



**St. Mark Lutheran School**

**2025-2026**

**Parent/Student Handbook**



2025-2026 • ST. MARK LUTHERAN

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# **ORGANIZATION**

## **Mission:**

### **“A Loving Community that Nurtures Academic Excellence Through a Christ-Centered Education”**

St. Mark Lutheran School exists to assist parents in providing a strong Christ-centered education for their children to grow academically, spiritually, and socially in a caring Christian atmosphere. As Matthew 28:19 states, our goal is to “make disciples of all nations...” reaching out to children both within our congregation and throughout the community.

## **Purpose of St. Mark, a Cooperative Partnership**

St. Mark Lutheran School exists to serve parents by assisting them in carrying out God’s command to bring up their children in the training and instruction of the Lord. Through this education, it is our objective to teach the children from God’s Word that they are indeed redeemed children of God through Jesus and that the Word of God is right and true. We believe that the Bible is the divinely inspired Word of God and the sole authority on faith and conduct. It contains no error and is in all parts the infallible truth.

St. Mark Lutheran School exists to provide the children with an environment and opportunities for spiritual growth in preparation for eternal life, as well as opportunities for academic growth aimed at preparing them to be Christian citizens in this world. The Word of God, in its truth and purity, is the focal point from which we view all secular subjects and is the standard by which we judge all earthly knowledge. This is done in accordance with the regulations established by the Nebraska Department of Education (providing they are not in contradiction with the Word of God).

## **History**

St. Mark Lutheran School first opened its doors in 1978, providing Lutheran elementary education for grades one through six. In 1983 grades Kindergarten, seventh, and eighth were added along with a second full-time teacher. In 1986 the school building was connected to the church building. In the winter of 2018, construction was completed on a new detached school building on the north end of the church parking lot and property. St. Mark added a preschool program for the 2020-2021 school year bringing the faculty to four full-time teachers. A fifth full-time teacher was added prior to the 2021-2022 school year. Construction to update the church basement into two new classrooms began in 2021 and was completed in time for the 2022-2023 school year.

In our school’s history, we have been served by over twenty-five different teachers. Our all-time high enrollment was 93 students during the 2022-2023 school year.

## **Administration**

St. Mark Lutheran School is at all times under the control and supervision of the Voters Assembly of St. Mark Lutheran Church. However, for the sake of orderliness and efficiency, a Board of Education is elected from the congregation and is chaired by the elected School Elder. The Board of Education exercises the power and authority delegated to it by the congregation.

The pastor, director of operations/lead teacher, and faculty members serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of Education. These people determine, modify, and adopt the policies that affect the operation of St. Mark Lutheran School, subject to congregational approval.

It is the primary function of the director of operations/lead teacher to implement all such policies and to maintain a high level of communication with the Board of Education that they are fully aware of the operations, activities, and problems involved in executing the policies of the Board.

Parents having questions or issues with regard to the established policies or their implementation should follow a sequential order of solving the issue. The concern should first be brought to the attention of the teacher. If the question is not resolved, the parent should take the concern to the director of operations/lead teacher. If that step proves unsuccessful, the matter may be brought to the attention of the Board of Education.

## **STATEMENT OF BELIEFS**

### **Statement of Religious Beliefs**

St. Mark Lutheran School is a ministry of St. Mark Lutheran Church, part of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament are the infallible written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and practice. Therefore, St. Mark Lutheran School is founded on these eternal Scriptural truths:

- There is only one true God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- God has revealed himself and his love for us in his errorless Word, the Bible.
- God created all things; he created man and woman as the crown of His creation.
- Mankind's fall into sin has corrupted the entire human race, making all people deserve God's condemnation.
- God, through his grace, love and mercy sent his Son, Jesus to live a righteous life for us and to die as payment for all sin.
- Everyone, who through the work of the Holy Spirit believes that Jesus is his/her Savior, receives forgiveness of sins, life and salvation.
- A Christian desire to show his love to God by obeying God's commandments and sharing the good news of this Savior.

### **Statement on Marriage, Gender and Sexuality**

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. We believe that the term marriage has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). We believe that 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 outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of sexual immorality revealed in Scripture is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; I Corinthians 6:9-10).

### **Statement on the Sanctity of Human Life**

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Ps. 139).

# EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

## Curriculum

The Word of God is the central feature of the curriculum at St. Mark Lutheran School. So that we carry out our goals and objectives, the Word of God permeates every course of study.

