



St. Paul Lutheran School

Student Handbook (K-8)

2015-2016 Mission Passage

Psalm 84:10a, "Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere."

2015-2016 Mission Theme

"How Good, Lord, to be Here!"



SPLS MISSION STATEMENT

St. Paul Lutheran School is an arm of the congregation that exists for the purpose of assisting parents in the Lutheran education and training of their children.

- 1) The primary purpose of our school is to give a Christ-centered education to all children of the school.*

- 2) *The secondary purpose is to serve as a mission arm of the congregation in reaching out to the unchurched of our community with the Gospel of Christ.*

WHAT IS THE AIM OF LUTHERAN EDUCATION?

The Christ-centered educator will strive toward developing the idea in the child that man, from Adam, is a condemned sinner (Rom. 3:23) and as a realization of this basic truth, trusts solely upon Christ, his eternal Savior, for his salvation (Eph. 2:5). His belief of this gift of salvation, by grace through the Holy Spirit, will instill in his heart a deep love for his Redeemer, and as a result, a Christian love for his fellow man.

HOW DO WE SUPPORT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION?

While St. Paul Lutheran Congregation maintains our Lutheran Elementary School, parents of children attending our school pay a tuition fee that is set by the congregation. Besides the tuition fee the members are encouraged to give as the Lord has blessed them. It is their gifts of love as well as gifts from all members and friends of St. Paul that keeps our school open and functioning.

SUPERVISION

St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran School is controlled, managed, and maintained by this congregation. The school is under the direction and supervision of the congregation's School Board.

ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

Children are admitted to our school following the priority scale listed below.

- 1. Children where one or both parents or legal guardians are members of St. Paul Lutheran Congregation.*
- 2. Children whose parents or legal guardians are members of a sister congregation.*
- 3. Children of prospective members.*
- 4. Children whose parents are members of churches not in fellowship with St. Paul Lutheran Congregation.*

CONFIRMATION/BIC POLICY

The School Board and Faculty developed the following policy, which took effect at the beginning of the 2008-2009 School Year:

All parents of any new enrollee, kindergarten through 8th grade, are required to attend a Bible Information Class (BIC) within the first year of the student's enrollment. This requirement is waived if the parents have taken BIC within the last 5 years. This is required for the student's continued enrollment at St. Paul. The parents of ALL 7th Grade Children will also be required to take BIC unless they have completed the class within the last 5 years.

TUITION

Parents who have the desire to enroll their children in St. Paul Lutheran School must agree to the following conditions:

- 1) New enrollees shall enroll in FACTS Tuition Management through the school web page (see the tuition document on the school web page for more details).*
- 2) The St. Paul Lutheran Tuition Contract (see web page) must be completed and handed in to the school office.*

**For more tuition details please see the FACTS tab at the school web page.*

- 4) Non-member parents are encouraged to attend the weekly lessons of Pastor's Adult Bible Information Class. New enrollees, as previously mentioned, are required to take the BIC class the first year of enrollment.*
- 5) Parents who complete the Pastor's class will have two alternatives:
 - a) They may join the congregation as active members at which time they will pay member tuition. Accounts must be paid up till the time membership is obtained. Rates are recalculated after the present month has expired.*
 - b) They may continue to enroll their children at the current prospective member tuition rate and not join the congregation. The continued enrollment of their children will remain subject to the approval of the SPLS School Board.**

UNPAID TUITION ENROLLMENT POLICY

St. Paul Lutheran School reserves the right to deny enrollment to any family who has not paid the previous year's tuition in full by the designated registration date for the current year. Please speak to our tuition manager or a school board member if you have any questions regarding the policy as stated above.

GRADING SYSTEM / SCALE

St. Paul uses a percentage system to determine grades for children in grades 1-8. The grades are expressed with a letter as follows:

**100-96=A; 95-93=A-; 92-91=B+; 90-88=B; 87-85=B-; 84-83=C+;
82-80=C; 79-78=C-; 77-75=D+; 74-72=D; 71-70=D-; 69↓=F**

MISSION PROJECTS

Jesus said, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." In order to carry out this instruction and to train our children to freely give out of love for Christ and His church, our school conducts an organized mission program.

