PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK

2026-2027



2026-2027 School Theme

Galatians 2:20 "I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School (WELS)

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St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School

706 Jones Street
Watertown, WI 53094
Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

Statement of Beliefs

Thank you for enrolling your son/daughter at St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School. We are pleased and privileged to serve your family. We are passionate about our mission and thrilled to share the joy of Jesus with you and your children.

The mission of St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School is very spiritual in nature. We want every one of our students to learn from God's Word about Jesus Christ as their Savior. At St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School spiritual matters are more than a class or a daily devotion. Lessons from God's Word are an integral part of everything we teach and do. The Word of God is seamless throughout the school day.

To that end, we realize that you need to be familiar with who we are as a Christian fellowship of the WELS and the spiritual nature of what we will teach your family and your son or daughter. Therefore, please read the following basic outline of what we at St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod believe and teach. It is important to us that you have a clear understanding of how we will spiritually serve your family and your son or daughter with the truths of God's Word.

We believe…

The Bible is the true word of God. It clearly teaches all we need to know in order to obtain our eternal life. The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to give and strengthen Christian faith; therefore, we want to hear, learn, and believe its message. (2 Peter 1:21, I Corinthians 2:13, 2 Timothy 3:16, John 10:35, Luke 11:28, John 5:39, Rom. 10:17)

There is only one true God. In the Bible God reveals himself as three persons-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is why he is called "Triune." These three persons in one God are all God. They are equal in power, glory, and in every quality. To deny or ignore one person is to deny all of them. It is God who created, redeemed, and sanctified us.(Deuteronomy 6:4, Matthew 28:19, John 5:23, Genesis 1:1, I John 2:2, Romans 15:13)

At the beginning of time God created heaven and earth and all creatures. He did this in six regular days—he spoke his almighty word to create all things. He made everything out of nothing. Man and woman are God's special creation. (Genesis 1:1, Genesis 1:31, Exodus 20:11, Psalm 33: 6 & 9, Psalm 124:8, Mark 10:6, Hebrews 11:3)

The first man and woman, Adam and Eve, lost the image of God when they gave in to the temptation of Satan and disobeyed God's command. This brought on them the judgment of God. Since that time all people are conceived and born in sin, desire to do what is evil, and are dead spiritually. Therefore, we are unable to

reconcile ourselves to God by our own efforts and deeds. (Genesis 2:17, Psalm 51:5, Ephesians 2:1, John 3:6, Psalm 5:4, Romans 5:12, I John 3:4, Romans 8: 7 & 8)

The message of the gospel is the good news that a loving God sent Jesus Christ to take away the sins of all people. The gospel freely offers to all sinners the righteousness that is found in Jesus. God offers and gives eternal life and salvation to all those who believe in the gospel promises. (John 1:17, Romans 1:16, John 3:16, Colossians 2:13, Luke 2: 10 & 11, Ezekiel 33:11)

Jesus Christ is the Savior of everyone. He is the eternal Son of God, equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit. He is also the son of the Virgin Mary. He became man to redeem all people. Taking our place, he lived a perfect life keeping the law of God for us. He also died as our innocent substitute on the cross to pay a price sufficient for everyone's sin. After rising from the dead, Jesus ascended into heaven. On the Last Day he will judge all the people who are still living and those whom he will raise from the dead. (I John 5:20, Matthew 1:23, Ephesians 1:7, Galatians 3:13, Hebrews 4:15, Romans 1:4, Acts 10:42)

God judged all sinners righteous in his sight when Jesus Christ died on the cross for us. God declared everyone free from the guilt and punishment owed for our sins. The sinner receives this free gift of forgiveness, not by doing good deeds, but only by faith. A person is justified when he or she believes in Christ and his redemptive work. It is a gift of God. (Ephesians 2:8 & 9, 2 Corinthians 5:19, Romans 3:22-24, Romans 3:28, Romans 4:5, Mark 16:16)

Baptism is a holy act instituted by God. Using water and God's Word, it offers and gives the forgiveness of sins, spiritual life, and eternal salvation. It is meant for young and old, including children. Infants are also sinful and therefore need the spiritual rebirth brought through baptism. (Matthew 28:19, John 3:5 & 6, Titus 3:5, Mark 10:14, Acts 22:16, Mark 16:16)

Holy Communion is a holy act instituted by Christ. Together with bread and wine we receive Jesus' true body and blood. In this special meal Jesus gives the forgiveness of sins, strengthens our faith, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe. (Matthew 26: 26-28, I Corinthians 10:16, I Corinthians 11:27 & 28, I Corinthians 10:17)

Christians, empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit, will conform their lives to the Word and will of God, out of love and thanks to God for salvation and all blessings, and to witness their faith to others. (I Thessalonians. 4:7, Gal. 5:16, I Corinthians. 10:31, I Peter 2: 9-10)

Human life is the gift of a gracious God. Our life is a time of grace during which we have the opportunity to learn the way of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Only God has the right to take the life he has given. Life begins at conception and ends when the soul leaves the body. (Acts 17:25,26; Isaiah 55:6; 2 Corinthians 6:1,2; Psalm 31:15; Exodus 20:13; Psalm 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:5)

Marriage is the union of one man and one woman. It is a partnership in which the man is the loving head. Marriage is established by God. It is a holy relationship not to be broken. A married person sins if he or she divorces without a biblical reason. Before God, no divorce is valid except in cases of fornication or desertion. The tendency to consider marriage as unimportant results in great harm to the family, the church, and the nation. (Genesis 2:18; Ephesians 5:24,25; Hebrews 13:4; Matthew 19:9; 1 Corinthians 7:15; Psalm 51:10)

God clearly teaches us to have compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity with others (Col 3:12-14). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture or the doctrines of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School.

God created human sexuality and gender at creation when he tells us that "male and female he created them" (Gen 1:27). These two distinct, complementary genders are God's design for people as they relate to one another in matters dealing with human sexuality, marriage, and gender (Gen 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of God's creative action and design for the individual. (Psalm 139:13-14; Jeremiah 1:5)

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). We believe that any form of intimate sexual activity outside of God's prescribed marriage bond is sinful and offensive to God. (I Cor 6:9-10; Heb 13:4)

God forgives all who confess and turn away from their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-20; 1 John 1:9)

If you would like more information regarding what we believe, please refer to the website of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod at www.wels.net.

By enrolling your son/daughter in our St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School, you understand that the aforementioned will be taught and you are giving us permission to spiritually serve your family and your son or daughter in this way. It is also understood that your family and your son or daughter is expected to worship weekly at St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church and during the week as we come together for chapel. How blessed we are to openly and boldly give thanks and praise to God as we worship him.

It is also understood that you and your son or daughter will abide by the Christian and moral standards as prescribed to us in God's Word and outlined in our most recent student handbook. This is also further defined in the "Parent Expectations" form that you also signed.

Again, we are so appreciative to be able to serve your family. We thank you for partnering with us as we carry out our mission to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with your family. We are here to provide an exceptional education, preserve a Christ-focused school culture, promote spiritual growth and Christian service, and prepare life-long disciples of Jesus Christ. May God bless our partnership!

These statements about our scriptural religious beliefs drive all policies and procedures for our school Specifically, our religious beliefs dictate our policies concerning marriage, sex and gender, gender identity and all other matters that are not in alignment with the Holy Scriptures as we live our lives in God's world.

Please sign the attached form!

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School
Watertown, WI 53094
2026-2027 School Calendar **Approved**



School Start Time is 7:45am - Close at 3:15pm

Thursday	**August 20**	**Parent Meeting** 6:00pm
Wednesday	**August 26**	**Parent Meeting** 6:00pm
Tuesday	**September 1**	**Open House 5:00-6:30**
Wednesday	**September 2**	**First Day of Classes for Grades PreK-8** – (classes start at 7:45AM)
Friday	**September 4**	**No School-Labor Day Weekend**
Monday	**Sep 7, 2026**	**Labor Day- No School**
Wednesday	October 28th	END OF 1ST QUARTER
Thurs/Fri	**October 29 & 30**	**No School (WI State Teachers' Conference in Milwaukee)**
Wednesday	November 4	Parent/Teacher Conferences (2:30PM – 8:00PM)
Thursday	November 5	Parent/Teacher Conferences (3:30PM – 8:00PM)
Friday	**November 6**	**No School**
Mon.-Fri	**November 23-27**	**No School – (Thanksgiving Break) LPS Off**
Thursday	December 24	Christmas Eve Services - 4:30 (M-Z) 6:30 (A-L)
Friday	**December 25**	**Christmas Day Services 9:00 and 10:45 A.M.**
	Dec. 24-Jan. 5	**No School (Christmas Break)**

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Wednesday	January 6	SCHOOL RESUMES
Friday	January 15	END OF 2nd Quarter
Monday	**January 18**	**No School – WUPS Off**
Tuesday	February 16	Parent-Teacher Conferences by Request
Wed. –Fri.	**February 17-19**	**No School – WW District Conference LaCrosse WI**
Mon.-Fri.	**March 15-19**	**No School - Spring Break / LPS Off / LLHS Off**
Friday	**March 27**	END OF 3RD QUARTER
Friday	March 26	**Good Friday – (No School)**
Sunday	March 28	**EASTER SUNDAY**
Mon- Wed	**March 29-31**	**No School-Easter Break**
Wednesday	April 1	School Resumes
Saturday	April 24	Confirmation
Friday	**April 23**	**No School** (Teacher Work Day)
Monday	May 31	**No School – Memorial Day**
Friday	**June 4**	**Close of school at 11:30am** (Graduation at 7:00pm) END OF 4th Quarter
Sunday	**June 6th**	**Church Picnic – Riverside Park 10:45 am Service**

*** Every Wednesday will be early release for all schools in the Watertown District - Early release at 2:00 pm. St. Mark's will follow the early release except for Advent and Lent - dismissal at 3:10 pm.**

2012 Act 257 WI Statute Hours of Instruction Required (Number of School Days Not Required)
Hours of Instruction are Required for all Public Schools: K4-K 437 hrs. required; Grades 1-6 1050 hrs. required; Grades 7-8 1137 hrs. required (1175)

St. Mark's meets or exceeds the hours for grades K4-8th Grade

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St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran Church and School Mission Vision Statement

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church

Congregational Mission Statement

As brothers and sisters in Christ, we are committed to serving all people in God's world with the Gospel of Jesus on the basis of the Holy Scriptures.

Through the grace of God, these objectives will enable us to carry out that mission:

- **Proclaim** both Law and Gospel;
- **Strengthen** believers through the Gospel in Word and Sacraments;
- **Equip** believers to share the Gospel of Jesus with others;
- **Provide** a Lutheran elementary school and other forms of Christian education.

St. Mark's Vision Statement

At St. Mark's we envision the future to exist as follows:

Worship – St. Mark's will offer weekly worship that proclaims Law and Gospel through God's Word, with Gospel predominance. The Scriptures and the Sacraments will receive primary focus. Worship will be done with excellence and reflect both the rootedness and the flexibility of the historic Christian tradition embraced by this congregation.

Christian Education – St. Mark's congregation will operate, support and fund a vibrant and growing, Gospel-centered Parish School for grades 3k through 8. The emphasis of the school will be to serve all of the families of the congregation and serve as a tool for outreach to any family of the community looking for a church home. The congregation will promote continuing Christian education for grades 9 – 12 through our Lakeside Lutheran High School and Luther Preparatory School by supporting these schools with regular congregational offerings and scholarship programs.

Discipleship – St. Mark's will offer a unified, planned curriculum of Bible study for the continued spiritual growth of all members. Through our discipleship efforts, members will be trained and equipped to live as their brother's keeper for both existing and new members.

Outreach – St. Mark's will make focused use of our harvest strategy for outreach among our school and ECE prospects, our Hispanic contacts, the friends and families of our members and our community at large.

Operational Strategy – Recognizing the challenges of a large ministry, St. Mark's will champion efficiency in all operations while focusing on individual pastoral ministry and personal discipleship. To better take advantage of ministry opportunities within our congregation and the community at large, we envision a streamlined leadership structure that focuses the engagement of our members in service.

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School

Mission

St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School exists to teach about Jesus all-day and everyday!

The mission of St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School is to partner with the parents in the spiritual and academic training of their children by proclaiming the **Gospel of Jesus Christ** on the basis of Holy Scripture and teaching the academic curriculum from a scriptural viewpoint. All of this we do to the glory of God out of thankfulness and praise as the Holy Spirit works to nurture the children as they prepare for this life and for eternity. In addition to teaching the students of St. Mark's congregation, we also ***use our school as an outreach tool of the church*** for those families who may be searching for a spiritual home. ***Our school is all about Jesus Christ!***

Vision

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School has served the congregation and community for over 160 years proclaiming **Jesus as the Savior** of all people. St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School offers a comprehensive educational program for 3K through 8th grade. Child-care is available for children from 6 weeks old through sixth grade. In addition to religious studies, St. Mark's Lutheran School offers academic courses, fine arts, and athletic programs as extra-curricular activities. St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School complies with the State of Wisconsin Standards for non-public Schools.