**Kindergarten** -- Devotions, Religion, Pre-writing and Reading, Printing, Phonics, Number Readiness/Math, Physical Education, Art, Music

**First Grade** -- Devotions, Religion, Reading, Math, Phonics, Grammar, Physical Education, Art, Music, Science/Social Studies

**Second Grade** -- Devotions, Religion, Reading, Math, Spelling, Phonics, Penmanship, Grammar, Physical Education, Art, Music, Science, Social Studies

**Third Grade** -- Devotions, Religion, Reading, Math, Spelling, Penmanship, Grammar, Physical Education, Art, Music, Science, Social Studies

**Fourth Grade** -- Devotions, Religion, Reading, Math, Spelling, Penmanship, Grammar, Physical Education, Art, Music, Science, Social Studies (Nebraska History)

**Fifth Grade** -- Devotions, Religion, Reading, Math, Spelling, Grammar, Writing, Physical Education, Art, Music, Science, Social Studies (World History & World Geography), Computer

**Sixth Grade** -- Devotions, Religion, Reading, Math, Spelling, Grammar, Writing, Physical Education, Art, Music, Science, Social Studies (World History & World Geography), Computer

**Seventh Grade** -- Devotions, Religion (Including Confirmation Instruction), Reading, Math, Spelling, Grammar, Writing, Physical Education, Art, Music, Science, U.S. History, Computer

**Eighth Grade** -- Devotions, Religion (Including Confirmation Instruction), Reading, Math, Spelling, Grammar, Writing, Physical Education, Art, Music, Science, U.S. History, Computer

## 1st - 8th Grade Scale

Students' assignments and report cards (1st through 8th grades) utilize the A, B, C, D, F grading scale (see below). These letter grades are percentage-based grades. Percentages reflect the ratio of points received on an assignment to the points possible for that assignment. All assignments are designed to make grading as objective as possible.

Grade	Percent
A	100-96
A-	95-93
B+	92-91
B	90-88
B-	87-85
C+	84-82
C	81-79
C-	78-76
D+	75-73
D	72-71
D-	70-69
F	68-0

## **Standardized Testing**

Standardized testing is a valuable tool in evaluating the progress of students. It provides an objective, longitudinal view of a student's academic growth. Standardized testing also allows our students to see how they compare to their local, state, and national peers.

St. Mark Lutheran School uses the NWEA MAP testing program. MAP is recommended by the WELS Commission on Lutheran Schools and is used by the Lincoln Public Schools. These tests are administered three times per year (Fall, Winter, and Spring) to all 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.

Test results are analyzed by the teachers and filed in the permanent record file of the child. Test results are also sent to the parents. Consultation regarding the test results is available upon request.

## **State Certification**

St. Mark Lutheran School is a certified educational institution by the Nebraska Department of Education. This certification is reviewed each year to ensure that St. Mark is maintaining a level of education at or above the state of Nebraska's requirements.

All areas of instruction will be documented to provide at least 1032 hours of classroom instruction in subject areas required by the Nebraska Department of Education Rule 14.

## **Certified Teachers**

All teachers at St. Mark Lutheran School are certified education professionals by the Nebraska Department of Education. Teaching certificates must be renewed every five years to ensure that our teachers are actively using and improving their education skills.

All teachers at St. Mark Lutheran School are also certified by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). This verifies that our teachers have been fully trained in Christian doctrine and the Lutheran Confessions.

Our teachers attend conferences, in-services, and seminars annually to learn and grow as professional educators. Our teachers are also urged to develop a plan to pursue continuing education.

# **ENROLLMENT**

## **Admission Policy**

St. Mark Lutheran School is operated for the benefit of the children of St. Mark Lutheran Church, children of our sister WELS congregations, and families from the community who desire a Christian education for their children.

- Children entering Preschool must be 4 years of age on or before July 31st. (An exception can be made for those who turn 4 on or before October 15th, but parents must speak to the principal/lead teacher in such cases.)
- Children must be fully toilet trained.
- Students are expected to sing in church on occasion and participate in the Children's Christmas Service.
- Children are expected to participate in the religion curriculum at St. Mark. This includes daily Bible lessons, devotions, prayers, Bible songs, weekly chapel services and learning or memorization of Bible verses or parts of Luther's Catechism

- Parents who are not members of St. Mark Lutheran Church or another WELS Church and desire to enroll their children will be invited and highly encouraged to attend a special Bible Information Course that will give them an overview of the biblical training their child is receiving.

## **Nondiscriminatory Policy**

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

## **Tuition**

Tuition rates for each school year are determined by the Board of Education. During the summer, parents will be notified of the tuition rates for the upcoming school year.

Tuition for K-8: **\$3,225**

Tuition for Preschool: **Dependent on Choice of Program**  
(See Preschool Registration Form)

In consideration of our families with multiple students attending school, we have a multi-student discount. The 2<sup>nd</sup> student attending our school from a family will receive a \$150 discount, the 3<sup>rd</sup> student from that same family will receive a \$300 discount and a 4<sup>th</sup> student from the same family will receive a \$450 discount. We also offer tuition discounts for families who refer another family who enrolls in our school as well as those who request tuition assistance.

