior interventions detailed below). **Repeat offenders may be subject to suspension and/or expulsion.**
5. The school administration will notify the complainant, the alleged bully, and their parents (if applicable) when the investigation is complete, informing all individuals involved of the findings of the investigation and the recommended course of action.

Additional Items

- Retaliation
 - Retaliation against any person who reports alleged bullying behaviors or assists with an investigation will not be tolerated. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment. Such actions may result in disciplinary action.
- False Allegations
 - False allegations intentionally levied against another individual will not be tolerated. Such actions may result in disciplinary action.

Possible Disciplinary Interventions

Unfortunately, because of sinful human nature, there are occasions when a child fails to achieve a sufficient level of self-discipline to function effectively in the classroom and behavior interventions are necessary.

Because each student is unique, the best intervention for each disciplinary situation will vary. However, a logical sequence will be followed and there will be communication with parents and students throughout that sequence. Please see below for more details.

There are two general tiers of interventions. For the most part, Tier 1 interventions do not involve administrative approval.

Teachers will use sound professional judgment in determining appropriate interventions to administer when our guiding principles are not followed. Possible Tier 1 interventions include (but are not limited to) prayer, apology/forgiveness, clip system, Think Sheets, loss of recess, noon detention, after school detention, and parent contact/conference. Possible Tier 1 infractions include (but are not limited to) excessive talking, classroom disruption, horseplay, minor acts of noncompliance, and arguing with adults. Your child's supervising teacher will communicate classroom behaviors and consequences within 24 hours of an incident occurring via email, Remind message, or phone call. Behaviors and interventions will also be documented.

Tier 2 interventions require administrative action. Possible Tier 2 interventions include (but are not limited to) prayer, contracts, after-school detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, parent conference, and expulsion. Possible Tier 2 infractions include (but are not limited to) theft, bullying, fighting, drugs, alcohol, vaping, weapons, endangerment, cheating, pornography, sexual harassment, destruction of school property, and excessive and/or prolonged classroom disruption. Please



note that repeating Tier 1 behaviors multiple times can lead to referral to administration and Tier 2 interventions being implemented. Administration will communicate regarding Tier 2 behaviors and interventions via phone call and behaviors and interventions will be documented.

In extreme cases where the teacher and administrator believe that a student's behavior is actively detrimental to self or others, the student may be removed from the classroom and immediately suspended for the day or until the parents, teacher, and principal can meet and come to a solution.

For students caught using tobacco or vaping an intervention plan will be put in place, and a first offense will result in a three-day out-of-school suspension, a second offense will result in a five-day out-of-school suspension, and a third offense will result in expulsion.

Damages

Zion Lutheran School and all of the materials, equipment, facilities, etc., belong to the members of Zion Lutheran Church. Misuse or abuse of these facilities creates greater expenses in maintenance and upkeep for everyone. This expense is eventually passed on to the parents. It is hoped that a feeling of ownership would develop where all of the students would take great pride in their school and would treat these facilities and materials with great respect and care. Any unnecessary hard usage or damage to books, desks, chairs, or school property or equipment will not be tolerated. Replacement or repair of any item and the cost of labor applicable is the responsibility of the parent and/or the child. The principal, in consultation with the teacher, will make the judgment in all such matters. These fees will be assessed in the student information system and be reflected in your balance due at the completion of the school year. Failure to pay for damages will be taken into consideration for future enrollment.

Dress Code

Our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. It, therefore, follows that we present our body as it ought to be done, decently and respectably. In keeping with our Christian purpose and our effort to maintain the highest all-around standards, all should strive to reflect this in their appearance.

We believe the personal appearance of students can have a marked effect on a student's attitude toward school and the degree of each pupil's achievement at Zion Lutheran School.

Clothing should be clean and in good repair, not frayed or contain holes. Students are not to wear hairstyles that distract from the learning environment, including unnatural hair color or styles. Students should not wear clothing that distracts from the learning environment or display an un-Christian or unpatriotic message or theme. The teachers and/or principal shall determine what conforms to this policy.

Students will be requested to change clothing should their dress be considered a violation of this policy. Parents will receive a written reminder when the dress code is violated. Upon the second violation, parents will need to bring appropriate clothing to school for the day. If available, an appropriate uniform will be used from the Uniform Supply Closet with the family fee of \$5.00 per



item needed to follow the dress code. The uniform closet may also have new items at a higher price.