Specific mission projects will be carried out during the four quarters of the year. A collection (offering) will be taken at the weekly chapel service which is conducted every Friday morning in our school.

BEHAVIOR POLICY

The model for St. Paul Lutheran School's Behavior Policy is based on God's Word. What the children should and should not do is guided by the Ten Commandments. What they should do is prompted by their love for the Lord who suffered and died for their sins.

Children are expected to follow the guidelines listed below:

- *Use appropriate and God pleasing language (uplifting words not putdowns)*
- *Follow the teachers' directions*
- *Walk in all areas of the school building unless participating in a gym class or during recess in the gym*
- *Include all children in group and social situations*
- *Respect others' personal space (no wrestling, tackling, fake fighting, etc.)*
- *Use normal voice in the school building*
- *Remain on the grass portion of the playground away from the ravine bordering our school property and remain in front of the storage shed*
- *Use gym and playground equipment properly*

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Disruptive behavior is any such behavior which inhibits the learning atmosphere in the classroom or school, and behavior which endangers the safety and welfare of the children in the classroom or school.

Disruptive behavior will be dealt with in the following manner:

- 1) The first corrective steps will be taken by the teacher to whom the student is directly responsible. When the teacher feels that the student is no longer responsive to these steps, his/her parents will be called by the teacher to discuss and resolve the problem.*
- 2) If no satisfactory results are evident, the teacher will refer the matter to the principal. The principal will counsel the child. The parents will be informed by the teacher that their child was referred to the principal, and they will be provided the reasons for the referral.*
- 3) If the child's misbehavior continues, a meeting will be held which includes parents, teacher(s), principal, (pastor, and/or school board members if needed), to review the behavior and set guidelines.*
- 4) Following that meeting, if the child does not change the misbehavior, he/she may be suspended. If counseling and finally suspension have no effect on the child, the child may be expelled from school.*

Expulsion or voluntary removal of the child will remain in effect for the rest of the school year. An appeal for readmission may be made by the parent at the beginning of the next school year. Readmission to the school must be approved by the school board.

**The board also reserves the right to deny any student(s) admittance, as well as the right to an appeal for the following school year, based on documented actions during the previous year.*

SPECIAL STEPS FOR FIGHTING AND FOUL LANGUAGE

Fighting among children or the use of foul language will receive immediate attention. Please note the following:

- First offense – a required in-school suspension of two days with no recesses. Also, detention will be served for two consecutive days.*
- Second offense – a one day out-of-school suspension and all work must be made up upon returning to school.*

- *Third offense – a two day out-of-school suspension and all work must be made up upon returning to school. The student and his/her parents must sit before the School Board to discuss the student’s continued enrollment at St. Paul. **SPLS Board will review the child’s behavior and may or may not grant permission to return to school.***

DRESS CODE

Our Bodies are a Temple of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 6:19). Therefore, out of respect for our Lord, we request that students practice good hygiene and wear appropriate and modest clothing.

We require that the following dress code be observed by the students:

- 1. Students are to wear neat, clean, untoned clothing, and well maintained footwear at all times.*
- 2. The following clothing is unacceptable for a young lady: halter tops, bare midriffs, and tank tops with spaghetti straps. For boys: sleeveless t-shirts or sweatshirts with large or oversized armholes are unacceptable. For both boys and girls: no excessively tight fitting clothing, or shorts that do not come down to mid-thigh (to students’ fingertips when arms are down at rest).*
- 3. Please use Christian discretion when purchasing t-shirts or sweat shirts for school wear. Printed messages or logos should reflect a Christian attitude.*
- 4. For the safety of each child, he/she must wear enclosed gym shoes to physical education classes.*
- 5. In order to play outside during the winter months, children in grades K-4 should bring snow pants, boots, coat, hat, and gloves. Grades 5-8 should bring boots, coat, hat, and gloves.*
- 6. Sandals will be allowed for normal wear (flip-flops must be approved by the classroom teacher) pending teacher approval.*

When a student’s clothing does not meet the dress code, parents will be notified and asked to bring proper clothing to school for their child.