St. Mark Lutheran Church and our sister congregation, Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, both believe strongly in supporting Christian education, and to that end the churches graciously sponsor a significant portion of the tuition cost for families. The cost to educate a child at St. Mark based on our 2025-2026 church budget is \$6,466 per student and members of St. Mark and Mt. Olive Lutheran churches generously cover the amount above the \$3,225 family obligation for any student enrolled in our school, regardless of which church their family may attend. As an acknowledgement to the fact that families who are members of St. Mark or Mt. Olive contributes toward the church budget through their church offerings in addition to what they give for tuition, we do have a WELS member discount of \$250 per student from WELS churches.

Tuition is paid either on an annual, semi-annual, or auto-monthly basis. An open house/Back to School Night will be scheduled in August for parents to visit with the Board of Education and faculty. Tuition assistance is available for those who qualify. Contact a Board member or the principal/lead teacher for more information.

## **Age Requirement**

St. Mark Lutheran School will follow Nebraska Revised Statute Section 79-214(1)(a), which states, "[T]he school board of any school district shall not admit any child into the kindergarten . . . unless such child has reached the age of five years on or before July 31 of the calendar year in which the school year for which the child is seeking admission begins." It is recommended that children be 4 years old by July 31 of the year they begin preschool, 5 years old by July 31 of the year they begin kindergarten, etc. Parents of any child who does not meet this age recommendation but who wish to enroll that child in kindergarten should contact the Board of Education, and or principal/lead teacher.

(Children over the age of 15 may be admitted upon approval of the Board of Education.)

## **Medical Files**

All children entering kindergarten and seventh grade must have a physical examination by a doctor, and the record of such examination must be on file in the school office. St. Mark will accept the general school physical form from your doctor.

In addition, medical histories and immunization records must be kept up-to-date in each child's permanent file. Faculty members frequently review these files and notify parents of any missing information. All immunizations required by Lincoln Public Schools are required for admission to St. Mark Lutheran School unless a religious or other exemption is on file in their place.

All children entering our school for the first time must have a copy of their Certificate of Live Birth on record in their permanent file.

These requirements are all in compliance with state law.

## **SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

### **Mission Contributions**

God commands us to preach the good news to all nations. Our school seeks to include our students in the mission endeavors of the church. Each year a mission project or two are selected and the students are made aware of the needs of the mission area. Children are encouraged to contribute to these mission efforts and a collection is taken each Wednesday morning in our chapel service. All money collected goes to the designated mission destination.

### **Church Attendance**

Attendance of Sunday worship services is certainly something we desire for our students. We want our students to have regular opportunities to hear God's Word preached in its truth and purity. In church we are able to publicly worship our gracious God with fellow believers. Regular worship attendance allows parents an opportunity to set a positive example for their children as well as support what students hear at school.

### **Singing for Worship Services**

Singing is one way of expressing our faith and of worshiping our God. For this reason, the children of our school sing from time to time in the worship services at St. Mark and Mt. Olive Lutheran Church. A singing calendar is distributed at the beginning of the year and additional notices are sent through the newsletter and e-mail. Attendance is highly encouraged and if not possible, we ask that parents notify the teacher affected.



# **ACADEMIC GROWTH**

## **School Hours**

St. Mark's standard school day is 8:15am to 3:30pm. All areas of instruction will be documented to provide a minimum of 1032 hours classroom instruction in subject areas required by the Nebraska Department of Education Rule 14.

At the start of the school day at 8:15am we ask that all parents please depart the school premises so that regular school activities can begin and so that students, faculty, and staff are able to begin the day's responsibilities. If a parent should want or need to stay after 8:15am, please make arrangements with the classroom teacher or principal/lead teacher. Care is provided from 7:00 to 8:00am at a rate of \$6.00 per hour.

Parents should arrange to pick up their children at the 3:30pm pick up time. If a child is not picked up by 3:45pm, they will be sent to the Extended Day Afternoon program and the family will be charged accordingly at a rate of \$7.00 per hour.

## **Extended Day Program**

St. Mark Lutheran School provides an Extended Day Program for our students. Extended Day Morning care is provided from 7:00 to 8:00am and Extended Day Afternoon care is provided from 3:45-5:30 pm. Morning students have a light breakfast provided and Afternoon students have recess, snack time, and then study hall/enrichment time until their ride arrives. The cost is \$6.00 per hour for mornings and \$7.00 per hour for afternoons (afternoon care is billed by the half hour). These programs will only be offered while St. Mark is in session.