The Board of Christian Education has adopted a uniform code of dress. The following represent the guidelines:

Uniform Tops

All tops (anything worn above the waist) must be purchased from the approved uniform company, Rocker Apparel. These items will be monogrammed with the Zion logo. The tops are available in a variety of colors. Polo-style tops include short and long sleeves, as well as hooded & crewneck sweatshirts. Monogrammed items also include any top items worn during the school day in the classroom. Parents may not purchase, wear, or contract a logo design from another company or persons different than Rocker Apparel for embroidery or school uniform designs, etc. Zion uses Rocker Apparel for all screen printing for school-related items.

Uniform Bottoms

- Pants and shorts must be in the khaki, chino, or dress pants style (business casual). Cargo pants and shorts are acceptable.
- All shorts must be no shorter than fingertip length when arms are hanging comfortably at the side.
- Pants and shorts must either be navy, black, gray, brown or khaki in color.
- All pants and shorts should be purchased to fit properly and ride at the waist.
- Pants and shorts should not be frayed or have holes in them. They must have a finished hem.
- Jeans will be allowed only on specially designated “Jeans” days.
- Leggings or running tights are not acceptable attire for pants on any school day.
- Pants and shorts may not be tight-fitting.
- Students are not permitted to wear athletic shorts, yoga pants, or athletic pants on regular uniform days.

Girls may wear the following in navy, black, gray, brown, or khaki.

- Plain jumpers, which can be worn with a plain white collared blouse or Zion Logo polo.
- Skirts and shorts must fit properly and be worn at the waist. All shorts and skirts must be no shorter than fingertip length when arms are hanging comfortably at the side. These items may not have ruffles or added decoration or designs.
- Capri pants are permitted.
- Leggings may be worn under appropriate length skirts and jumpers. These must be plain in color. Skirts and jumpers must still be within the proper length described above, even when worn with leggings.

Shoes: Tennis and gym shoes, sandals, flats, and dress shoes are acceptable footwear. All footwear must have some form of heel strap or enclosed heel. A separate pair of gym shoes, which have not been worn outside, will be kept at school for P.E. classes for the entire school year. If a child grows out of the current size, a new replacement pair should be brought in.



Friday Spirit Wear: Students may wear an approved t-shirt for Fridays. These can be worn with their uniform pants. Approved Spirit Wear includes: Zion, Dani's Dreams, LHSI, Camp Lakeview or Camp Lutherhaven, and Thrivent.

Special Days: Zion will announce from time to time the wearing of jeans and other clothing (i.e., spirit week, athletic team dress up, etc.). Specific guidelines will be provided at those times. The third Friday of each month is a designated non-uniform day.

Non-Uniform Day: For non-uniform days, students may wear casual school-appropriate clothing, including jeans, pants, shorts (school length), skirts, dresses, sweatpants, t-shirts, and basketball shorts. Straps on girls' clothing must be the width of three adult fingers. Items that are not appropriate for Non-Uniform Day would include yoga pants, running tights/leggings, jeggings, pajama pants or shorts, short shorts and skirts, skinny jeans, belly shirts, cut-out or cut-off shirts, inappropriate or offensive words, words on bottoms, etc. Shoes must have a heel strap on non-uniform days. Non-uniform day passes/rewards may not be used on Chapel days.

\$1 Jeans / Shorts / Sweatpants Fridays: Students may pay \$1.00 to wear jeans/ shorts/sweatpants on the 2nd Friday of the month. Students may wear sweatpants that are not skinny jeans, leggings, jeggings, running tights, or tight-fitted sweatpants or jeans. Jeans/ shorts/sweatpants must be free from holes, tears, or frays. Funds raised from \$1 Jeans / Shorts / Sweatpants Fridays go toward the Zion 7th/8th-grade class trip fund.

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Library

One day each week is set aside for use in the school library.

- Books and paperbacks may be checked out and renewed. Books must be presented to the librarian when renewal is requested.
- Books must be returned on the due date. After that, they will be considered late, and fewer books will be allowed to be checked out.
- Reminders for all overdue books will be sent to the classroom.
- A damage fee will be charged if a book is returned in a condition that indicates it has been mishandled. If a book is not returned one calendar month from the date it is due, it will be considered missing, and replacement costs will be assessed.