USE OF BICYCLES

Bicycles may be ridden to and from school; however, they are not to be ridden on the school property during the school day. Infractions will jeopardize the privileges of bicycle transportation.

REPORT CARDS / CONSULTATIONS / COMMUNICATION

Report cards are sent home each quarter. Please check the yearly calendar for the dates. Parent-Teacher Consultations are held after the first report card is sent home. A special appointment note will be sent home to assist in scheduling the consultation sessions. Inquiries regarding your child's progress are welcome. Making an appointment with your child's teacher for that purpose will allow preparation for the consultation.

Communication enhances the Christian elementary school. (ie. Reinforcement of positive elements of the Christian education process, or, constructive discussion of any other pertinent items). No one will benefit if parents keep their questions and concerns to themselves or worse yet, if they discuss them with other parents or uninvolved school staff. Please do not discuss adult issues in the presence of children.

Concerns from parents will be handled outside regular school hours. In all cases, Christians should follow the course laid down in Matthew 18:15. Any question or complaint should be directed first to the person or persons involved. If in the opinion of the complainant, no satisfactory result has been achieved, the matter may be taken to the principal and, if necessary, to the Board of Child Discipleship. The Board will then review the matter and take steps to arrive at a God pleasing solution to the problem.

Parents should contact the classroom teacher if the question or concern is related to the classroom teacher. That teacher is familiar with the child and can address the question or concern from direct observation. The Principal or others would not have the advantage of direct involvement. Immediately before and after school are times during which the teacher has responsibilities to the children; therefore, we ask that unless a subject is urgent, requiring immediate attention, parents avoid those times to discuss a question or concern. If, after discussing the problem with the teacher, the parent feels the need to pursue the situation, they should contact the Principal. The Principal will set a meeting involving the teacher and parent to resolve the issue in a positive manner.

TELEPHONE USE

Students may not use any school telephone unless they have permission from a staff member. Furthermore, cell phone use during school hours is prohibited. Cell phones may be used before 8:45AM and after 3:30PM.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

*Christ, our Savior, tells His followers, "Feed my Lambs." The Apostle Paul writes, "Parents bring your children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." You, as parents, are encouraged to model regular church attendance and Christian living for your children. It is congregational policy that all prospective confirmands have an attendance rate of 75%. **When children are scheduled to sing in church, all children are expected to be in attendance.***

SCHOOL ABSENCES

*In accordance with the laws of the State of Michigan, all pupils are expected to attend school regularly. A planned field trip or track meet is considered school activities which the children should attend. If a child does not wish to participate, they must come to the school for a supervised normal day. All absences must be excused in writing (email/text is acceptable). Even if a phone call is made to the school, a written note (email/text) must be provided or the absence will not be excused. School policy requires all absences to be documented in writing. A note (email/text) may be given to the teacher providing instructions for keeping a child in from recess or for administering medication (*See medication administration policy). We ask that an effort be made to schedule all appointments, dental or doctor, during non-school hours. Any child with a contagious disease (lice included) must have the permission of a physician or the county health nurse in order to re-enter the classroom.*

A student will be excused from attendance for any of the following reasons:

- 1) Illness requiring home confinement*
- 2) Hospitalization*
- 3) Death or serious illness in the family*
- 4) Court-ordered appearances*
- 5) Inclement weather problems*
- 6) Absences approved by the principal*
- 7) School suspensions*

TRUANCY LAW (explanation)

**In accordance with Michigan State law, the Van Buren truancy officer (Russ Reynnells - Truant Officer) will be contacted by the principal if a given student accumulates an unacceptable number of absences (outlined below) during the school year; accompanied by a lack of parent/student compliance to school procedure (see complete procedure below).*

Truancy is described as:

- 1) Truancy by a student occurs when the student willfully and regularly absents himself or herself from school.*
- 2) Truancy by a parent or guardian occurs when the parent or guardian fails to comply with a notice (meeting/letter) from the principal and/or the Van Buren Truancy Officer.*