Any student arriving before 8:00am will be accepted into the Extended Day Morning program and the family will be charged \$6.00 for any portion of that hour. As a matter of consistency, the school entryway will not be available for any students as a waiting area, nor will students be allowed to simply wait on the playground or parking lot anytime prior to 8:00am.

A late pickup fee of \$1/child per minute will be applied if a child is picked up after 5:30pm. Any unpaid extended care balances of 30 days or older will result in suspension from the extended care program. Once the balance is cleared, families are welcome to resume using the service.

## **Library**

St. Mark Lutheran School has and continues to improve a library for the children in the school to use. In compliance with state regulations, we purchase or accept donations of twenty-five books per classroom per year. In the library are found a reference section, a large collection of children's fiction, and non-fiction books. Children are taught how to use the library and are encouraged to use it often. Books may be checked out for two weeks at a time. Lost or damaged books may incur a \$5 charge. Unpaid fines may be added to the student's tuition account.

## **School Calendar**

A calendar listing important dates and events for the upcoming school year is available for your planning purposes. All dates, events, and vacations are approved by the Board of Education. Should there be any changes made to the calendar, parents will be notified as soon as possible. St. Mark's

school calendar heavily references the schedule of Lincoln Public School (LPS). There are some minor differences, so please reference the school-provided calendar to be sure.

We will follow LPS for **snow-related closings**. **For all other weather-related closings, the school staff in conjunction with the school board reserve the authority to close the school on a situation-by-situation basis.** If it should become necessary for the school to be closed because of inclement weather, parents can tune in to 10/11 news or find the information online at [www.1011now.com/weather/closings/](http://www.1011now.com/weather/closings/). If some other situation would arise necessitating school closure, each family would be contacted via email or phone to inform them of the situation. If there is ever a question as to school closures, please contact the school office, your classroom teacher, or the director of operations/lead teacher.

## **Homework and Study Habits**

The amount of time required for homework will vary with the grade level of your child. Generally, the younger children will be able to complete the vast majority of their assignments at school. By the time a student reaches the junior high level, it is fair to expect that some time may need to be set aside at home for completing assignments. Parents can offer great assistance to the school by reinforcing good study habits at home. Parents should feel free to discuss the homework with the student and the teacher if questions or the feeling of excessive time requirements at home arise.

## **Attendance Policy**

When a student is absent from class for any reason, equivalent experiences for students who miss class are difficult and sometimes impossible to recreate. Simply getting and completing the homework from that day does not fully replicate the learning that happened. Therefore, it is important that absences be kept to a minimum.

When a student is absent from school for reasons other than truancy and suspension, he or she will have the opportunity to make up for missed work. The date when make-up work is due will be determined by the teacher based on the content being studied and the length of the student's absence. We greatly appreciate communication when your child needs to miss school. Parents should please notify the office before 8:25am. The most efficient method for school's purposes is to please email Mrs. Schwede in the office ([carolyn.schwede@stmarklincoln.org](mailto:carolyn.schwede@stmarklincoln.org)) as well as your classroom teacher notifying them that your child will be gone.

Tardies will be issued for students arriving at school any time after the beginning of school (8:15am) and up to one hour late. Tardy students may be asked to wait in the school entryway until their arrival will not be a distraction for the classroom at which point their teacher will come and get them.

A student who arrives unexcused between one hour late and noon will be marked for a half-day absence. Students who arrive after noon will be marked for a full-day absence.

If the number of tardies or absences is excessive in a single quarter, written communication will be sent to parents and a meeting may be set up with the parents, teacher, and principal/lead teacher to try to identify and eliminate the issues causing absence. If absences continue, and as a final attempt at a solution, a meeting will be set up between the parents and the Board of Education to determine further courses of action.

# FAITH IN ACTION

## Behavior

Our Lord tells us in John 14:15, **“If you love Me, you will obey what I command.”** In a Christian school such as St. Mark, the Lord Jesus Christ must have first place in the minds of both students and teachers. Both must conduct themselves as redeemed children of God. Whenever discipline becomes necessary, it will be designed to develop favorable attitudes and nurture spiritual growth.

St. Mark Lutheran School uses a foundation of four school-wide guidelines. They are as follows:

Show love for God as you...

1. Respect all adults, peers, self, property, and learning.
2. Build each other up through words and actions.
3. Keep our school clean, friendly, and a place where people can concentrate.
4. Use acceptable, God-pleasing language.

Individual classrooms may include other rules in any of these four general areas, but these four will be followed consistently throughout the building and grounds of the school. Teachers will set adequate consequences for rules that are broken. When necessary, the director of operations/lead teacher may issue further appropriate discipline. Of course, parents will be informed in advance of major consequences given.

Excessive trouble with the rules by any student will be handled on an individual basis by the director of operations/lead teacher in consultation with the classroom teacher. In dangerous or extreme cases, students may be sent home immediately.