Athletics

The opportunity to participate in athletics is available to students in grades five through eight. Depending on enrollment, fourth-grade students may be invited to participate. Zion competes primarily with Lutheran schools in the Indianapolis Lutheran Athletic League, as well as in tournaments and other special contests. Sports include:

- Girls: Volleyball, Co-ed Soccer, Basketball, Cheerleading, and Track
- Boys: Co-ed Soccer, Basketball, and Track
- Junior Saints: Football, Club Volleyball, Cheerleading, Wrestling, Softball, and Baseball

Parents will attend a parent information meeting prior to the start of athletics each season. The Athletic Director of Zion Lutheran School directs the meeting.

Interscholastic Sports Eligibility

It is considered a privilege to represent Zion Lutheran School as a member of a team. Students participating in athletics are required to maintain an acceptable level of academic achievement, Christian conduct, and worship attendance. The guidelines for eligibility include:

A student with an "F" or "Incomplete" grade will be declared ineligible for team participation. This determination will be made at midterm and at the end of the quarter.

- Any student who receives an "F" for the quarter will remain ineligible until the midterm for the following quarter. At that time the student will be allowed to participate if the grade has been raised to passing level and the teacher certifies that the student is demonstrating increased effort in the classroom. Concerning Accelerated Reader, if a student fails, he/she must achieve half of his/her goal by the following midterm.
- A student who receives an incomplete will be allowed to resume participation when the incomplete work is submitted as long as no additional homework is left incomplete.
- An "F" or incomplete received at midterm will make a student ineligible for the two weeks beginning with the day the mid-term is sent home. After those two weeks, the teacher, athletic director, and principal shall determine whether improvement has been made. If improvement is made, the student will be declared eligible. If the determination is made that insufficient improvement has taken place, the student will then remain ineligible until the end of the quarter.

A student whose conduct in the classroom, school, or society falls below reasonable Christian expectations may be declared ineligible for a team until the principal is satisfied that the conduct of the student has improved sufficiently.

Students participating in weekend tournaments must attend worship on Saturday or Sunday in order to play in Sunday afternoon games.

Clubs

Zion Lutheran may offer extracurricular activities and teams at various times. Students enrolled at Zion Lutheran School, who meet the necessary requirements, are welcome to participate. Clubs may include but are not limited to Robotics, Lego, Cooking, Baking, Bible Studies, etc. Zion Faculty/Staff organizes clubs. Clubs may be led by faculty, staff, or volunteers.

Only Zion Lutheran School students are allowed to attend and participate in school activities, including but not limited to dances, clubs, and sports.



Lutheran School Competitions, Gatherings, & Servant Events

Lutheran School Competitions and Gatherings

The Central Indiana Lutheran Schools gather students together for various activities including, but not limited to, Bible Quiz, Sci-Fest, and the Fine Arts Festival. Students from Zion will be able to participate in various events according to grade level.

Servant Events

Serving others is part of our ministry at Zion. Students will have many opportunities to help and serve others by leading chapel, donating items, and service days. Parents are welcome to participate in whole school activities.

Extended Care/Before & After School Care

Before and After School Care are available to families.

- Before School Care opens at 7:00 am.
- Students arriving before 8:00 am will check in at the cafeteria. Students will have activities to do while waiting for the school day to begin. Students will be dismissed to go to class at 8:00 am.
- Students arriving early on Late Start Wednesdays will check in at the cafeteria prior to 9:00 am.
- Students staying for after-school care will be signed into the Extended Care program. Students will be able to play games, work on homework, and read for A.R. Activities are arranged each day for the students to work on or investigate.
- Students may not bring toys, games, or electronics to use during Extended Care. Such items may be lost, broken or damaged.
- Students may not use any digital devices during Extended Care unless it is their own school-issued device.
- Students may not use cell phones during Extended Care for any purpose. Students may not text, message, or call parents, friends, or others during the hours of the school day and into Extended Care. The phone will be confiscated if used.
- Parents will pick up their children from Extended Care at the main flagpole entrance.
- Extended Care closes at 5:30 pm each school day.

TUITION & SCHOLARSHIPS

Zion Lutheran Church and School is dedicated to providing Christ-centered education. We provide quality education to families who desire this for their children. We are honored to provide this to our community, friends of Zion, and members of Zion by striving to keep tuition rates at a reasonable cost for families.