The following procedure will be followed when students are absent from school without excuse or when truancy is suspected:

- 1) In the event of an unexcused absence, the child's teacher will report the incidence to the principal for further investigation of whether or not the absence is truancy.*
- 2) After 8 unexcused absences or suspected truanancies, the principal will meet with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to discuss the attendance problem.
 - a. Discussion will include the nature of the absences, discussion of the repercussions of truancy, and the exploration of alternatives to eliminate further absences.**
- 3) If the student reaches 10 days of unexcused or suspected truanancies the principal will complete the truancy referral form in full, and send a copy to the district attendance liaison and fax the form to the Youth Service Bureau.
 - a. Upon receipt of the referral, the Youth Service Bureau assigns a complaint number and sends a letter to the parents, guardians advising them of a date and time for a meeting between the student, the parent(s)/ guardian(s), school parties involved, and the Youth Service Bureau officers. If involved parties fail to show up for the meeting a report will be forwarded to the prosecutor's office for consideration of a warrant for the parent/guardian for educational neglect.**
- 4) If the student reaches over 10 absences despite the efforts outlined above, a district liaison officer or Youth Service Bureau officer will discuss the case with school officials and make a home visit for the purposes of investigation.
 - a. If the student is under 12 years of age, a report will be sent to the prosecutor's office with a request for consideration of**

a warrant for the parent(s)/guardian(s) for educational neglect.

- b. If the student is between 12 and 16 years old, a Youth Service Bureau officer will issue an appearance citation. The citation will include a specific date and time of required appearance for the student and parent(s)/ guardian(s) at juvenile court. A copy of the citation, accompanied with a report will be forwarded to the prosecutor's office.*

TARDINESS

As part of their education, parents want to train their children to be prompt. Students who enter the classroom late disrupt classes. Tardiness due to weather or road conditions will be marked as an excused tardy. If a viable excuse cannot be provided for tardiness, it will be marked an un-excused tardy. After three unexcused tardies, the Principal and parents will meet for a special consultation.

**A child who is taken from school early for reasons other than scheduled appointments or lessons will be given an unexcused tardy.*

BAND

Exemplary band instruction is provided through Michigan Lutheran High School. Billing and payment will be made directly to the high school. Information on band lessons will be made available at registration.

HOT LUNCH PAYMENTS

We contract with the SH public schools to provide a hot lunch at noon. Hot lunch and / or individual milk orders may be purchased at school on a daily basis.

SCHOOL BOOKS

Each child should be supplied with books and materials as suggested in the summer school letter. The remaining texts and workbooks will be supplied each pupil on a rental basis. The school will have to be reimbursed for lost or damaged books and workbooks.

STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINARY POLICY

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

USE OF GYM

Church policy requires that an adult member (at least 18 years old) of the congregation be present when children are using the gym facilities. Please ask for a copy of guidelines for use of the gym. The school athletic director is in charge of the available dates for reserving the gym.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

St. Paul Lutheran School has met the requirements regarding asbestos laws through inspection and removal of friable asbestos.

St. Paul Lutheran School is a lead-free facility, and has conducted state certified lead testing on its facility, and corresponding playgrounds, including all outdoor facilities.

PK-12 ASSOCIATION: SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN LUTHERAN SCHOOLS (SWMLS)

St. Paul Lutheran in South Haven is a member of the SWMLS PK-12 association. Southwest Michigan Lutheran Schools is an association of schools which have been serving the Southwestern Michigan-Northern Indiana area for over 50 years. They remain consistent to quality, Christ-centered, student-focused education that seeks to prepare children for their lives in Christ.

Mission Statement: *The schools of SWMLS serve Lutherans and others by providing a Christ-centered approach to education that fosters intellectual and spiritual development. SWMLS schools aspire to produce students with a clear understanding of Christian vocation, that is, an understanding that Christ works in and through them to love, help, and serve their neighbor. Christ-centered education therefore has as its goal true, Christ-centered living.*