## Suspension or Termination of Enrollment

St. Mark Lutheran School believes that working together in the guidance of Christ's love is essential. Steps will be taken to retain all parents and children within our school family. However, St. Mark reserves all rights to suspend or terminate any enrollment based on the following reasons:

- Persistently not observing policies and procedures as outlined in this handbook or as presented by the principal/lead teacher.
- Continuous defiant behavior
- Continuous lack of support from parents
- If our school cannot accommodate the high needs of a special needs child based on the best interest of all children.
- Physical or verbal abuse by a child or parent toward another child or staff member.
- Excessive and continuous abuse of school pickup times.
- Failure to pay tuition or consistently receiving late fees.
- Bringing items to school that are prohibited, illegal, or dangerous
- Defying, mocking or consistently discouraging the Word of God and His truths in daily activities or any other form.
- Persistently acting out and defying before care and/or after care employees (This will be a suspension from before care/after care until further notice.).

## Right to Appeal

A family who feels they have been unfairly disciplined (suspended or terminated) may submit a written appeal to the director of operations/lead teacher or the chairman of the Board of Education of St. Mark Lutheran School. The appeal should state the reason for the dismissal, what actions were done on the part of the parents to resolve the problem, and why they feel the discipline was unfair. The child who was disciplined will not be readmitted during the appeal process.

The director of operations or Board of Education chairman will respond to the appeal and will outline a timeline for the rest of the process in writing within seven working days. The appeal will be discussed with members of the Board of Education and parents will be notified of the board's decision regarding the appeal in a timely manner.

## Non-tolerance Policy

Bullying\* or threatening other students or staff is not tolerated at St. Mark Lutheran School. Should a student bully or threaten another student or staff member, the parents, pastor, principal/lead teacher, and the Board of Education will be notified immediately, and proper disciplinary action will be taken.

\*(Bullying is defined as unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Disagreements or arguments between students, unfortunately, happen on occasion and are not *necessarily* bullying. Labeling behavior as “bullying” too quickly can escalate a situation and deprive the involved individuals of an opportunity for true conflict resolution.)

Students are not to bring weapons or drugs of any kind to St. Mark Lutheran School.

## Dress Code

At St. Mark Lutheran School we seek to show our students that one way we can reflect our love for Jesus to the world is in the way we dress. Christian modesty and decency, as opposed to the standards accepted by the world, suggest that certain clothing not be worn in school. We understand that agreeing on appropriate clothing and grooming habits for children is a challenge at times. To assist parents, the following guidelines have been established:

- The goal of our dress code is to be modest, clean, and represent Christian values. If students and parents can approach daily attire with that in mind, most issues should be avoided.
- Clothing should be becoming of a Christian: No clothing with crude lettering or pictures, or clothing with words, or symbols related to guns, tobacco, drugs, or alcohol or focused on death.
- No cut-off shirts, halter tops, bare midriffs or other similar attire. No spaghetti strap tank tops (please use two-fingers as a guide for shoulder strap width)
- No clothing which is excessively sloppy, dirty, frayed, tattered, or has excessive holes.
- Shorts, dresses, and skirts are not to be excessively short.
- Pants or bottoms must be worn at the waist. Please use a belt if needed. Please assure that undergarments will remain covered.
- Please use the temperature of 60°F as a benchmark for sending your child to school in shorts, capris, and dresses/skirts without leggings.
- Students should bring a coat in winter months. Teachers will determine when coats/long-sleeves may be removed at recess.
- Shoes are to be worn at all times. Laces must be tied. Shoes with wheels are not permitted.

- Preschool and kindergarten students should please wear shoes with backs and that stay on well when moving. No shoes with laces, unless a child can easily tie them on their own.
- Hats, caps, hoods, and bandanas are not to be worn in the school building.
- We do go outside on cold winter days. Students are to have proper winter wear, including a heavy jacket, hat, and gloves. They must wear boots and snow pants if they plan to play in the snow.
- Students may be required to wear a St. Mark School shirt or other designated clothing on days we have school outings, such as field trips, or to other school sponsored activities.

The following grooming guidelines have been established:

- Tattoos, decals, or pen markings on the body are not allowed.
- Body piercing, other than girl's ears, is not permitted.
- Hair should be groomed and styled in good taste.
- Extreme hairstyles that would be distracting or messy, such as tall mohawks, glitter paint, or non-natural color or designs, are not permitted.
- Pony-tails or other hair tails are not allowed for boys.
- Girls may wear makeup according to parental discretion, but we ask that it not be extreme or distracting.
- It is important that the students bathe/shower on a regular basis and use deodorant as necessary.