We, the members of St. Mark's, having been blessed with a distinctively **Lutheran** foundation, envision our school to be the first choice of our congregational families as well as those seeking a church and school home. It is the prayer of the members of St. Mark's that through the all powerful Word, the Holy Spirit would lead the children of St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School to lead lives of service to **Jesus** who died and rose for them, and finally to live with **Jesus** in the mansions of heaven.

The members of St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Congregation own, operate, and maintain their Lutheran Elementary School to **proclaim Jesus as Savior** and to partner with parents as they fulfill God's commands in the training of their children. *We reach out by serving **all people** with a Bible-based Lutheran Christian education through witnessing, modeling, and sharing the **Gospel message of Jesus Christ.** "Dedicate a child in the way he should go, and when he becomes old he will not turn away from it."* **(Proverbs 22:6)** *"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."* **(Ephesians 6:4)**

School Objectives

Spiritual:

1. To proclaim Jesus Christ as the Savior of all people.
2. To provide systematic and thorough instruction in God's Word, through which the faith of each student may be nurtured and strengthened.
3. To provide a rich devotional life centered in God's Word.
4. To teach the students to use their time, talents, and treasures to glorify God with a life of faithful service.
5. To strive to build the congregation and the church-at-large through the training of future members.

Academic:

1. To teach all subjects in the light of God's Holy Word.
2. To provide systematic and thorough instruction in all areas of the basic elementary and junior high

school level curriculum.
3. To meet or exceed the state standards in the basic curriculum.

Personal and Social:

1. To provide a Christian school community guided by God's Holy Word.
2. To provide students with an opportunity to live their faith in daily Christian fellowship.
3. To encourage students to live in a God-pleasing manner, be respectful of others, and live as obedient citizens of their country.

Home and School Relationships:

1. To support Christian parenting and home life that is centered in God's Holy Word by encouraging weekly church attendance and daily use of God's Word in the home.
2. To build an awareness that the Christian school exists to assist parents in their God-given responsibilities by partnering with parents through Parent-Partner Meetings and Bible Classes and by providing regular Christian parenting topics in the form of parent meetings.

Parent Partnership Policy Summary

"We love because He first loved us." **1 John 4:19**

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School exists because of God's love for us and our children, and our desire to share His message of love with our children on a daily basis. By enrolling your child at St. Mark's, you've made an excellent choice for your child. By your choice you have made sure your child will. . .

- hear God's Word that **Jesus is their Savior** on a daily basis.
- learn from teachers of your same Christian fellowship who are committed to Jesus Christ, His Word, your child and you.
- study every subject in the light of God's Word.
- be in a Gospel-filled environment when away from you.

By enrolling your child at St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School, you have told your child that. . .

- you, his/her parent, are first and foremost a child of God.
- you want your child to be first and foremost a child of God.
- Christ, His Word, and hearing and studying that Word, are your family's highest priorities, and
- God and His Word are not just for one or two hours a week, but a part of every minute of every day.

Again, you have made an excellent, God-pleasing choice in enrolling your child at St. Mark's, and your congregation is very pleased to assist you in your Christian parenting by providing a Lutheran elementary school. It's one of the most special things we do together.

Your choice, however, follows an even more important choice for your family, the excellent and God-pleasing choice of *weekly family* attendance at worship services. Yes, the decision for your family to worship weekly at St. Mark's Church comes before, and must come before, a decision to enroll your child in St. Mark's School. This is true for several reasons:

First, Christ has told us that the only way any of us stay connected to Him through faith is by the Means of Grace, His Gospel in Word and Sacrament. Coming to church is not primarily our opportunity to serve God; it is primarily an opportunity for Him to serve us with the Gospel of His love and forgiveness. And again, His service to us is essential because by hearing His Word and receiving Holy Communion, we stay connected to our Savior, Jesus.

Second, by being a member of St. Mark's, you are saying you want to be in God's house hearing God's Word on a weekly basis.

Weekly worship is the primary way we. . .

- proclaim the Gospel to one another,

- support and encourage each other as we gather around God's Word, receive Holy Communion, as well as sing and pray together weekly.
- support our school and all other Christian endeavors through our prayers and generous offerings. All of us joining our God-given resources are how God blesses us with great things like our school. (*Please remember that it costs about $3,400 per student per year to operate our school and this does not include any cost of the facility.)*

Third, as the parent, you are your child's most important teacher.

- Our teachers strive to teach and model God's Word for your child, but God has designed the family in such a way that the examples parents give have the deepest impact on a child's heart and leave the most lasting impression for a child's life.
- By taking your child to church every week you teach your child by example. You tell your child that your family needs Jesus and hearing His Word is the highest priority. Your weekly attendance at church service for one hour a week reinforces and puts the exclamation point on every lesson taught in our school throughout the week.
- ***Trust me, when a child is enrolled at St. Mark's School, they will hear on a daily basis how important worship attendance is every week. And, I can also guarantee that if the home doesn't take weekly worship seriously, the child is left to wonder: "Who's right? My teacher who says we need to be in church every week or my parents who don't take me? Maybe it's not that important to hear God's Word?"***

For all these God-pleasing reasons, *weekly worship* in a church within the fellowship of the WELS is the standard at St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School. To be sure, we all understand that sickness occurs and from time to time we may be out of town. Also, situations that involve parental visitation require our understanding and extra care and concern. But the Lord has blessed our congregation with the ability to have five regular services each week with a timeslot that will accommodate almost every schedule.

By our church membership and by enrolling our children in St. Mark's School, you have already confessed that God's Word is our highest priority. May God bless you as you commit yourself to Christ and your child by making every week worship a part of your family's life.

Serving our families, Pastor Backus – Educational Pastor

Parent/Teacher/Student Expectations Policy Summary

Family Enrollment Expectations

By enrolling your child(ren) in St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School, you agree with the expectations as listed below. You also agree to work to support the mission and policies of St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran Church and School.

Christian parents have the primary responsibility for the Christ-centered training and education of their children.

- All children are precious gifts from God.
- All children need the love of God expressed through parents and teachers.
- St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran Church stands ready to assist parents in their God-given task.
- St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran Elementary School has been established by St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran Church to partner with parents in this God-given responsibility.
- All scriptural and doctrinal statements of belief of the Church are also the scriptural and doctrinal statements of beliefs of the school. Scriptural teachings on family, marriage, adultery, false witnesses, etc. are also teachings of the school.
- The pastors and teachers of St. Mark's will serve and assist the parents in a Christ-centered partnership.
- Parents and teachers will work together in the common goal of training God's children in the ways

of the Lord based on our scriptural beliefs and doctrinal statements of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Expectations of Christian Parents

- Parents are to **be *actively involved* in their child(ren's) Christ-centered training and education**, whether in traditional schooling or distance learning.
- Parents are to **support and work closely and communicate with teachers** for the wellbeing of their children.
- Parents are to **practice proper decorum** when problem solving with teachers, placing trust in the teacher as a Gospel Minister to them and their children.
- Parents are to **train and guide their child(ren)** to grow in the ways of the Lord by:
    - Placing God's Word foremost in their lives and in their home.
    - Having daily family devotions and table prayers with their children.
    - Attending services at St. Mark's every week with their children.
    - Encouraging their children to respect their parents, teachers, and pastors and all in authority over them.
    - Refraining from criticism of teachers or school procedures in front of their children.
    - Making sure that their children are prompt and regular in attendance at school.
    - Encouraging their children to be considerate, courteous, and Christ-like when dealing with all people.
    - Attending all parent meetings and Bible classes offered by the school.

With God's help you will strive to meet these expectations.

Expectations of Christian Children

- A Christian Child's full responsibility and obligation is to ***obey their parents as Christ's representatives in all things*** – this is job one!
- A Christian Child should ***obey all in authority*** placed over them by their parents – Church and Society.
- A Christian Child should strive to ***reflect the love of their Savior*** to their classmates and all people.
- A Christian Child is ***respectful to all people***, including adults, classmates, and themselves.
- A Christian Child is ***accountable for their actions*** – correcting their mistakes in a positive manner.
- A Christian Child is ***responsible for their words*** – verbal and non-verbal.
- A Christian Child ***displays proper manners and conduct*** at home, school and in society.
- A Christian Child ***fulfills their roles and responsibilities*** in the family and in society.
- A Christian Child should strive to ***do their best in all thi*****ngs** using their God-given abilities to the fullest!
- A Christian Child will ***complete their school tasks on time*** and strive to achieve academic success.
- A Christian Child will ***obey and follow the dress code*** as outlined by the school and their parents.
- A Christian Child should ***pray, praise, and give thanks to God*** in heaven above every day.

With God's help, your child will strive to meet these expectations.

Expectations of Christian Teachers

- Christian Teachers are to place **God's Word foremost in their lives** and attend church weekly.
- Christian Teachers are to be solid **Christian role models** for children and parents.
- Christian Teachers are to be **loving and respectful** of children and parents.
- Christian Teachers are to **profess the truths of God's Word in love** to children and parents.
- Christian Teachers are to **speak well of their students and parents.**
- Christian Teachers are to practice **proper decorum** when problem solving with parents.

- Christian Teachers are to **refrain from criticism** of parents and families in non-scriptural areas.
- Christian Teachers are to **be Gospel Ministers** by:
    - Being a reflection of their Savior in all they do.
    - Performing their duties faithfully by communicating with parents regularly and being accessible to the parents on a regular basis.
    - Doing everything in their power to ensure that students have a path to success in school.
    - Creating a classroom atmosphere that **follows scriptural principles** and respects the students as God's precious children.
    - Holding their students accountable for using their God-given talents by applying the Law and the Gospel throughout the school day. This is the responsibility of a Christian teacher.
    - Working for the benefit and well-being of their students out of love for Jesus Christ.
    - Working to modify assignments and making other adaptations for students with different learning styles.
    - Being prompt in their educational tasks. (ie. grading, report cards, notes home, assignments, etc.)

With God's help, your teachers will strive to meet these expectations.

St. Mark's Policies and Procedures Summary

The policies of St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School have been established to ensure the safety and welfare of all the students during the school day. Parents and students are subject to the policies of St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School upon enrolling their children in school.

The statements about our scriptural religious beliefs drive all policies and procedures for our school specifically, our religious beliefs dictate our policies concerning marriage, sex and gender, gender identity and all other matters that are not in alignment with the Holy Scriptures as we live our lives in God's world.

These policies are never intended to interfere with the parents' role concerning their children. The parents continue to retain all their God-given responsibilities for their children and their legal rights under the laws of the State of Wisconsin and the United States of America. Based on the religious beliefs as set forth in our statement about those religious beliefs, the legal rights of the children will not be infringed upon by the policies of St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School.

The role of the school is to partner with the parents in the Christian training of the children. Therefore, the policies that have been established for St. Mark's Lutheran School are similar to those present in a Christian home. If you have any questions concerning any of these policies, please contact the School Administrator, the Educational Pastor, or the Chairman of the Board of School Ministry of St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School.

Administration Policy Summary

The Board of School Ministry is responsible for the operation of the school. The agent of the Board for the daily operation of the school is the School Administrator and the Administrative Team. All policies of the school are set by the Board of School Ministry and carried out by the School Administrator, Educational Pastor, and Assistant Principals in conjunction with the staff and teachers of St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School.

This handbook has been developed to assist the parents of St. Mark's School in their understanding of the policies and procedures of St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School. **All parents are asked to read this handbook and follow the guiding policies as outlined in the handbook.**

Academic Excellence Summary

Excellence in Christian Education is the goal of St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School for all students. This "Striving for Excellence" in all that a Christian does in this life is in keeping with the Holy Scriptures. God has blessed our students with many varied gifts, and our students are to use those gifts to the best of their ability.

This means that school is an essential part of the student's life and deserves the student's full attention.

Students should be:

- Striving to do well in all activities at school.
- Completing their homework and other related assignments.
- Being punctual and regular in attendance on a daily basis.
- Seeking help and guidance from the teachers when needed.
- Working to go beyond the teacher's expectations.
- Seeking God's help in all that the students do.

Parents in grades 6-8 will be kept up to date on a student's academic progress through a weekly grade report that will be available on Monday or the first day of a school week. Parents are asked to sign and return the report on the following day that it came home on. Formal report cards are sent home at the end of each quarter for all students. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of the first quarter. Parents and teachers are encouraged to contact one another whenever questions or concerns arise. This contact can be person to person, phone, or email. If a student is struggling, a regular form of communication needs to be established between parents and teacher.

When students do not meet the goals mentioned above, the teachers in grades 6-8 and the administrator will work cooperatively with the parents to develop a plan for remediation of the points not being met by the student. The plan for remediation may include the student receiving assistance during recess, study hall, or after the school day. Representing St. Mark's through participation in extracurricular activities may be denied for a given period of time to be reevaluated during the time of nonparticipation.

May God bless our students and their parents to place Christian Education in its proper place of importance in their lives.

Math - Advanced Placement Policy

St. Mark's offers Algebra in the eighth-grade year. In order for a student to be eligible for Algebra, the student must be advanced one year in the regular math curriculum. This usually takes place in the seventh-grade year. The approval to advance a student is based on academic performance and testing scores. Parents are required to give approval to advance a student.

Once a student is advanced they will be enrolled in the pre-algebra course. In order to advance to algebra in their eighth-grade year the student must carry a B average grade throughout the pre-algebra course. Failure to maintain a B average will result in repeating the pre-algebra course during their eighth-grade year.