The cost of education continues to increase. Zion is blessed to have the support of our congregation, community, and generous donors to keep fees as low as possible. Zion Lutheran Church supports each family through generous financial commitments to educating children. Members of Zion Lutheran Church, who are active and participating, can receive a tuition discount as a member who supports the ministry of education.

Scholarship Opportunities are available:

1. Zion offers scholarships through various means. Scholarship opportunities include:
 - a. Indiana Choice Scholarship
 - i. Scholarship funds provided through the state of Indiana.
 - b. SGO Scholarship
 - i. Scholarship funded by generous donors to the Lutheran SGO for Zion.
 - c. Zion Scholarship - There are 3 types of Zion scholarships for our families.
 - i. Church Partner Scholarship- This scholarship is provided to each student who is an active participant in the ministry at Zion or of a local church. A church partner form is required each year.
 - ii. Community Fund Scholarship- This scholarship is provided to students based on financial need as determined by household income. Awards are given based on a family's income range according to the FFRL percentages.
 - iii. Helping Hand Scholarship- This scholarship is provided to students whose out-of-pocket costs increase significantly.
2. You may request assistance by completing a Scholarship Application form from the Admissions Director at Zion.
3. All scholarships require verification of a family's household size and adjusted gross income. This is verified by providing the Federal tax returns, more specifically the 1040 form. The Admissions Director cannot apply for scholarships until all documentation is provided.
4. Meetings with the Principal and/or Admissions Director will be required for scholarship verification and awards each year. Meetings take place in the late spring and into the summer to sign paperwork.
5. Families who do not qualify for a Choice Scholarship or SGO do not need to provide their tax returns to still receive a Community Fund Scholarship. Families need to check their income range according to the FFRL percentages and awards will be calculated.

JULY / AUGUST 2025							30 Staff Only 31 Warrior Night 01 Staff Only 06 First Day of School K-8 11 First Day of School PS	SEPTEMBER 2025							01 Labor Day 05 Quarter 1 Midterm 18-19 K-8 E-Learning Days for Professional Development.
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S		S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	
=			30	31	1	2			1	2	3	4	5	6	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9		7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16		14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23		21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30		28	29	30					
31															

OCTOBER 2025							03 End of 1 st Quarter 09 E-Learning (PT Conferences) 10 No School (PT Conferences) 13-17 Fall Break – No School	NOVEMBER 2025							14 Quarter 2 Midterm 24-25 E-Learning 26-28 No School
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S		S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	
			1	2	3	4								1	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18		9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25		16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
26	27	28	29	30	31			23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
								30							

DECEMBER 2025							19 End of 2 nd Quarter 22-31 Christmas Break – No School	JANUARY 2026							01-02 Christmas Break – No School 19 MLK Day – No School
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S		S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	
	1	2	3	4	5	6						1	2	3	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20		11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27		18	19	20	21	22	23	24	
28	29	30	31					25	26	27	28	29	30	31	

FEBRUARY 2026							06 Quarter 3 Midterm 16 President's Day – No School	MARCH 2026							13 End of the 3 rd Quarter 23-27 Spring Break – No School 29-31 Holy Week
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S		S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14		8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21		15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28		22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
								29	30	31					

APRIL 2026							01-05 Holy Week 03 Good Friday 05 Easter 06 No School 24 Quarter 4 Midterm	MAY 2026							22 End of 4 th Quarter 22 Last Day of School 25 Memorial Day 26-27 Staff Only
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S		S	M	T	W	TH	F	S	
			1	2	3	4							1	2	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11		3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18		10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25		17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
26	27	28	29	30				24	25	26	27	28	29	30	
								31							

NO SCHOOL	E-LEARNING	SPECIAL DAYS	MIDTERM	END OF QUARTER	STAFF ONLY
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

Please Sign and the online form on Skyward by August 29, 2025

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

Please read and review the Zion Lutheran School Parent & Student Handbook with your student. It is important that parents/guardians and students understand the expectations and rules of the school. Your signatures will indicate that you have reviewed and discussed the handbook together and will adhere to the policies and procedures herein. **Students in Grades 4-8 are also required to sign this acknowledgement. Students in Grades K-3 do not need to sign.**

Parent/Guardian Printed Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signed Name _____

Parent/Guardian Printed Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signed Name _____

Student Printed Name _____

Student Signed Name _____

(Signatures required for students in Grades 4-8.)

Date Signed _____

For Office use ONLY:

Date Received _____

Received by (initials):