Parents are asked to monitor their child's clothes before sending him or her to school each day. Parent oversight and intervention is much preferred and often saves the teachers from having to have conversations that are awkward or uncomfortable for the student. However, the faculty reserves the right to determine if dress or appearance is not appropriate for school. If a student violates the dress code of the school, parents will be notified and may be asked to bring in a proper change of clothing or to pick up their child in extreme cases.

## **School and Church Property**

All buildings, textbooks, desks, and materials are to be treated with respect and are to be used in good stewardship. Damaged property will be compensated for by the parents and will be set at the cost of a similar replacement for the damaged item.

## **Telephone**

The school telephone is available for student use upon request. With teacher approval, students will be allowed to use the telephone. Phone calls will also be permitted in the event of weather or similar closures during the school day.

## **Cell Phones / Internet Connected Devices**

Student cell phone or other internet-connected devices (including tablets, smart watches, etc.) use is prohibited during the school day. Some exceptions may be made in the case of inclement weather or family emergencies. Students should obtain teacher permission to use their phone in these circumstances.

Cell phones brought to school must be registered in the office using the appropriate form. They must also be checked in with their homeroom teacher and turned off each day during school hours. Smart watches are not permitted in school. Repeated refusal to follow these rules will result in the cell phone being held by the principal/lead teacher until a parent can come to claim it in place of the child.

Cell phone use is strictly prohibited in the restrooms.

## Lost and Found

Since articles of clothing, personal books, and other belongings are easily lost, we ask that parents please label their children's belongings. The school will not be responsible for valuables and money brought to school. If items are missing, please contact the child's classroom teacher. We will do our best to locate any missing items. Any unclaimed items will eventually be given to a local thrift store.

## Prohibited Items

Drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, firearms, knives, guns, and other weapons are strictly prohibited on school property. These items will immediately be confiscated and possession of any of these items may be reported to the police department. Cell phones are allowed but usage is prohibited during the school day (see *Cell Phones* above). Other items not listed may be deemed inappropriate or distracting to student learning by the classroom teacher or principal/lead teacher. Such items may be confiscated and returned to the parents at the school office. Gum chewing will not be allowed while school is in session because of the many resulting cleaning and sanitation problems.

# HEALTH & WELLNESS

## Contact School

If a child is not attending school for any reason including illness, please email Mrs. Schwede in the office ([carolyn.schwede@stmarklincoln.org](mailto:carolyn.schwede@stmarklincoln.org)) as well as your classroom teacher by 8:10am notifying them that your child will be gone. The school office number is (402)-904-7340.

## Communicable Diseases

Parents are asked to keep their children at home if they have contracted a communicable disease. If symptoms are prolonged or behavior is unusual for your child, please check with your child's doctor to be advised on when your child should return to school. The following is a general listing of common illnesses, their symptoms and recommendations for return to school:

For these purposes, a temperature of 100.4 is considered a fever. If a child vomits, experiences diarrhea or any other of these symptoms while at school or is found to have a temperature of 100.4 or above, his or her parents will be notified, and arrangements must be made for the child to be picked up.

- **Common Cold:** symptoms include stuffy nose (clear drainage), sneezing and mild cough. Children should attend unless not able to participate in activities. If a child is experiencing heavy, colored drainage, parents will be contacted to take their child home.
- **Earache:** Symptoms include trouble sleeping, ear tugging and poor appetite. Follow the 24-hour rule.
- **Flu:** Symptoms include fever, body aches and fatigue. Follow the 24-hour rule.
- **Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease:** Symptoms include rash on hands, feet or mouth, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea. Follow the 24-hour rule.

- **Head Lice:** Symptoms include itching scalp. However, many children have no symptoms. It is recommended that a child should be kept home until proper treatment can be applied or it can be said that there are no nits (eggs of a lice) to be found.
- **Impetigo, Scabies, Ringworm:** Symptoms include small red pimples, fluid-filled blisters and crusty yellow scabs. It is often found around the nose and mouth. Children should be kept home until treatment has begun and measures are taken to cover the affected areas from coming in contact with others.
- **Conjunctivitis (pinkeye):** Symptoms include red/irritated eyes, drainage of mucous and drainage of pus. Child should be kept home until there is no more discharge from the eye.
- **Strep Throat:** Symptoms include swollen lymph nodes, fever, chills, sweats and decreased appetite. Follow the 24-hour rule.

Other illnesses lasting longer than three days should be treated by a doctor with a recommendation on when to return to school.

## First Aid

State Law forbids the administration of any medication by the school. If your child needs medication, please notify the child's teacher for proper instruction.

A signed consent form should be completed each time common, over-the-counter medication is given. A doctor's consent is needed if the child needs prescription medication. Once the medication is taken, it will then be given to the teacher and put in a secure place.