Special Education Summary

St. Mark's provides special education programs for struggling students in grades K-8. The special education teacher works with the classroom teacher to provide targeted interventions to support classroom curriculum.

Fast ForWord is a computer evidence-based, adaptive reading and language program used to assist students in K-5. It is a brain-based approach that targets the root causes of reading difficulty to deliver lasting results that make better readers and lifelong learners.

ALEKS math is a research-based, online program using personalized learning and adaptive assessments. ALEKS quickly and accurately determines exactly what a student is most ready to learn. This unique approach to learning dramatically improves student performance and confidence.

FastBridge and other exercises and curriculums are used to supplement the interventions as needed.

Progress monitoring takes place regularly to target individual needs and to celebrate success in the classroom.

The special education teacher works with the classroom teacher to determine when a student is ready to "graduate" from intervention.

Academic Integrity Policy Summary

St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School regards academic honesty as an important component of Christian character. It is expected that all school work submitted for the purpose of meeting class requirements is the work of the individual student. Teachers, students, and their families are all-important contributors to the upholding of this academic integrity. It is important that all involved understand their integral role in helping to promote this climate of academic honesty. Any form of academic dishonesty is prohibited. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: **plagiarism, forgery, copying or stealing another person's work, allowing another person to copy one's own work, doing another person's class work, creating more than one copy of one's work for distribution, intentionally accessing another's material for the purpose of using it as one's own, downloading information from other sources and presenting it as one's own, and using AI tools.**

Asbestos Policy Summary

Notice of Asbestos Inspection

Our facility has had the majority of asbestos removed. The new construction is certified as asbestos-free. The renovated school building may have some remnants of asbestos remaining which are encased in the walls. Our old asbestos inspection identified asbestos-containing materials within our old facility of which 95% has been removed. All changes to the asbestos plan have been implemented into our Management Plan. All or any interested parties may review the Asbestos Inspection Management Plan through the Board.

Athletic Policy Summary

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School has a comprehensive program of interscholastic athletics. A complete explanation can be found in the special publication called the ***"St. Mark's Athletic Handbook".*** Any questions about the athletic program and policies should be directed to the School Administrator and the Athletic Director. Problematic issues related to athletics will be shared with the members of the Board for School Ministry for a proper resolution.

To keep all things in a proper balance, students are encouraged to select one athletic activity for the fall and winter seasons and up to two activities for the spring season. If there are no overlaps with athletics and other extracurricular activities, then with careful guidance from the parents, a student may be involved in more than one athletic activity or extracurricular school activity at the same time. If there is an overlap with other extra-curricular activities and athletics, the student will need to choose the one activity they desire most. If any parents have a question, they can speak with the child's teacher, the athletic director, or any of the administrators of the school.

For any clarification on Athletic Policy, please consult with the Athletic Director. All concerns should be shared with the Athletic Director concerning any and all of St. Mark's athletics. If parents are willing to assist with athletic activities a request needs to be made to the athletic director, school administrator, or assistant principal which will be forwarded to the Board of School Ministry for their approval or denial.

At any time, parents can speak with the Athletic Director, School Administrator, Educational Pastor, Assistant Principals, or members of the Board of School Ministry concerning any issues with the Athletic Program; however, all parents are asked to start by speaking with the Athletic Director first. The Athletic Director is the agent of the School Administration for all Athletic Programs at St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School.

Enrollment Policy Summary

St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran Church and School has established the following policy for any and all students that are admitted to St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School.

Admission of Students

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church owns and operates St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School to serve our member families. *Families with students who are mission prospects* (unchurched individuals who are not members of St. Mark's) may petition for enrollment of their children after they have met with the School Administrator and the Educational Pastor. Their request for enrollment will be based on the following criteria:

1. Does the family wish to be served spiritually by the pastors of St. Mark's Congregation and assist the members of St. Mark's with the Christian education of their children? All member children are eligible for enrollment in the school upon approval from the Pastors and the Board of School Ministry. Children must be 5 years of age by September 1st to enroll in Kindergarten according to state law. Children must be 3 years of age (and potty-trained) by September 1st to enroll in the 3-year-old preschool and children must be 4 years of age on September 1st to enroll in the 4-year-old preschool. Children may enter 1st grade from another school provided they have completed a Kindergarten year successfully. Children will be admitted to any other grade upon presentation of records which show successful completion of previous grades. Home-schooled children will be evaluated for placement at the proper grade level. Some exceptions may apply due to the learning abilities of the child(ren) and/or physical limitations of the child(ren) which the school may not be equipped to handle.
2. Is the family (not just the child) willing to study what St. Mark's Church teaches and believes based on scripture? Are they also willing to learn what is taught at St. Mark's Church through the Bible information class? Then, after that study, do they desire to be in Lutheran fellowship with the members of St. Mark's?

Members of other WELS congregations are welcome to enroll their children at St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School provided the WELS congregation of the family requesting enrollment does NOT have a Lutheran elementary school or a preschool of their own.

WELS members from congregations that have their own Lutheran elementary school are encouraged to remain in their own congregation and make use of their own Lutheran elementary school. These families are not eligible for enrollment in St. Mark's School unless there is an agreement between the leaders of those WELS churches.

Since St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School operates under the mission of St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church, *active members of other churches outside of our fellowship would not be eligible to enroll their children* in the school because the children of that ***heterodox church could not be under the spiritual care*** of the pastors and teachers of St. Mark's. St. Mark's does not enroll children of heterodox churches that are active in their own heterodox church. ***St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School is a Gospel Ministry and comes under all of the principles as outlined in scripture and followed by St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran Congregation***.

(See the Parent/School Covenant Agreement Form)

Non-Discriminatory Enrollment Policy Statement Summary

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement 2015

This 2015 version is only allowable if the school food authority is claiming a religious exemption.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering

USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
   Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
   1400 Independence Avenue, SW
   Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
2. fax: (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Attendance Policy Summary

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School follows the laws of mandatory school attendance as defined by the state statutes of Wisconsin. The compulsory attendance law states that all students must attend the designated school day. Academic success is linked directly to school attendance. Parents should make every effort to have their student in all classes throughout each school day. Consistent with state law, any student who has been absent ten or more days in a school year can only be excused for medical reasons for any additional absences. Students may be absent (excused) by parents or guardians under Section 118.15 of Wisconsin Statutes for the following reasons: *personal illness, severe illness or death in the family, health appointments, impassable road conditions, severe weather conditions, or special emergencies at the principal's discretion.*

Faithful attendance is required of all students enrolled in St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School. Parents are to report absences by contacting the school office by 7:45 A.M. *(This is a safety and liability concern so that a child is not lost on the way to school.)* Parents will be contacted if no message is received.

During an emergency health order which can close schools, St. Mark's Lutheran School will move to the Distance Learning Plan (DLP). This plan will be revised as necessary throughout the school year. If parents have questions about the DLP, they can contact the school office.

Vacations

Families are asked not to take vacations during school days. If a family does plan a family vacation over school days, parents need to cooperate with the school staff to help their child(ren) complete their work. Communication between parents and teachers needs to take place well in advance of any vacation planned by parents during school days.

Illness - Health Crisis

Parents have the primary responsibility for the care of ill or injured children and keeping them at home. If a child is ill when he/she comes to school, or becomes ill or injured while in school, the parents will be contacted to pick up the child and take the child home. A logical medical reason should be provided to the

school for students who have been absent for a prolonged period of time.

To facilitate a healthy environment at school, we ask parents **not** to send their children to school if the child has the following symptoms:

- Any fever within the past 24 hours
- Recurring diarrhea
- Vomiting within the past 24 hours
- Severe cold symptoms, i.e. severe coughing and extreme fatigue
- Any flu-like symptoms or other viral symptoms

Children may return to school if they are symptom-free for 24 hours without medications or have clearance from a health care provider. In accordance with the health care providers, if a child is required to take an antibiotic, they should not return to school until they have been on the antibiotic for at least 24 hours.

During an epidemic or pandemic crisis, St. Mark's Lutheran School will follow the particular policy regarding that crisis. Parents can request a copy of the particular policy by contacting the school office.

Truancy

Truancy is defined as any absence for part or all of one or more school days during which the school office has not been notified of an approved absence by the parent or guardian. Being late to class is considered as a truancy violation.

Habitual Truancy

Wisconsin Law defines habitual truancy as a student who is truant for part or all of five or more days each semester during which school is normally held. These students can be referred for legal action according to state law (Wisconsin Statutes 118.51 (1)(a) and 947.16) and/or local municipal ordinance (Watertown Municipal Ordinance #11.117 (1) (b).

Tardiness

Tardiness is a two-way problem. First, tardiness is disruptive to other students and the teacher of the class. Secondly, tardiness results in a loss of education for the tardy student. Students are expected to be in their classrooms when the class starts. Students are allowed three unexcused tardies per semester. Continued habitual tardiness beyond the three unexcused tardies may result in disciplinary action including detentions and in school suspensions.

All students are expected to be in their seats and ready for classes by the time designated. The designated time for PreK3 through 8th grade is 7:45 A.M. Students arriving later than 7:45 A.M. must check in at the school office before entering the school building. Classroom housekeeping duties such as the lunch count and attendance records are undertaken at 7:45 A.M. A tardy will be recorded each time a student is late in getting into the classroom. Actions concerning habitual tardiness will be in compliance with the State of Wisconsin guidelines. The State guidelines require the school to notify the parents that they are in violation of the State tardiness guidelines found with the truancy statutes.

Leaving and Returning to the School Building During School Hours

Students are not allowed to leave the school grounds for any reason once they have arrived at school. The St. Mark's school campus is a closed campus. If a parent needs to pick up a child for any reason during the school day, the child needs to check out in the school office when leaving and returning to the school. The child must be accompanied by an adult when leaving the school grounds.

Bicycle Policy Summary

Bicycles and scooters are to remain in the designated bicycle area (outside bike rack) during the school day. Students are not to ride their bicycles on the playground before school begins or at the close of the school

day. In cooperation with the local police department, all students are required to lock up their bikes while parked at school. The bike racks are found on the east side of the school.

Bullying and Harassment Policy Summary

The State of Wisconsin requires all schools to provide a safe, secure, and respectful learning environment for all students and teachers in school buildings and at school-sponsored events. The State of Wisconsin does not tolerate bullying and harassment behavior in schools or at school events. This policy addresses the bullying or harassment issue for St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School.

Definition of Bullying or Harassment

Bullying or harassment is a behavior that does not reflect a Christ-like attitude, or a Christ-like love for other individuals. Bullying or harassment is repeated, intentional, unprovoked, hurtful action intended to cause hurt and harm. Bullying or harassment is a form of victimization. It is repeated over time and is different from normal socialization issues that children experience in any social setting. ***Parents are asked to discuss with the school whether certain actions are bullying / harassment actions or socialization difficulties between individual students.***

Examples of Bullying or Harassment

- Repeated physical or verbal assaults which cause harm
- Continued and repeated non-verbal emotional threats or intimidation
- Repeated and consistent social exclusion and isolation in a harmful manner
- Repeatedly sending embarrassing, slanderous, threatening, or intimidating electronic messages via the phone, computer, internet, or other electronic-communications
- Constant teasing, put-downs, name-calling, false rumors and accusations, and hazing
- Continually insulting someone's race, gender, appearance, or socioeconomic status
- Repeated types of extortion – getting others to do any hurtful behaviors as listed

Bullying or Harassment Complaint Procedures

St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School takes any bullying or harassment behavior by students very seriously. When a serious incident of bullying behavior is reported, the school administration will notify the parents of the students involved the day of the complaint. A plan to resolve the bullying or harassment behavior will be worked out with the parents and students. The goal of the plan will be to guide the students' behaviors to be Christ-like toward other people. (The following words of our Savior Jesus from John 13:34 teach us, "...As I have loved you, so also you are to love one another.")

Bullying or Harassment Prevention

St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School will conduct activities to inform and assist parents, students, and teachers about the issues concerning bullying or harassment. Those activities will include but are not limited to:

- Classroom instruction by each teacher concerning bullying or harassment
- Review of the bullying or harassment policy in the annual August Parent Meeting
- Publish the bullying or harassment policy in the Parent Handbook
- Instruct students as part of the Religion class concerning Jesus' command of "loving one another"
- Teachers will be observant to any bullying or harassment in the classroom, hallways, or at recess
- Teachers will report any complaints about bullying or harassment to the school administration
- Teachers will strive to be excellent role models concerning the love of Christ to all of their students

Bullying or Harassment Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action will be taken by the School Administration and/or the Board of School Ministry in

cases of bullying or harassment. The disciplinary actions may include, but are not limited to, the loss of student privileges, in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions, and or possible expulsion. The Board of School Ministry will have the final authority on any expulsions.

Bullying Policy or Harassment Conclusion

It is the mission of St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with all of the parents and students. In keeping with that goal, the objectives of the school are to reflect the teachings of Jesus Christ our Savior and love one another.

Busing Policy Summary

The Watertown Unified Public School District (WUPS) provides busing for St. Mark's students living in the bus attendance area. The WUPS considers the disciplinary rules and procedures of the school extended to the bus. It is the responsibility of the School Administrator to enforce the school rules for students riding the school bus to and from school. Therefore, all students riding the bus are expected to conduct themselves in a Christ-like manner when riding the bus. In cases of misbehavior by students on the bus, which are reported to the School Administrator by the bus company, the School Administrator will relay that incident to the parents. Corrective action must be taken by the parent. If the student continues to misbehave on the bus, the privilege of riding the bus may be denied to that student. Each case of misbehavior will be handled on an individual basis with the parents, the bus company, and the Board of School Ministry.

Cell Phone/Electronics Policy Summary

Student Cell Phones are not allowed in St. Mark's School building!

Student Cell Phones are <u>NOT</u> Allowed at School or at School Events!

Students are not allowed to have cell phones at school or at school events. St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School has an office secretary that provides a communication link with parents throughout the school day. In addition, every classroom has a phone that can call outside; therefore, it is not necessary for students to bring cell phones to school.

If a child is found to have a cell phone at school or making use of a cell phone at school, ***the phone will be confiscated by the teacher or one of the administrators and returned only to the parents.*** A second violation by a student will result in a suspension from school.

Students are not allowed to bring cell phones to any after -hours school events. Cell phones that are camera phones can cause a liability problem for the student and the school. The students are to be observing and participating in the school event. Parents are asked to supervise their children at these after school events.

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Parents that want to apply for a waiver must provide a valid security concern for their child. If a waiver is granted, the phone must be turned into the school office. Student cell phones are *not allowed in the school building during the school day or at after school events including athletic practices, athletic games, pioneers, concerts, open houses, etc.*

Other electronic devices are also included from entering the school building. See "Electronic Device Policy".

Chapel Summary

St. Mark's students attend chapel every Wednesday morning from 8:00-8:30. Parents and relatives are

invited to attend Wednesday chapel services. The children have the opportunity each Wednesday to ***bring an offering to chapel***. This voluntary offering is used to help support the work that our church and synod are doing to share the news of salvation through Jesus Christ with others throughout the world. The school staff chooses where their offerings will go. Several different projects are supported each school year.

Christian Family Solutions

St. Mark's Lutheran Church is part of the MAP- Member Assistance Program which is through Christian Family Solutions (A WELS Organization). This service is for any member of our church and can be referred to by reaching out to the pastoral staff.

Counselling Services

Mental Health services offered include classroom lessons, parent-teacher consultations, wellness check-ins, and group/individual counselling. There is no additional cost or fees for these services. A professional counselor will be onsite one day a week providing faith-integrated services. You will be informed by the counselor anytime that your child meets with that person. Families can also request a meeting with the counselor. To contact for services, please email at bretskaer@findingforwardresources.com

Dress Code, Uniform Policy, and Personal Grooming Policy Summary

St. Mark's staff assumes that parents are responsible for what their children wear to school. In all things, we act first of all to do everything in a decent and orderly manner to honor our Savior, Jesus Christ. Children are expected to be neat, clean, and **modest in uniform dress and appearance** and to dress for success.

The school administration enforces the dress code and personal grooming policy with the assistance of the teaching staff. Parents may be contacted if the teacher or the School Administration feels that dress or grooming is inappropriate. Parents are asked to purchase the school uniforms from Old Navy or the Children's Place. If sizes are not available at those stores then parents are asked to find what they need at other places while trying to match the approved colors and styles as much as possible.





St. Mark's Established Guidelines

- All clothing and accessories must be modest, neat, clean, in good condition, and sized appropriately.
- Leggings are not allowed in Grades 5-8, unless worn with a uniform dress, skirt, or long tunic.
- Clothing must not interfere with the safety of the child, especially during recess and phy-ed activities.
- Clean, non-marking tennis shoes are required for inside gym use.
- Appropriate footwear should be worn. Close-toed shoes, tennis shoes, and socks should be worn. No crocs or slippers.
- Teachers reserve the right to make decisions on appropriate dress based on the dress code policy.

Discipline Policy Summary

Purpose for Discipline

"Let us love one another, because love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. This is how God's love for us was revealed: God has sent his only-begotten Son into the world so that we may live through him. This is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

Dear friends, if God loved us so much, we also should love one another.
No one has ever seen God. If we love one another, God remains in us and his love has been brought to its goal in us.God is love. Whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him.This then is the command we have from him: The one who loves God should also love his brother." **(I John 4, selected verses.)**

The love that God has for us remains the driving factor in the relationships of students and teachers in our Christian school today. Christian love calls for discipline that will strengthen the discipleship of students and staff at St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School.

Initial discipline falls to the teacher; however, if there is a serious or ongoing problem, the student will be referred to the School Administrator or Assistant Principals. Communication between the school and parents in cases involving serious discipline issues will be established by the School Administrator or Assistant Principal.

Listing EVERY offense requiring Christian discipline is neither possible nor necessary. God's will for Christian living remains our guide. The Love for our Savior and what he has done for each and every one of us as sinners will be the motivation for our sanctified living in Christ.

Each individual discipline case will be handled by the School Administrator, Assistant Principals and/or the Educational Pastor. The appropriate consequences will be applied to each individual case for each violation of school policy and Christian virtues. Suspension can and will be used by the School Administrator. Suspension can be in-school suspensions or at-home suspensions. Expulsion can and will be recommended to the Board for School Ministry by the School Administrator in any case deemed necessary.

Parental Appeal Process For Discipline Cases

Parents have a right to appeal discipline cases. Parents that wish to appeal may follow the steps listed below:

- Parents may request a meeting with the School Administration to state their concerns and appeal their case. If parents are not satisfied with the decision of the School Administration they make a further appeal to the Board of School Ministry.
- The parents can request an appeal meeting from the Chairman of the Board of School Ministry.
- The Board will set a meeting with the parents in a timely manner. (five business days)
- The Parents can "make their case" to the Board Members and the Administration.
- The Board will then rule on the request of the parents and notify the parents in a timely manner of their decision. (three business days)
- There are no additional appeals for parents. The decision of the Board is the final dispensation of the case.

John 13:34b Jesus commanded, "...As I have loved you, so also you are to love one another."

Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco Policy Summary

The possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, vapes, paraphernalia, or any controlled substance, or the abusive use of a non-prescription drug, is not permitted on St. Mark's property or at any school-related event. This includes coming to school or any school-related event while already under the influence of these banned substances. Pretending to have drugs or other illegal substances, or talking about the use of such substances is also a violation of school policy, which will lead to disciplinary action by the school.

Possession of illegal substances will be reported to the appropriate authorities (Police). Further actions will be taken by the School Administrator, Assistant Principal, and the Board for School Ministry based on the seriousness of the violation.

Extended Child Care Program Summary

St. Mark's School offers an extended childcare program throughout the year. The Extended Care Center takes children starting at six weeks and older. The program is a self-supporting program funded by the parents who make use of the program. The hours of operation are from 6:00 am to 6:00pm. The cost of the program is $6.25 per hour for the first child and a smaller amount for additional children. Parents are billed on a weekly basis. Each school year (September-May) a one-time registration fee is $35.00 per year. For summer care (June-August), there is a registration fee of $20.00. If using year-round, one fee of $50.00 This is a

self-supporting operation and therefore all fees and hourly charges are billed and paid through the ECC. **All outstanding balances need to be paid in a timely manner before parents can continue to use the ECC.** Additional help is always needed in the ECC. If you would like to apply to work in the ECC, please contact the Extended Care Director.

Electronic Communication Policy Summary

The use of electronic communications by children is cause for caution and concern. Students do not have the maturity to make use of such powerful media in a variety of different circumstances. Often problems that arise from the use of electronic communication are brought into the school setting. The in-school human resources needed to deal with the problems caused between students using texting, social media, and electronic media requires a tremendous amount of human resources that St. Mark's School does not have available during the school day; therefore, if texting, social media, or other electronic media between students during or outside of school hours causes problems within the school day, the parents of the offending children will be called to pick up their children from school. If possible, a resolution will have to be worked out after school hours. If the difficulties cannot be resolved during after school hours, then the situation will be referred to the Board of School Ministry for possible disciplinary action.

Emergency Procedures Policy Summary

St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School conducts regular monthly fire drills. Tornado drills are conducted each school year. Special school safety drills are conducted by the Safety and Security Committee on an annual basis. An emergency Safety and Action Plan booklet is located in each of the classrooms in the building. The emergency Safety and Action Plan booklet provides instructions for all emergency situations. Parents can review any emergency procedures for the school by contacting the school office.

Field Trip Policy Summary

St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School places a high value on educational field trips. Each teacher and classroom is encouraged to follow the points listed below as they go about scheduling their field trips throughout the school year.

1. Each classroom is encouraged to take two to three regular field trips each school year
2. No out of state field trips without special permission from the Board of School Ministry
3. No overnight field trips are allowed.
4. All field trips must be approved by the principal and assistant principal.
5. All classrooms must use a bus company for transportation to or from a field trip site.
6. Finances for All Field Trips
    a. The teacher is responsible for setting up the field trip.
    b. The teacher must collect enough funds to cover the bus and other expenses for each field trip. All money collected will be handled by the school office in an appropriate manner.
    c. The teachers are encouraged to request that all field trip funds be collected as cash if possible.
7. **Teachers are required to use the field trip permission form when notifying parents of an upcoming field trip.**
8. **The special medical field trip form is used when the students go a distance greater than 70 miles for a field trip.**
9. Teachers will allow parent chaperones to go along as requested with one exception- the buses may only accommodate a certain number of chaperones. If the bus limits the number of chaperones, then the parents can still chaperone if they provide their own transportation to the field trip site. Chaperones are not allowed to bring other family members if they are chaperoning for the class.
10. All chaperones and parents are required to be trained as volunteers if they plan to chaperone on a field

trip. This includes grandparents and other relatives as well.

11. Any pictures taken on a field trip should not be posted on Social Media unless permission is granted following the FERPA Guidelines for schools.
12. Other additional items not covered in this policy should be relayed to the principal for further action.

Field Trip Pictures

There is a concern about field trip pictures being placed on social media as various grades take field trips throughout the school year. Field trips are school-sponsored events and as such certain rules apply to the use of these pictures which contain images of various students. We want parents and teachers to be able to take memorable pictures on their field trips at school; however, we are required to inform parents and teachers that ***these pictures should not be placed on social media.*** These pictures represent children participating in a school function and therefore the use of these pictures falls under the Church's policy concerning the use of those pictures. The school does ask permission of parents to make use of school-sponsored event pictures for various school purposes. This permission is provided by parents on the *"Family Information Signature Sheet"* signed by all parents at registration each year.

Gang Affiliation Policy Summary

Students attending St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School cannot be affiliated with any gang organizations. Gang colors, gang markings and signs, and gang clothing are not allowed on the premises of St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School. Students admitting to or bragging about being in a gang or having gang affiliations will be subject to immediate suspension from school. Each case will be investigated with a possible recommendation to the Board of School Ministry for removal from the school if there is a gang affiliation. Students are not to wear hats inside the building. Students wearing hats to school are instructed to wear their hats forward rather than in different positions which can indicate gang affiliation. Gang affiliation and gang activity will not be tolerated at St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School.

Gradebook Policy Summary

St. Mark's School uses an on-line data system called **Sycamore.** This data system provides parents with an instant view into the teacher's grade book for their child in grades 2 through 8. Parents are provided an access code for their child's grades as well as access to the family account for fees and the lunch program. In grades 6-8 progress reports are filled out by students weekly and therefore *we ask that parents check their child's grades at least once a week using the online access.* Parents are asked not to rely solely on this grade book for all communication with the teacher regarding their child's progress at school. The best and most effective communication is based on personal contact between the parents and the teacher.

Grade Level Promotion Policy Summary

The promotion of each student from grade to grade is based upon the student's achievement of the class work. A child will not be held back without previous arrangements with the parents and notification to the Board of School Ministry. All achievement is based on standards the school has established and on the God-given abilities of the student. Failure to complete subject matter may result in our school requesting the student to attend summer school. Students who continually put forth no or minimal effort toward their education may be subject to probationary status or disenrollment.

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School does have an orderly and sequential curriculum. The standards established by the State of Wisconsin are used in establishing the St. Mark's standards for curriculum. Testing is completed each year. The test used varies according to the needs of the school. Testing results are used to improve the curriculum for the students of St. Mark's Lutheran School.

Gum Policy Summary

To keep our building, carpeting, and furnishings clean and free from damage, **no gum chewing** is allowed on the school property. We ask for the parents' support in this matter so that our building does stay clean and free from damage related to gum.

Honor Roll Policy Summary

To be on the Honor Roll, a student in grades 5-8 needs to have a GPA of 3.0 and also have no grades lower than C-. To be on the High Honor Roll, a student in grades 5-8 needs to have a GPA of 3.5 and above.

Homework Policy Summary

St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School has established this homework policy to assist teachers and parents. This policy provides general guidelines for teachers and parents. There will be some differences from teacher to teacher and from family to family.

The talents and abilities that all students possess are gifts from God. God has given these gifts in varying amounts to all individuals. Some people have many more gifts than others, and some have fewer gifts than others.The amount of our God-given ability has nothing to do with our standing in God's eyes. God loves His children and blesses them because He has declared them righteous for Christ's sake. All that we are and have is a gift from God.