It should be understood by parents that first aid will be administered by the staff members for minor injuries which may occur on the playground, field trips, athletic events, or in the classroom. If an injury occurs which is of a more serious nature, the parents will be notified. If it appears that the child needs immediate medical attention, paramedics will be called. In the event that emergency medical treatment is needed, the parents or guardian assumes all responsibility for the payment of such treatment.

## Lunches

Hot lunch is available through an outside company, Guppies. St. Mark will facilitate payment and distribution of lunch, but does not create the menu or make the food. Orders are taken using a Google Form sent out from the school office each Friday. Orders and payment are due no later than the Tuesday night of the week before the scheduled menu.

Cold lunches may be brought from home and will be stored in the students' lockers/backpacks until lunch. If refrigeration is needed, please talk with the classroom teacher.

Parents are strongly encouraged to help their children pack their snacks and lunches or at least be aware of lunch contents. "Junk foods" should be avoided as snack and lunch regulars. Soda, coffee, and energy drinks are not to be consumed by students during the school day.

## Wellness

St. Mark Lutheran School is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. The physical education curriculum will include instruction on physical activity and habits for healthy living. School activities, including athletics, will be available for student participation.

# EMERGENCIES

## Fire and Tornado Drills

Fire drills are held once a month and one severe storm drill is conducted each spring and fall. Children are instructed in proper behavior for an emergency so that in the case of a fire, the building can be evacuated in a rapid, yet safe manner. In the event of a tornado emergency, the students will quickly and calmly be moved to the school bathrooms and asked to assume a tornado safety position until it is deemed safe to exit.

## Emergency School Closing

We will follow LPS for **snow-related closings**. **For all other weather-related closings, the school staff in conjunction with the school board reserve the authority to close the school on a situation-by-situation basis.** If it should become necessary for the school to be closed because of inclement weather, parents can tune in to 10/11 news or find the information online at [www.1011now.com/weather/closings/](http://www.1011now.com/weather/closings/). If some other situation would arise necessitating school closure, each family would be contacted via email or phone to inform them of the situation. If there is ever a question as to school closures, please contact the school office, your classroom teacher, or the director of operations/lead teacher.

## “Health Day” School Closure

If approximately 30% of the St. Mark student body are absent due to illness on a particular day, a “health day” will be issued to allow for the illness to run its course and stop its spread. If a “health day” is deemed necessary by the principal/lead teacher and Board of Education, each family will be contacted via phone and/or e-mail to inform them of the situation. “Health Days” will be taken from snow days which are accounted for in the yearly schedule. If there is ever a question as to school closures due to sickness, please contact the school office or the principal/lead teacher directly.

## Emergency Procedures

We have developed several plans of action to maximize the safety of the students in multiple emergency scenarios.

In the event that the school building needs to be evacuated, the students will follow our standard fire drill procedure. Once it is assured that all persons are safely out of the building, the students will be taken to the basement of the church (across the parking lot) where emergency personnel and then parents would be contacted.

In the event that a seemingly dangerous situation or person is outside of our school with the possibility of entering our school, the students will be quickly and calmly relocated to the other school building. The doors will be locked while emergency personnel are contacted. If it is deemed unsafe to move the students from the classrooms, students will be directed to a position as far away from the doors and windows as possible. The classroom doors will be locked and emergency personnel contacted.

Please be aware that we try to keep all doors locked during the school day. Both the front door of school and the door in the school entryway have doorbells for parents to gain admittance to the school.



# **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

## **Extracurricular Participation Policy**

Students have many God-given talents, and we encourage our students to use those talents to glorify God. However, at St. Mark, academic instruction takes precedence over extracurricular activities. For students to participate in extracurricular activities, students will need to maintain passing grades in all subject areas. Extracurricular activities are a privilege. Participation in extracurricular activities will also depend upon the student's effort and performance in the classroom as determined by the teachers and the St. Mark Board of Education. If a student is not present for at least half of the school day on the day of an extracurricular activity, he or she may not be allowed to participate in that activity that day. (Example: If a child is sick during the school day on Friday, he or she may not play in the basketball game Friday evening.) Exceptions will be made for family emergencies (Example: funerals).

## **Field Trips**

To enhance the learning process, from time to time our teachers plan field trips as a way to enhance the classroom curriculum. The purpose of these field trips is to enable children to grow culturally, expand their awareness of their community, to add real-life context to the material studied in school, and to motivate them toward further study. Field trips that take place during regular school hours are expected to be attended by all students as a normal school day. Students not attending will be marked absent. Sometimes there is a cost associated with these field trips. If cost is an issue, please contact your classroom teacher. (See also, Parent Involvement: Drivers)

## **Athletics**

St. Mark Lutheran Church sponsors sports teams for our students so that they have opportunities to participate in volleyball, basketball, and track and field with other church teams in the area. Athletics are co-ed and are for grades 4-8. It is possible, because of large participation, that grade 3 and 4 may be designated as only "practice team members, meaning they are welcome to come to practices to learn the fundamentals and be a part of the team, but will likely not play in games or the tournament.