All children are important to us as parents and teachers because they are God's children. We understand that God holds us accountable for each student's well-being under our care. This then sets the groundwork for our homework expectations. May God bless our efforts as parents and teachers as we strive to develop the talents and abilities of God's precious children.

1. St. Mark's has a unified grading scale for grades Kindergarten through eighth grade. There is a different set of grades for certain subjects in the lower grades of K-2. The grading scale does not allow for double or triple F's or for greater levels of failure. Failure is failure. The lowest grade possible for any assignment is 65%. There are two exceptions to the grading policy: late work and no effort made on the work. **Late work will be graded down** according to how late the work is turned in. If a student does not turn in late work **according to what was agreed upon between the teachers and the parents, no credit will be given. When the student gives no effort, the grade can be lower than 65%.**
2. Teachers are expected to correct the work of the students in a timely manner. Teachers are also required to know whether a child has not been handing in his/her work in an acceptable manner. This means that a child should not fall behind in his/her work more than several school days before the parents are notified.
3. Parents and teachers should keep in contact with one another concerning a student's work habits and homework. This can be done with notes being sent home, phone calls, emails, or parent-teacher meetings. Parents need to keep in contact with teachers by reviewing their child's work regularly. Parents are encouraged to review grades on Sycamore on a regular basis. Parents should inform the teacher of any concerns about homework. **(Example: Too much homework, too little homework, or extreme frustration by the student and/or parent with assignments.)**
4. Teachers and parents need to recognize that our Special Education Teacher is there to assist and help guide them through difficult situations in grades PreK-8. All teachers in grades PreK-8 at St. Mark's work with the Special Education Teacher to help any child that is struggling with the academic challenges at school. With the permission of the parents, the Special Education Teacher can intervene in order to assist a struggling student. The Special Education Teacher and the classroom teacher will maintain a working relationship for the well-being of the child.
5. All teachers are responsible to fill out regular quarterly report cards based on performance for each

student. These reports need to be completed on time. Each teacher is required to keep a grade book where the child's work can be verified.

6. Student's papers will be sent home in any manner that a teacher chooses. Parents should insist that their child brings the papers home that the teacher has corrected. Parents are encouraged to review the papers on a regular basis.
7. If parents request, special programs will be set up for those students that need help in organizing their work and keeping their parents informed. Any particular program to assist students will be organized by the teacher and/or the Special Education teacher and discussed with the parents. Teachers and parents will need to partner together on such special programs if students are to be successful in their work.
8. Parents and teachers need to recognize the importance of homework as part of the academic program of any school. Both parents and teachers need to exercise common sense in their expectations concerning homework. Too little homework can cause problems as well as too much homework. All homework needs to be age and grade appropriate to be successful.
9. ***In grades 3-8, all homework for the day will be turned in and or collected by the teachers at 7:45 A.M. each morning. Homework not turned in will be considered late-work and fall under the late-work guidelines.***

May God bless our work as we strive to guide our students to develop their God-given abilities.

Guidelines for Homework Summary

Parents are asked to work with Memory Work on a daily basis. Grade eight Algebra is a demanding course that may require some extra time and effort every night. Pastor Walther's course and Pastor Backus's course for confirmation do not fall under the homework guidelines. Any and all concerns over the confirmation class homework and expectations should be discussed with Pastor Walther and / or Pastor Backus.

Parents are encouraged to read with their children on a daily basis. Reading is essential to all other areas of learning at every level. Taking time to read with your children will produce many blessings and benefits for your child.

Parents may assist their children with special projects. Parents are encouraged NOT to do the work for the child but rather to provide guidance and encouragement as the children work on their classroom projects. (i.e. Science Fair, Social Studies projects, other classroom projects)

Incomplete or Late Homework for Grades 5-8

Homework for the students in the middle and upper grades can be a problem at times. It is a serious concern for the teachers when students do not use their talents and complete their assignments on time. For those students that do not complete their work on time, every effort to assist these students will be made. Here is where parental support of the teachers is needed most. The following guidelines apply to late work:

1. Incomplete work is any assignment that is not finished and handed in by the time the teacher has designated as the deadline.
2. If there are extenuating reasons (illness, family emergency, etc.) for incomplete work, parents should communicate with the teacher explaining why it is incomplete.
3. When assignments are incomplete on a regular basis, the classroom teacher will notify the parents (i.e., phone call home, note sent to the parents, or an e-mail). Teachers and parents need to communicate regularly in these cases.
4. The teacher will ask the parents to monitor the student's assignments each night.
5. The parents need to stay in communication with the teacher by faithfully watching the assignments and their completion.
6. Students that consistently fail to complete their assignments over many days and weeks could be required to serve an in-school suspension or an out-of-school suspension.

7. Every effort will be made by teacher and parent working together to provide the proper guidance to these students who struggle with their homework.
8. Special needs students will be under a program designed by the Remedial teacher and classroom teacher based on the parent or teacher's request.

Make-Up Homework for Grades 5-8

After a student has been absent from school, arrangements should be made with the teacher to make up any work that has been missed. If a student will be absent for several days or longer, arrangements would be made with the teacher so that part of the make-up work may be done during the absence. Teachers can use their discretion to adjust make-up work requirements. Grading of make-up work will follow the unified grading scale policy.

If you plan an extended vacation during the school year, please provide the school with ample notice. This notice should be given to the teacher by the parent and not through the student. Parents are responsible for the student completing all make-up work during a vacation absence in a reasonable amount of time. Parents should not request assignments from the teacher any more than one week in advance of the impending vacation. The teacher may adjust the assignments according to their discretion while teaching the lesson. Students that struggle in school with academic work should not be removed from school for extended periods of time for family activities.

Any number of excessive days absent or tardy by a student, which may cause concern for the welfare of the child's education, may be brought to the attention of the School Administrator, parents, the Watertown Public Schools truancy officer, Human Services, and the St. Mark's Board of School Ministry.

Immunization Requirements Policy Summary



Parents should be sure their child's immunization records are kept up-to-date. Mrs. Helen Zellmer serves as our school nurse. Mrs. Zellmer can assist parents with questions concerning immunizations. The following are the minimum required immunizations for each age/grade level required by Wisconsin State Law *(NOTE: this is not a recommended immunization schedule for infants and preschoolers. For that schedule, contact your doctor or local health dept)*:

Very Important! 2024-2025 State of Wisconsin Requirements

STUDENT IMMUNIZATION LAW
AGE/GRADE REQUIREMENTS
2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR

The following are the minimum required immunizations for each age/grade level. It is not a recommended immunization schedule for infants and preschoolers. For that schedule, contact your doctor or local health department.

Age/Grade	Number of Doses					
Pre K (2 yrs through 4 yrs)	4 DTP/DTaP/DT[2]		3 Polio	3 Hep B	1 **MMR**[5]	1 Var[6]
Grades K through 5	4 DTP/DTaP/DT/Td[1,2]		4 Polio[4]	3 Hep B	2 **MMR**[5]	2 Var[6]
Grades 6 through 12	4 DTP/DTaP/DT/Td[2]	1 Tdap[3]	4 Polio[4]	3 Hep B	2 **MMR**[5]	2 Var[6]

1. DTP/DTaP/DT vaccine for children entering **Kindergarten:** Your child must have received one dose after the 4th birthday (either the 3rd , 4th or 5th dose) to be compliant. (Note: a dose 4 days or less before the 4th
   birthday is also acceptable).
2. DTP/DTaP/DT/Td vaccine for all students Pre K through 12: Four doses are required. However, if your child received the 3rd dose after the 4th birthday, further doses are not required. (Note: a dose 4 days or less before the 4th birthday is also acceptable).
3. Tdap means adolescent tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis vaccine. If your child received a dose of a tetanus-containing vaccine, such as Td, within 5 years of entering the grade in which Tdap is required, your child is compliant and a dose of Tdap vaccine is not required.
4. Polio vaccine for students entering grades Kindergarten through 12: Four doses are required. However, if your child received the 3rd dose after the 4th birthday, further doses are not required. (Note: a dose 4 days or less before the 4th birthday is also acceptable.)
5. The first dose of MMR vaccine must have been received on or after the first birthday (Note: a dose 4 days or less before the 1st birthday is also acceptable).
6. Var means Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine. A history of chickenpox disease is also acceptable.

Changes in Immunizations Required for 7th Grade, 2024 – 2025

7. **Meningococcal (MenACWY-containing) vaccine** is now required for students **entering seventh grade**, and a booster dose for students entering 12th grade.

   a. Meningococcal disease refers to any illness caused by the meningococcal bacterium (also called Neisseria meningitidis).
   b. These illnesses often are severe and can be deadly.
   c. The bacteria infect the blood, brain, and spinal cord. This is one of the most common causes of bacterial meningitis.

8. **Tdap** is required for students entering seventh grade. Previously Tdap was required for students entering sixth grade.

School Calendar Policy Summary

Annual Calendar

1. St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School will begin its school year with the Watertown Unified Public School District starting no earlier than September 1st as set forth by Wisconsin State Law. If Labor Day is earlier in the calendar, then school will start after Labor Day.
2. St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran school will end its school calendar for student contact days the Friday after Memorial Day. The Church & School Picnic is always held the first Sunday in June and school needs to end the Friday before the picnic. Graduation will be held on the last day of school, Friday evening, with a worship service.
3. The teaching staff of St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School will attend teacher conferences as planned into the calendar.
   i. WELS Western District Teachers' Conference held in February
   ii. The Wisconsin Lutheran State Teachers' Conference held in October

4. Christmas break for St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School will begin no earlier than December 22nd if it falls during the week. School will resume no earlier than January 4th allowing the day after New Years for people to travel home.
5. St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School will take all holidays in accordance with the Watertown Public School District Calendar.
6. St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School will follow the Watertown Public School District Calendar for Conferences and PD days.
7. St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School will take Easter Break as follows:
    a. Every effort will be made to adjust the schedule in accordance with Lakeside Lutheran High School and Luther Prep School.
    b. If these two schools cannot agree on a Spring/Easter Break, then St. Marks will decide which school to follow based on the discretion of the staff and Board of School Ministry.
    c. St. Mark's will not take Easter Break during Holy Week.
8. St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School will hold faculty and staff in-service meetings in May or at the end of the school year and in August before the new school year begins.
9. St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School will hold parent meetings in the month of August. All teachers will establish a visit with parents to be held at the home during the month of August.
10. St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School will strive to meet Wisconsin standards of number of hours.

2012 Act 257 WI Statute - Hours of Instruction Required (Number of School Days Not Required)
K 437 hrs. required; Grades 1-6 1050 hrs. required; Grades 7-8 1137 hrs. required.

The school calendar policy guidelines will always be guidelines and are not intended to override the needs of St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran Church. If there is a conflict between the needs of the Church and this School Calendar Policy, the need of the Church will always supersede the School Calendar Policy.

Monthly Master Calendar

St. Mark's School plans its activities a year in advance. The schedule for these activities can be found on the school's master calendar. The master calendar is provided to the parents electronically or by paper copy in the school office.

The school tries to adhere to the master calendar throughout the year. Sometimes an act of God may bring about a change in the calendar schedule. Please post the master calendar in your home so that you can stay in touch with all the different school activities for the year.

School Lunch Program Policy (NSLP) Summary

The National School Lunch Program is a federal program funded with federal money. The USDA and the WI Department of Instruction(DPI) are responsible for the administration of the program. In our society, many issues concerning sex and gender are in opposition to the scriptural principles which we hold to as fundamental beliefs of faith. The USDA does promote gender identity anti-discrimination language in their publications, forms, paperwork, and required posters. These statements are not in agreement with the beliefs of our fellowship and therefore are not the beliefs of St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School and its policies. We abide by our right as a religious organization to stand by our religious beliefs as outlined in our "Statement of Beliefs" at the forefront of this handbook.

Breakfast and lunch meals are served as part of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). This is a Federal Program and subject to the Federal Laws that guide this program. Applications for free and reduced cost meals are available to all families in the school. Eligibility for free and reduced-cost meals is determined by federal and state guidelines according to family size and income. Children who do not qualify for fee lunches *cannot receive meals on credit* throughout the school year. Every family needs to keep their lunch account current with a positive balance at all times. This is a legal requirement of the Federal NSLP program.

Breakfast is served from 7:00-7:30 A.M. It is the student's responsibility to be in line for breakfast by 7:30 A.M so they can eat and be to class on time by 7:45 A.M. Breakfast will not be served after 7:30 A.M. Students that arrive late to school will not be able to eat breakfast. Lunch is not available on days when classes are scheduled to be dismissed at 11:30 A.M. The cost for each meal is as follows:

	Breakfast	Lunch	Separate Lunch Milk
Full Cost	$3.25	$4.25	$.45 per carton
Reduced	$.45	$.45	Break Milk
Free	$.00	$.00	$66 per year (paid by the year)

Adult Lunch cost is $5.25 Adult Breakfast cost is $4.25

Milk is served with each meal and is included with the cost of the meal. Milk can be purchased separately by students who are not taking breakfast or hot lunch. The cost of a separate milk for lunch or breakfast is $.45 per milk. **Break milk** is served **for grades preK-2nd** grade. This break milk is a separate **milk purchase billed by the year.** The break milk for the 3 year-old children is $45 per year for the 3 day program or $75 per year for the 5 day program and for 4 year-old children through grade 2 children it is $75 per year.

All breakfast, lunch, and milk costs are paid by the parents through the **school office**. A **lunch account is set up on Sycamore** and can be monitored by the parents on a daily basis. All money paid for these food items is deducted from the parent's account on Sycamore on a daily basis**.** ***The food items are billed and paid for separately*** from all other school fees. This is done because the food items are **subsidized by the Federal Government** and need to be accounted for in a separate account. ***Separate checks*** *will be needed to pay for school fees and lunch fees.*

Students use their school ID as their lunch ticket. The cost of breakfast and lunch is deducted automatically from the parent's Sycamore account. Families where parents are separated need to agree on which parent will have the lunch account. *There can be* ***only ONE lunch account per family***. If you have questions about this, please contact the school office.

Adults are welcome to join us for breakfast or lunch. The cost of breakfast is $4.25 and lunch is $5.25 per adult.

Cold Lunch Guidelines

St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School makes use of the Federal National School Lunch Program (NSLP) for breakfast and lunch. The parents have the option of participating in the NSLP Program or sending their children a cold lunch. If a parent opts to send a cold lunch, then the following guidelines apply.

1. The school will provide a place for the students to keep their cold lunch. At the present time the children keep their cold lunch at their designated area in the hallway of school.
2. The parents need to assure that their child's cold lunch is in a proper container to prevent spoilage or contamination.
3. The teachers will allow students with cold lunch to bring their cold lunch to the dining area at their class's scheduled lunch-time.
4. The teachers will remind the students to take their cold lunch containers home each evening for cleaning by the parents.
5. Milk, Water, and Juice are allowed for drinks during cold lunch.
6. Students should not be bringing candy as a part of their cold lunch.

Music Program Policy Summary

Band: St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School works with a local band instructor. Band lessons are voluntary. The band instructor organizes and establishes his program for the students. The practice schedule and fee schedule for the band program are set by the band instructor before the year begins. Band is available to students in grades 5 through 8. ***The Band program is a self-supporting program and all fees need to be paid according to the guidelines established by the band instructor.***

Piano Lessons: The Board for School Ministry contracts with local piano teachers to operate our piano lesson program. Piano lessons are voluntary. The piano lesson schedule strives to avoid taking the students out of a core class whenever possible. If a child has a lesson during a core class, the student still is responsible for the homework from that class. The piano teachers will hold the lessons in our school. Costs for the lessons and the books are the responsibility of the parents established through the individual piano teachers.
Piano / Band: If a parent has enrolled their child in the voluntary piano or band classes, the parent is responsible to pay for the lessons in a timely manner. It is also expected that the parents abide by the agreement they signed with those instructors.
Choirs: St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School operates a choir program for students in grades 3 through 8. Students are required to participate in the choir as a co-curricular activity. Students in grades 3 through 5 participate in the **Alpha Choir;** students in grades 6 through 8 participate at school in the **Omega Choir.**
Omega and Alpha Choir: Choir is a mandatory choir for all students in grades 3-8 during the school day. Parents are asked to speak with the Choir Director concerning any family conflicts with the singing schedule. Please let the **choir director know ahead of time** about any conflicts with the schedule.

Choir Expectations

Teachers

- Two practices/week + additional practices as needed
    - students singing in proper range - teacher monitor
    - active participation - teachers closely monitor
- Preparation for worship: should not have to leave the sanctuary, seated quietly
- Teachers sitting within or near choir - same as if a student sat with parent
- Show by example and monitor:
    - Active worship: posture, listening, participating
    - Active singing: open mouths, posture, attitude

Students

- Two practices/week + additional practices as needed
    - students singing in proper range - teacher monitor
    - active participation - teachers closely monitor
- Seating in church: same as in choir practice, arranged according to voice and height
- Preparation for worship: should not have to leave the sanctuary, seated quietly
- Active worship: posture, listening, participating
- Active singing: open mouths, posture, attitude, proper range
- Clothing should be appropriate and respectful for worship.

Parents

- Students are expected to be present to sing
    - helps meet state academic standards - performance standard
    - helps meet God's standard - 3rd Commandment
- Teach your child in church
    - Active worship: posture, listening, participating
    - Active singing: open mouths, posture, attitude, proper range

Student Participation in Singing for Worship

Singing God's praises in a worship service is a privilege. At various times during the school year, the school children are scheduled to sing for worship services. When a child's class sings, all students of that class are expected to be present. We need to have your children in attendance so that the worship service is beautified by the singing of the children. Please prayerfully consider this issue as you plan your weekly church attendance.

Medication Policy Summary

If a child is required to take medication during school hours, parents are required to fill out a ***Medication***

Form. The State Law requires that all medications will be kept in the school office under lock and key. The medications need to be in their original container with the student's name on it. ***Over the counter medications such as cough drops, aspirin, etc. need to be kept in the office as well according to the law***. Exceptions to this policy are students that have inhalers, epi-pens, or other medical devices prescribed by a doctor. These medications and or devices should be kept with the student at all times.

Parental and Student Rights Policy Summary

St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School will not create policies that are contrary to Scripture or infringe on the rights of parents or students. God has placed the parents as the primary authority over their children. St. Mark's School respects the Scriptural position of parents over their children. When parents enroll their children at St. Mark's School a firm partnership between the parents and teachers exists. Expectations for parents, children and teachers are shared with parents on an annual basis. **(See WELS / St. Mark's Statements of Belief and Parent Expectations Policy)** The rights of children are respected and upheld at St. Mark's School in accordance with the Holy Scriptures.

St. Mark's School publishes the following non-discriminatory statement:

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

Guidelines in Custody Cases

In our American society, families come in all different sizes and types. Many families are intact with two biological parents raising their children. In other families there may be only one parent raising the children due to other circumstances. Still, in other families, the children may be adopted or raised by relatives and or grandparents. In all of these situations, St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School follows and obeys all legal rights that parents or custodial parents have regarding their children. The following guidelines are shared with parents if there is a custodial dispute about their children.

- The relationship that St. Mark's School has with the parents is a contractual relationship "At Will" that the parents entered into. That relationship can be terminated at any time by either the parents or the school. If the relationship is terminated by either party (Parents or School) all laws regarding the rights of the parents, children, and school staff will be followed and obeyed.
- The relationship St. Mark's has with their school families is a "Partnership" based on a spiritual basis. (See the Partnership Policy)
- All legal rights of parents are maintained in custodial issues with their children and their relationship with the school.
- Biological parents retain all rights over their children at school unless there is a court ordered change to that custody.
- Parents, whether biological or adoptive, are treated as "The Parents" of the children.
- In court ordered custody of children, all conditions of the court order will be followed and obeyed by St. Mark's School.
- In all court ordered custody cases, a copy of the court order needs to be provided by the custodial parents to the school personnel. That copy is placed into the student's permanent record file at school. If the court ordered provisions are not provided to the school, then the biological parents, adoptive parents, or custodial parents, retain all rights over their children.
- St. Mark's School will not deny biological parents, adoptive parents, or court ordered custody parents access to their children or interfere with any of their parental rights.

- In cases where parents are separated or divorced, the court order provisions of that separation or divorce in regards to the children will be honored by St. Mark's School and its personnel.
- In cases where one parent has been convicted of a crime against children, the other parent must supply the court ordered provisions of the probationary status of that felon parent. The court ordered probationary provisions must be provided to the school and will be placed into the student's file. Failure to produce those probationary provisions will result in the felon parent having their full parental rights concerning their children.
- The parent that enrolls their child at St. Mark's School is the parent that the communication will flow through.
- School personnel will follow all the FERPA regulations regarding communication and sharing of school information with non-custodial relatives of the children.

Parent-Teacher Problem Solving Policy Summary

We certainly desire to develop a close working partnership between parents and teachers. Such a partnership is certainly God-pleasing and serves to bring about a unity of effort in educating the child.

At times a problem or misunderstanding may develop. It is not good to leave these matters to themselves even for a short period of time. If at any time you have a question, please feel free to follow the steps to solve the problem in a God-pleasing fashion. It is the aim of all concerned to clear up any problems in a Christ-like manner with as little disturbance as possible.

Problem Solving Step: John 13:34b "... As I have loved you, so also you are to love one another."

1. First, determine what the problem is. Determine with whom the problem is and the cause for the concern.
2. Go directly to the person/teacher with whom you have the concern.
3. If you feel that no solution can be found between the two parties, take your concerns to the School Administrator as a second party to hear both views on the problem. The School Administrator will involve the Assistant Principal, and the Educational Pastor at this point.
4. If no solution can be found, the Board of School Ministry will then be called upon by the School Administrator, Assistant Principal, and the Educational Pastor to lend their wisdom and aid to solving the problem.

We pray that all parents and teachers would follow these steps and work in a God-pleasing manner.

Partnership Policy Summary

Home and School Partnership

Since the students that attend St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School are members of St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church, the students and their families come under all the policies of St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church. The responsibility of the church is to provide opportunities in the instruction of God's Word and opportunities for worship. The responsibility of the families of St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School are to be faithful in their use of the Means of Grace by attending worship services on a weekly basis and making use of the opportunities to study God's Word through Bible classes. Parents' responsibility for the education of their child rests in the partnership with the teachers in the school. Parents need to be actively involved in their child's Christ-centered education.

Christian parents have the primary responsibility for the education of their children in the ways of the Lord. St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran Elementary School has been established to partner with parents in their God-given responsibility. Parents and teachers must work together in the common goal of training God's children in the ways of the Lord. You, as parents, can help your child grow in the ways of the Lord. Some of those ways include:

1. Placing God's Word foremost in your lives.

2. Having regular family devotions and table prayers.
3. Attending church every week at St. Mark's with your children.
4. Encouraging your children to respect their teachers and all in authority.
5. Refraining from criticism of teachers or school procedure in front of your children.
6. Making sure that your children are prompt and regular in attendance to school.
7. Encouraging your children to be considerate, courteous, and Christ-like when dealing with all people.

Partnership Assistance

Our congregation's school exists to assist you in the Christian education of your children. A large part of that partnership revolves around serving your children through a wide variety of curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities. Another important aspect of that partnership is supporting you as you strive to raise your children as God's children.

Our school's support of Christian parents can take on many different forms. Often it may be words of encouragement offered by one of our staff members. Sometimes it might be you requesting some formal counseling for a difficult situation. Every day, it means our teachers remind the students that the Savior who first loved them now lovingly directs them to honor, love and obey their parents.

Periodically, it also means offering opportunities for parents to grow in their parenting knowledge and skills. As partners and parents, we will together look at the challenges and blessings of being Christian parents. Together, we will seek direction from God's Word and talk about practical steps to better serve our children.

Playground and Recess Policy Summary

1. Students are not to bring any items from home to use on the playground unless the teacher provides permission.
2. Students are not to go out on 8th Street for any reason.
3. Students are not to throw ice chunks or snowballs.
4. Students are encouraged to be active at recess.
5. For indoor recess time, clean-non-marking shoes are needed for the gym.
6. All students are required to obey the recess supervisors.

Outside Recess Weather

Students will **not** go out for recess under the following conditions:

1. If the temperature is 5 degrees or lower, or there is a wind chill of 5 degrees or below.
2. If there is heavy slush on the playground.
3. If there is steady rain.

All students in grades K-5 are required to have proper winter clothing; boots, hats, gloves, and jackets. If students do not have boots they need to stand in a dry place on the playground for recess. Students in grades 6-8 are also required to have proper winter clothing with one exception; boots are optional if they play on the blacktop and not in the snow. All students who play in the snow must wear boots.

Pre-K Program Policy Summary

(3 and 4 year-old program)

The Pre-Kindergarten program has been established for 3-year-olds and 4-year-olds. The 3-year-old program will operate three days per week. The 4-year-old program will operate five days per week. The calendar for pre-kindergarten will follow the school calendar for the year. For information, please contact the school office or the director of the preschool program.

School Hours Policy Summary

Pre-K - Morning Session - 7:45 A.M.-11:00 A.M.; Afternoon Session - 11:45 A.M.-3:00 P.M.
Kindergarten through 8th Grade — 7:45 A.M. until 3:15 P.M.(Staggered Release)
Wednesdays (except Advent and Lent) — 7:45 A.M. until 2:00 P.M.
Classroom doors open at 7:15 A.M.
Classes begin at 7:45 A.M.
School Commons opens at 7:00 A.M..
School Supervision from 7:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.

Before School

The Commons area will be open from 7:00-7:30 A.M. for breakfast and for the students that **NEED** to arrive early to school. The Childcare Center will open at 6:00 A.M. Students that need to arrive before 7:00 A.M. must make use of the Childcare Center. The classrooms open at 7:15 A.M. Teachers are preparing for the day and attending faculty devotion in the morning; therefore, we encourage our parents to take this into consideration when trying to meet with the teachers in the morning. It is better to meet with teachers after school or to set up a pre-arranged appointment. **Breakfast will not be served after 7:30 A.M.**

Thank you for not dropping off your child(ren) at the Commons before 7:00 A.M!

After School

Parents are encouraged to be as prompt as possible when picking up their children. Students are to be picked up by 3:30 P.M. unless they are attending an after-school activity. The Childcare Center is available and should be used if students must remain later than 3:30 P.M. Students that are not picked up by 3:30 P.M. will be taken to the Child Care Center, except for special circumstances via the office.