Participation in sports is not mandatory unless it happens to be a part of the physical education curriculum and happens during the normal school day hours. We do encourage all students to participate, seeing as athletics provide an opportunity to learn and improve fine motor skills, decision-making, and teamwork.

## **Drama**

The students of St. Mark will have regular opportunities to perform a drama production, a play, or musical. All students are expected to participate because rehearsals are held during the school day and drama fits into a well-rounded curriculum. In drama, students further develop their skills of memorization, public speaking, self-discipline, and teamwork. The "unit" will almost always culminate with a public performance, where friends and family are invited to attend.

# **COMMUNICATION**

## **Parent-Teacher Consultations**

Consultations are conducted at school at least once a year. Consultations are held after the first quarter is concluded and are provided as an opportunity for teachers to meet with parents to discuss each student's progress. Optional consultations are offered after the third quarter and may be requested by either the parent or the teacher. Please make every effort to attend these meetings as needed.

Parents should also feel free to discuss their child's education at any time with the teachers and are encouraged to reach out to set up a meeting any time throughout the year.

## **Report Cards**

Our school reports student progress through the use of the A, B, C, D, and F marking system (see Grade Scale). Report cards may also report progress in terms of E, S, N, I, and U for excellent, satisfactory, needs improvement, incomplete, and unsatisfactory or utilize standard-based grade reports.

Report cards are printed and handed out four times each year. Grades for 1st through 8th graders are always up to date and available by logging into your parent account of JupiterEd.

## **Regular Communication**

At St. Mark Lutheran School we believe that regular and effective communication between school and home is vital to the quality operation of our school. The most regular form of communication will be email from the teachers or director of operations/lead teacher. Please watch for regular communication through our weekly newsletter. Other information can be found at our school website, [www.stmarkmustangs.org](http://www.stmarkmustangs.org).

# **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

## **Transportation**

Transportation to and from school is not provided by the school. However, car pools and other forms of transportation can usually be arranged with the help of the director of operations/lead teacher. If you would like to request that your child be added to the public school bus schedule, that is possible with some advanced notice to allow the director of operations/lead teacher time to coordinate that with the necessary LPS schools and transportation coordinators.

## **Home and School Cooperation**

We see at least part of the purpose of St. Mark is to aid parents in bringing up their children in the training and instruction of the Lord. Therefore we feel it is vitally important for home and school to cooperate with each other to the fullest extent. That is why we welcome discussion and collaboration from parents on the educational development of their children. In the Bible, we see that God has bound the home and school together with the same goal when He said,

*“Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” Deuteronomy 11: 18,19.*

We hope that parents still uphold this God-given responsibility even after sending their children to our school. Here are a few ways in which home and school may work together in this area:

- Attend church regularly with your child and have family devotions and table prayers.
- Let the Word of God be the sole guide in all phases of daily living and conduct.
- Exercise Christian discipline at home and support Christian discipline exercised at school.
- Always project a positive attitude towards education, particularly Christian Education.
- Consult with your child’s teacher on any matters you might feel pertinent to your child’s training.
- See to it that the child is regular and prompt in attendance.
- Encourage sufficient hours of rest and sleep.
- Encourage the child to eat well-balanced meals.
- Encourage the child to be considerate and courteous.
- Refrain from being critical of school procedures in the presence of the child.
- Sign Parent-Handbook Agreement form

## **Drivers**

At times during the year the students of St. Mark Lutheran School travel to athletic competitions, field trips, and other activities. We regularly ask parents to be the drivers to such events. Volunteers will be requested prior to the events using email or normal classroom communication. Drivers will be required to submit a copy of their driver’s license and insurance card to be kept in the office.

## **School Cleaning**

In an effort to keep tuition rates as low as possible, we ask that parents take turns cleaning the school, rather than hire a professional cleaning service. Normal weekly school cleaning is done by our faculty and staff. However, at the beginning of the school year, a rotation is established for the school to be more thoroughly cleaned by school families each weekend.

All cleaning supplies are provided by the school and a list of duties is posted on the utility room door in the northeast side of the school. If a family is unable to clean we ask that arrangements be made for your time slot to be covered. If a family simply feels it is not capable of being a part of the cleaning schedule, we ask that they speak to the Board of Education or director of operations/lead teacher.

## **Volunteers**

There are several opportunities for parents to volunteer their time and talents at St. Mark. If you are interested in volunteering at St. Mark, please contact the school director of operations/lead teacher.

**Thank you for your trust in our school as we partner with  
parents to train the next generation of God’s people.**