Dismissal from classrooms will be at 3:15 P.M.

Thank you for being prompt to pick up your child(ren)!

Visitors to School Policy Summary

St. Mark's welcomes visitors to the classroom. All visits have to be in keeping with the instructional purpose of the school. **Visitors must sign into the school office whenever they enter the school building before going to their destination.** These same visitors are asked to sign out at the school office when they leave. **All visitors will be given a visitor's pass at the office which needs to be worn by the visitor while in the building.**

Parents that need to pick up their children during the school day for a variety of reasons are asked to check in at the school office. Parents will be directed to wait in the school office until their child comes to the office from their classroom.

Student Activities Summary

Co-curricular Activities

Co-curricular – These activities are part of the school day. A student cannot be ineligible from any of these activities:

- Choir (grades 3-8)
- Band
- Piano
- Music Concerts
- Lions' Pride Activities
- Gr. 5-8 Forensics
- MLC Meet Math
- All School Entertainment Night

Festival

- Lakeside Fine Arts

Extra-Curricular Activities

Extra-Curricular – These activities are "extras" and are outside of the school day. Based on academic performance and attitude **students can be ineligible from these activities** as described under the eligibility guidelines:

- All Sports Activities
- Lakeside Spelling Bee
- Forensics (5-8) Regional Meets
- Lakeside Math Meet
- Lakeside Visual Arts Fair

Volunteer Training Policy Summary

Congregational members are encouraged to volunteer to assist with various activities around the school. All volunteers are required to go through volunteer training before serving as a volunteer at St. Mark's. Congregational members are trained as level 1 volunteers. Parents and relatives that are not members of St. Mark's can be trained as level 2 volunteers. All volunteers will be supervised by the School Administrator.

All volunteers must complete a volunteer application and attend a training session before serving as a volunteer. All volunteers that are trained will need to be re-trained every two years. All training is good for two years. The training sessions are part of the registration process. All volunteers that work with children directly or indirectly need to pass a background check. Training is valid for a two-year cycle on odd years. (i.e. 2017-2019, 2019-2021, etc.)

For more information, please contact the School Administrator. Great Christian schools have great involvement from their Christian members.

Weapons Policy Summary

Weapons, including guns and knives of any kind, are not allowed on St. Mark's property or at any school-sponsored activity. The threat to use a weapon on St. Mark's property or at a school-related activity will not be tolerated. Possession of any type of weapon on St. Mark's property or at a school-related activity will result in immediate action by the School Administrator and Board for School Ministry. In an incident involving the use of weapons on school property or at sponsored events, the appropriate authorities will be informed.

At the present time, teachers and pastors are not allowed to conceal carry on church and school grounds. That will be under review as the rules in our society continue to change.

Weather Policy Summary

Emergency Closings

School closings are announced on radio stations WTTN (AM-1580) and WTMJ (AM-620) and also on TV, (TMJ-4). All school closings are announced by the Watertown Unified Public School District. **When inclement weather causes Watertown Public Schools to close, St. Mark's will also be closed.**

St. Mark's follows the Watertown School district for most school closings. If the Watertown School District closes down for weather then St. Mark's would also close school***. In rare instances if the weather conditions are deemed dangerous and Watertown Public Schools do not close, St. Mark's reserves the right to close if necessary.*** Please watch the news for any announcements throughout the remainder of this winter concerning weather related closing for Watertown.

If you, as a parent, decide not to travel to bring your children to school when the weather is too cold or there is too much snow, that is your decision. Parents have the right to choose not to send their children to school if they determine the weather is too dangerous for the family to travel to and from school. The

children's absences are recorded as excused absences under those situations.

On days when classes are canceled, or school is dismissed early due to inclement weather, all youth activities under the supervision of the Board for School Ministry will be canceled.

Wellness Policy – St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School

Federal and State law requires schools to have a Wellness Policy. St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School complies and has an ongoing Wellness Policy. Each year at the Parent Meetings held in August, the parents can review and add input to the Wellness Policy. Copies of the Wellness Policy can be found in the "Parent Folder" on the school's Google drive. The Wellness Policy is reviewed every three years and an ongoing report will be listed on the "Parent Pages" for parents to review. A paper copy of the Wellness policy will be provided upon request by any parent. Please contact the school office to receive a paper copy.

School Fees Policy Summary

The fees that parents pay for their children to attend St. Mark's cover only part of the cost to operate the school. The Board of School Ministry and the congregation as a whole strive to keep the fees as low as possible for the families. **The actual operational cost per child for the operation of St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School from preschool age through 8th grade is approximately $5,200.** It is the hope and prayer that all the members of St. Mark's share their earthly blessings with their Lord through their weekly offerings so that the various programs of ministry at St. Mark's can be properly funded including the operation of the school.

The policy of St. Mark's congregation is to encourage all of its families to send their children to St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School. If there is a lack of financial means for a family, the congregation stands ready to help so that a child will not be denied attendance at St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School. The congregation has established a financial assistance program for families that need help with their fees. Assistance forms are available through the school office.

School Fees

*All Fees are Included

Grade	1st Child	Additional Children
PreK3 (3 day Option)	$700	$700
K4 – 8th Grade	$1400	$700
Non-Member (WELS)	$3000	$3000

Fee Assistance

Fee Assistance will be based on family needs set forth in the fee assistance guidelines. Many parents still struggle with their school fees; therefore, the Board of School Ministry is clarifying how families will be required to handle their school fees. All families are required to have a plan on how they will handle their responsibility for their school fees. Families that need assistance are also required to have a plan to pay their school fees based on the assistance provided by the congregation.

The State of WI has passed a law concerning private school fees paid by parents. This new law allows parents in the State of Wisconsin to deduct the school fees that they pay to a private school; however, it is only for school fees and does not cover books and other items purchased through school.

Final Comments

Not all specific situations or understandings can be expressed in a handbook of policies. It is the

understanding of the school staff as they work with their Christian parents that God's Word will be our guide in all of our dealings with one another. Items not covered in this policy handbook will be worked through on the basis of God's Word and the Mission of the school. ***The support of school policies by all parents is vital to the Mission of St. Mark's School.*** The partnership that exists between the school staff and parents is a Christian bond based on our common faith as we are united in that common faith. We pray that Jesus will bless our efforts as we work together in taking care of His lambs.

Teaching Staff- Called Workers

	Last Name	First Name	Title Position	Position
Mr.	Uttech	Fred	Administrator/Teacher	Administrator
Mr.	De Frain	Casey	Teacher/Science Upper Grades/Technology Director	8th Grade
Mr.	Kassulke	Tim	Teacher/Social Studies Upper Grades/Assistant Principal	7th Grade
Mrs.	Behl	Kristen	Teacher/Upper Grade English/Library Coordinator	6th Grade
Mrs.	Koester	Brenda	Teacher/ Music Coordinator	5th Grade
Mr.	Hirsch	David	Teacher/Athletic Director	4th Grade
Mrs.	Skaer	Niki	Teacher/Marketing	3rd Grade
Mrs.	Kassulke	Tammie	Teacher	2nd Grade
Mrs.	Fredrick	Natezia	Teacher/Cub Club/Secretary	1st Grade
Ms.	Mays	Tabitha	Teacher	Kindergarten
Mrs.	Tetzlaff	Carol	Teacher/Preschool Director	PreK3-4
Mrs.	Backus	Jessica	Remedial Grades K-8 & ALEKS Math	K-8th Grade
Pastor	Jensen	Michael	Associate Pastor/District President	Pastor
Pastor	Backus	James	Associate Pastor/Education Pastor	Pastor
Pastor	Walther	Karl	Associate Pastor/Outreach Pastor/Elders	Pastor
Pastor	Wells	Peter	Associate Pastor/Pastoral Ministry	Pastor
Ev.	Hochmuth	Dave	Evangelist	Evangelist
Mrs.	Palacios	Becca	Hispanic Liaison	Secretary

Support Staff

	Last Name	First Name	Title Position	Position
Mrs.	Borchardt	Monica	Administrative Assistant	Secretary
Mrs.	Palacios	Becca	Secretary P.M./Hispanic Liaison	Secretary P.M.
Mrs.	Ochoa	Erica	Teacher's Aide	Aide Preschool
Mrs.	Kumbier	Deb	Teacher's Aide	Aide 6-8
Mrs.	Zweig	Joyce	Teacher's Aide	Aide Special Ed
Mr.	Koester	Jason	Teacher's Aide	Aide 3-5
Mrs.	Rabehl	Ashley	Kitchen Staff	Cook
Ms.	Maldonado	MaGuadalupe	Kitchen Staff	Helper
Mrs.	Uttech	Peggy	NSLP Coordinator	NSLP Coordinator
Mrs.	Hensler	Cathy	Administrative Assistant/Accountant	Admin. Assist.
Miss	Hensler	Kelsey	Child Care Director	Director
Mrs.	Wollinger	JoAnn	Child Care	Child Care

Mrs.	Hensler	Cathy	Child Care	Child Care
Mrs.	Lohneis	Shelly	Child Care	Child Care
Mr.	Magritz	Randy	Church Cleaning	Janitor
Mr.	Zwieg	Ron	School Cleaning	Janitor
Msr.	Manke	Becky	School Cleaning	Janitor
Mr.	Manke	Dennis	School Cleaning	Janitor
Mr.	Duwe	Brett	Band Director	Band Director
Mrs.	Zellmer	Helen	School Nurse	Nurse
Mrs.	Scheiber	Nancy	School Nurse	Nurse
Mr.	Skaer	Bret	School Counselor	Counselor

St. Mark's Teachers and Pastors Email Addresses

School Office smlsoffice@smlswatertown.com
Mrs. Tetzlaff carol.tetzlaff@smlswatertown.com
Mrs. Kassulke tammie.kassulke@smlswatertown.com
Mrs. Fredrick natezia.fredrick@smlswatertown.com
Mrs. Skaer niki.skaer@smlswatertown.com

Mrs. Koester brenda.koester@smlswatertown.com
Mrs. Behl kristen.behl@smlswatertown.com
Mr. De Frain casey.defrain@smlswatertown.com
Mr. Kassulke tim.kassulke@smlswatertown.com
Mr. Uttech fred.uttech@smlswatertown.com
Mrs. Backus jessica.backus@smlswatertown.com
Pastor Backus pastor.backus@smlcwatertown.com
Pastor Jensen pastor.jensen@smlcwatertown.com
Pastor Walther pastor.walther@smlcwatertown.com
Pastor Wells pastor.wells@smlcwatertown.com

Board of School Ministry

Mr. Chris Denniston denniston6@hotmail.com

Policies and Permissions - Parent Sign Off on Separate Sheet

Parents, please read the following policies and permissions and sign off on all of the items on the *Family Sign Off Form*

Communication Policy Using Electronic Email Summary

St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School provides many valuable pieces of information for school families via electronic communication. Therefore all families are asked to provide a viable email address or multiple email addresses. These addresses will allow the school to save substantial funds by reducing printing and copying costs. Please provide your email addresses on the annual family information sheet.

Please Provide Email Addresses on the Family Information Form

Bus Family Policy Summary

Families that require bus services for their children ***are required to fill out the bus request form for the Watertown Transportation Service Incorporated.*** Please complete the forms and submit them to the school office by the due date each year. Also, please sign off on busing on the School Forms Verification Sheet.

Please Provide Busing Information on the Family Information Concerning this Policy

Permission for Students to Go Off School Grounds Policy Summary

The purpose of this policy is to allow students of St. Mark's to leave the school grounds under the supervision of a teacher for phy-ed. classes, science walks, nature walks, etc. Parental permission is needed to allow students to leave school grounds. The parents granting this permission are allowing the teachers of St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School to take their children off school grounds for various activities during the school day. The children will always leave the school grounds with proper teacher supervision and the students will not be left unsupervised at any time while off school grounds. All activities that require the teachers to take the children on special field trips will still require a special signed permission form from the parents. That special field trip form will be sent home at the appropriate time during the school year.

<u>Please Sign</u> on the Family Information Form Concerning this Policy

Special Education Federal Title I Policy Summary

St. Mark's works with the Watertown Public School District's Title I Reading Program. This program provides additional specialized reading instruction to those students in grades one and two who qualify for services. To determine whether a student qualifies for the Title I Program, students are screened by qualified Public School Personnel in St. Mark's building, under the supervision of St. Mark's school administration. We ask for your permission to have your child considered and screened for the Title I Reading Program, should their regular classroom teacher deem such screening appropriate and necessary. Should your child qualify for the services of the Title I Reading Program you will be notified by Public School Personnel thru the St. Mark's school administration.

<u>Please Sign</u> on the Family Information Form Concerning this Policy

Special Education Policy Summary

St. Mark's takes the learning needs of each child very seriously. It is very important that if you, as the parent or guardian, have any concerns related to your child's learning needs during the school year that you first express your concerns to your child's regular classroom teacher. If you believe your child needs services for their special learning needs, additional testing services, or other outside services relating to their special learning needs, you may consult with the St. Mark's School Administration. Please remember it is important that you first consult the regular classroom teacher to determine the child's learning needs and document such needs. This includes students with special speech needs and IEP's. The school administration can then communicate with you the appropriate next step in getting your child the extra help to meet their learning needs.

<u>Please Sign</u> on the Family Information Form Concerning this Policy

Choir Policy Summary

- St. Mark's offers a mandatory vocal choir for all students in grades 3-8 of the school.

- The purpose of these choirs is to first and foremost give the students the opportunity to serve and glorify their Lord in worship and concert through the use of music. In addition, these choirs will encourage the students to develop their musical skills and knowledge in an applied way.
- Again, it is important for students and parents to understand that participation in a choir does require a time commitment.
- Participation in a choir also teaches students about working together not as individuals, but as one "choir family." This common goal creates a sense of unity and oneness in the choir as all the individual voices create a unified sound together.
- We look forward to working with the students in the choirs this year. If you have any questions or would like more information please contact one of the directors
- The rehearsal schedule for the choirs is as follows:
    - Omega Choir (grades 6-8) – 30 minutes twice a week.
    - Alpha Choir (grades 3-5) – 20 minutes twice a week.

Omega Choir 2024-2025

Expectations for Teachers

- Two practices/week + additional practices as needed
    - students singing in proper range - teacher monitor
    - active participation - teachers closely monitor
- Preparation for worship: should not have to leave the sanctuary, seated quietly
- Teachers sitting within choir - same as if a student sat with parent
- Show by example and monitor:
    - Active worship: posture, listening, participating
    - Active singing: open mouths, posture, attitude

Expectations for Students

- Two practices/week + additional practices as needed
    - students singing in proper range - teacher monitor
    - active participation - teachers closely monitor
- Seating in church: same as in choir practice, arranged according to voice and height
- Preparation for worship: should not have to leave the sanctuary, seated quietly
- Active worship: posture, listening, participating
- Active singing: open mouths, posture, attitude, proper range
- Clothing should be appropriate and respectful for worship.

Expectations for Parents

- Students are expected to be present to sing
    - helps meet God's standard - 3rd Commandment
- Teach your child in church
    - Active worship: posture, listening, participating
    - Active singing: open mouths, posture, attitude, proper range

Please Sign on the Family Information Form Concerning this Policy

Computer Network and Internet Use Policy Summary

For your safety and protection, school authorities have access to all usage and do monitor for appropriate usage. School authorities may review files to maintain system integrity and ensure that students are

using the system properly.

Each student is assigned his/her own file on the system. The student is assigned a login name and password to protect his/her files and to determine which software programs the user is allowed to use. *(The teacher handles the password for the youngest students.)* Students should not give their password to anyone else, because the student is responsible for any network use under his/her login name. In addition, the students may be asked to create an email account for school use only. These accounts will be controlled and monitored by the teachers for all school use.

The school expectations for Christian conduct apply when using computers.

Specific expectations of students accessing the school network:

- Use your own file system; do not use or tamper with anyone else's system.
- Use the network properly. Do not do anything that would disrupt the use of the network by others.
- Respect all copyright laws. Students may only run software that is licensed to the school; do not load, run, or copy any other software.
- Cost of repairs for damage caused by carelessness, negligence, or vandalism will be the responsibility of the student and parents.

Specific expectations of students accessing the internet.

- General Email accounts, chat rooms, and known objectionable sites are blocked from student access at school. Do not try to access such sites.
- Even with filtering and monitoring, some material accessible on the internet may be inappropriate and sinful. If, despite our diligence, such a site is accessed, report it immediately to the teacher.
- Never reveal your name, address, or phone number on the internet.
- Information downloaded from the internet is to be placed in the student's file or on a disk.
- Students may not access Facebook or any other social networks at school or using any school computers after school hours.
- Network/internet privileges may be suspended for not meeting these expectations.

Parents, it is very important that you read this policy and agree to the conditions for your child to use the computer network and internet. Discuss this agreement with your child/ren in the way that is best, taking into consideration your child's age.

<u>Please Sign</u> on the Family Information Form Concerning this Policy

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Family Policy Compliance Office - U.S. Department of Education

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
    - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
    - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
    - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
    - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
    - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
    - Accrediting organizations;
    - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
    - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
    - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.
    - Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

<u>Please Sign</u> on the Family Information Form Concerning this Policy

Google Education – St. Mark's Policy Summary

School Google Education Accounts

This permission form is for parents of students in grades 3-8 at St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School in Watertown, WI. The students of grades 3-8 make use of technology in their daily classes. Transporting portable devices such as jump drives can transfer viruses back and forth between school and home, so they are not allowed. To avoid this possible problem, the school has established a working relationship with Google Education. Each student in grades 3-8 has Google Education account access through school.

- This account is owned, operated, and controlled by the school and Google Education.
- The students are asked to use this account when moving assignments and other data back and forth from home and school.
- This account may be used from home with parental guidance.
- An initial password is set up by the school allowing parents or students access to change and create their own passwords.
- The school reserves the right to change a password whenever necessary to preserve the security and protection of the child and their account.
- Parents are asked to supervise the child's use of the account at home so that the child does not use the account in an inappropriate manner. The account is to be used for school purposes only.
- The account can be closed at any time by the school if the child breaks the "usage guideline" as listed.
- The school will monitor the student's account periodically through the Technology Director.
- All questions can be directed to the school technology director, classroom teacher, or the administration of the school.
- No email accounts will be included in these Google Education Accounts!

<u>Please Sign</u> on the Family Information Form Concerning this Policy

Chromebook Use Agreement

Students in grades 3-8 will be participating in a one-to-one program where each student will have a Chromebook to use. We believe that this access to technology will be a great benefit to our students. However, there are some points that need to be specified:

- Chromebooks are property of St. Mark's.
- Students will be provided a Chromebook. No other devices should be brought or used in school.
- Chromebooks will be labeled and the student will only use their assigned Chromebook in each class.
- If a Chromebook gets broken or damaged, whether by accident or negligence, the student whose Chromebook gets broken or damaged is responsible to pay for repairs. The parents will be informed about the damages. Since the Chromebook is St. Mark's property, permission is not required from the parents to make the necessary repairs. As a courtesy to the parents, the school will inform the parents of the repair. Parents may not substitute their own Chromebook or make repairs on their own to any school Chromebook. The parent(s) will be informed when this charge is applied. The Chromebook remains the property of St. Mark's school until a student opts to purchase the Chromebook upon graduation from 8th grade.
- If a Chromebook malfunctions on its own (e.g. the battery dies), St. Mark's will pay for that repair.
- If a Chromebook needs to be repaired, a temporary Chromebook will be loaned to the student until repairs are completed.
- If a Chromebook is damaged beyond repair, a new one will need to be purchased by the student.
- Chromebooks are to stay at school at all times. They should never leave the St. Mark's campus.
- If additional accessories are needed for the Chromebooks (e.g. mice, headphones, etc.), the school must give permission.
- All Chromebooks will be monitored through a program called GoGuardian. GoGuardian also provides web filtering. Through it, St. Mark's can see every activity that each student does on a Chromebook. This does not monitor anything beyond St. Mark's Chromebooks.

In grades 6-8, the same Chromebook will be staying with the student for all 3 years. Therefore:

- Students who graduate from St. Mark's will be able to purchase their Chromebooks for a nominal fee. Costs may vary depending on how old the Chromebooks are or how long the student has been at St. Mark's.
- Students who do not graduate from St. Mark's will not get to keep or purchase the Chromebooks. If a student leaves for any reason before graduation, the Chromebook will remain property of St. Mark's.
- Once a Chromebook has been purchased after graduation, St. Mark's is no longer responsible for that Chromebook. All responsibility for that Chromebook is on that student and his/her family.

<u>Please Sign</u> on the Family Information Form Concerning this Policy

St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran School – Watertown, WI

Parental Covenant (2026-2027)

I am redeemed by the blood of Christ and called to a new life following Jesus.
"The life I am now living in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20)

By enrolling my child(ren), I enter into this covenant with St. Mark's Church and School. By God's grace I will strive to live it faithfully. When I stumble, I will trust Christ's forgiveness and strength to help me begin again.

(By placing your initials beside each statement, you affirm these commitments.)

_____ **Lead family devotions** with God's Word in my home.
"Impress these words on your children…when you sit in your house." (Deut. 6:7)

_____ **Worship each week at St. Mark's,** gladly hearing God's Word when able.
"Let us not neglect meeting together, as some have the habit of doing." (Heb. 10:25)

_____ **Live a God-pleasing life,** pursuing what is good and godly, and fleeing substance abuse, foul language, sexual immorality, and ungodly media.
"Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit." (1 Cor. 6:19)

_____ **Ensure my child(ren) are prepared,** well-rested, well-dressed, well-fed, on time, and ready for school.
"Start a child out on the way he should go." (Prov. 22:6)

_____ **Support my child(ren) in learning,** completing assignments, hymns, and memory work.
"Whatever you do, keep working at it with all your heart." (Col. 3:23)

_____ **Recognize that enrollment is a blessing** for families who, by God's grace, seek to live faithfully in this covenant, and that enrollment may be discontinued if this covenant is persistently neglected.
"As for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." (Josh. 24:15)

By the Spirit's power and with God's help, I enter into this covenant with St. Mark's Church and School.

<u>Please sign</u> the Parental Covenant.

St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran Church and School

Standards for Appropriate Communication Between School Staff/Volunteers and Students

Policy Purpose & Scope

To ensure a safe, professional and respectful learning environment, all staff members are expected to adhere to the following communication guidelines when interacting with any students, including those enrolled at St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran School**.** Beginning on Sept. 1, 2026, this policy is also adopted in compliance with 2025 Wisconsin Act 89.

This policy and standards apply to all school employees and volunteers, including coaches, when acting on behalf of the school. All applicable individuals will hereby be defined as "staff."

The policy and standards below apply to communications that occur either during or outside school hours.

Appropriate Communication Content

- All communication between staff and students must be professional, transparent, and observable by others.
- All communication with students must be within the scope of the staff member's assigned duties and responsibilities. Staff may not send communications to students if the content is not about school activities.
- Staff must ensure all communication with students is appropriate in tone, content, and timing, reflecting the educational and professional nature of the staff-student relationship.
- Staff may not engage in communication with students that is or may be perceived as:

o Secretive, covert, or hidden from parents or supervisors;
o Has sexual or romantic undertones;
o Involvestheprovisionorpromiseofpersonalgifts,favors,attention,invitations,orotheritemsof value unrelated to school;
o Theuseofcomputers,onlineservices,orotherelectronicdevicewiththepurposeofcontacting a child outside of the specific guidelines provided in this policy;
o Occursoutsideofschool-authorizedchannelsorpurposeswithoutpriorwrittenpermissionof the parent/guardian and school administration; or
o Anyothercommunicationorbehaviorthatcouldreasonablybeconstruedasinappropriate and/or as grooming, which is conduct, behavior or acts with the intention to condition, seduce, solicit, lure, or entice a child for the purpose of engaging in sexual intercourse or sexual contact.

Appropriate Methods of Communication

- All communication between staff and students must be conducted through official school-approved platforms (Sycamore or Google Classroom) and be within the scope of the staff member's assigned duties and responsibilities.
- If a one-on-one video conference with a student is necessary, employees must schedule the meeting using the school's official calendaring system and hold the meeting on a school-sponsored video meeting platform that maintains an administrative log of all meetings.

- Personal email accounts, personal phone numbers, or personal messaging apps (e.g., WhatsApp, iMessage, etc.) may not be used to contact students under any circumstances. Only use group texting if it is necessary for student safety while off campus for a class or other school-sponsored activity. If texting an individual student is necessary, include another adult in the messaging. All messages and communications must be preserved for the entirety of the student's enrollment, plus 7 years.
- If meeting in-person, a staff member should not be alone with a student in a non-public space or inside a room with a closed door unless the space or room can be seen through a window. It is understood that teachers may meet with their students for educational purposes outside of classroom time and that some of those meetings will involve one-on-one meetings. Any such private meeting with a student should, whenever possible, occur with the door open or in a public space. When a student's privacy needs to be preserved and no appropriate location is available, consider delaying the meeting or have someone join you in the meeting. The only permissible private meetings occurring in non-public spaces and/or shielded from view are when privacy and confidentiality is required. For example, this includes meetings between a student and a school nurse, counselor, psychologist, or social worker.

Training

All staff members are required to complete annual training provided by the school on identifying, preventing, and reporting inappropriate student-staff communications and interactions. This specifically includes situations of perceived or actual grooming and other professional boundary violations. Failure to complete this training within the applicable window of time established by the school will be considered a violation of this policy.

Consequences of Violation of this Policy

Violations of this policy, including the use of personal communication channels to contact students, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment and notification to relevant authorities. Possible disciplinary consequences include, but are not limited to*:

1. Verbal warning or coaching.
2. Written reprimand placed in the employee's personnel file.
3. Required additional training regarding professional boundaries or appropriate communication with students.
4. Restrictions on methods of communication with pupils (e.g., limitation to school-approved platforms).
5. Removal from certain duties or assignments involving students.
6. Suspension with or without pay.
7. Demotion or reassignment.
8. Non-renewal of contract (where applicable).
9. **Termination of employment or volunteer position.**

**The law requires the policy to include "a range of consequences, the most serious of which is termination, for employees and volunteers" who violate the policy. These consequences are just examples. You can include your own range of consequences, as long as it includes termination.*