

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023-2024



ST. PETER
LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Celebrating Over 80 Years of Christian Education

Est. 1941

Sharing Christ's Word as we Discover His World

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SCHOOL STAFF 2023-2024

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Position

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OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Sharing *Christ's Word* as we Discover *His World*

OUR VISION

"Laying the foundation to Build on the Rock of Christ, study the word, seek the lost, and serve our Neighbors."

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

"To bring in, build up and send out disciples for Jesus Christ. Our school prepares children for a life of discipleship by helping them grow in faith, knowledge and character."

Students will develop a relationship with God that leads to ongoing spiritual growth and active involvement in the Christian community.

Together we seek a strong spiritual, academic and moral foundation for our students, trusting in God's promise in Proverbs 22:6 "Train a child in the way to go and when they are old, they will not stray."

Students will develop the moral integrity and sense of responsibility that guides a life of service to God and seek justice in God's creation.

Education at St. Peter Lutheran is a shared effort between teachers, students, parents and congregation. We believe that learning occurs in the classroom and beyond-the playground, playing field, in worship and in service.

STATEMENTS OF BELIEF

We are a confessionally Lutheran congregation of Christians. We believe in the one, true God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—who created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them. We believe that our first parents, Adam and Eve, fell into sin and that all people naturally conceived and born since have inherited this sinful condition. We believe that the wages of sin is death. We believe that God, in love, sent His Son into the world to save us from our sins and bring us everlasting life.

Our existence as a Church and School is centered in the preaching of the Word of God and the administration of the Sacraments, the means through which the Holy Spirit works and sustains saving faith in Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God who became man, was crucified for the sins of the world, and was raised from the dead for our justification. Concerning baptism, we believe that it is a washing of the new birth in the Holy Spirit and that it works forgiveness of sins, rescues from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this. We believe that children are to be baptized. Concerning the Sacrament of the Altar, we believe that it is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted for us Christians to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins. We acknowledge the Holy Scriptures to be the Word of God and the Lutherans Confessions, collected in the Book of Concord and published in 1580, to be a true and binding exposition of the Holy Scriptures.

St. Peter Lutheran Church is a member congregation of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod (LCMS). For more information on the LCMS, please visit www.lcms.org. For more on what we believe, teach, and confess according to the Word of God, go to www.bookofconcord.org.

One Pertinent Faith Issue Today

Our society increasingly disregards the Word of God. This is evident in contemporary issues regarding marriage and life. At St. Peter Lutheran Church and School, we believe, teach, and confess that God made mankind in his own image, and that he makes us male and female (Genesis 1:27). We teach that marriage was instituted by God at creation and is the union of one man and one woman (Genesis 2:18-25). God blesses marriage for the procreation of children (Genesis 1:28). Every child conceived is a human person, made in the image of God, for whom Christ shed his blood. Therefore, every human life, from conception to natural death is sacred, a gift from God.

We reject the notion that biological sex and gender are distinct or that gender can be determined by the individual, and we affirm that it is God who assigns gender, which corresponds to the biological sex of a person. We also condemn all abortion as sin.

Our teaching, policies, and activities reflect these beliefs. Dress, restroom facility usage, and pronoun usage for students and staff will correspond to one's biological sex. Students are taught that boys and men are different from women and girls according to God's good creation and design. Students are taught that all human life is God's gift. In short, we teach and delight in the truth, beauty, and sacredness of marriage and life.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SCHOOL

1. God's Word, as found in the Holy Bible, is the rule and norm for our lives.
2. St. Peter Lutheran Church Council is responsible for all ministries of St. Peter Lutheran Church including St. Peter Lutheran School and Preschool.
3. The Pastor is charged with the administration of all operations of St. Peter Lutheran Church including St. Peter Lutheran School.
4. The Administrator will oversee the administrative operations of St. Peter Lutheran School.
5. The school board through its Administrator will consider the ideas and concerns of parents, faculty, and students and to deal with policy issues.

ACCREDITATION AND CERTIFICATION

St. Peter Lutheran School is accredited according to the State of Michigan's required standards and the Michigan Association of Non-Public Schools (MANS).

PARENT-TEACHER LEAGUE (PTL)

All parents are invited to participate in the St. Peter Parent-Teacher League (PTL). The PTL Board meets approximately once every month during the school year. The PTL sponsors various activities, fundraisers, assemblies, and programs for all ages throughout the school year for the students and for the parents.

PLEDGE POLICY

As citizens of the United States, our students will have the opportunity to develop feelings of loyalty and patriotism to their country. A part of this is learning and saying the "Pledge of Allegiance" as well as the "Christian Pledge". Teachers will be sure that their students are given the opportunity daily to join in saying the Pledge. Time will be spent in discussing the meaning of the Pledge so that its recitation does not become an empty mouthing of words.

I. ENROLLMENT POLICY

St. Peter Lutheran School admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarships, or other school administered programs.

Children enrolling in Kindergarten must have attained the age of five by September 1st of the year he or she starts school. Exceptions will be considered on a case by case basis. A copy of the student's birth certificate is required, along with the child's social security number. We follow the State of Michigan law regarding immunizations.

An enrollment link is available to complete enrollment. If you do not have access to the internet a hard copy of enrollment forms can be provided upon request. All parents are asked to attend an orientation night prior to the beginning of the school year.

II. RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS

St. Peter Lutheran School is a mission of St. Peter Lutheran Church in St. Johns, Michigan, member congregation of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS).

St. Peter Lutheran School is a school with a mission, but it is more than that. St. Peter Lutheran Church considers St. Peter Lutheran School to be a ministry in form, a Christian mission to its members and to the community. LCMS Christians believe that the purpose of education is not ultimately to prepare people for life in this world, but to “make people wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.” (1 Tim. 3:15)

Christian beliefs, as understood and taught in the LCMS, permeate everything that is done at St. Peter Lutheran School. Christian instruction is not only carried out formally, but it is integrated into all subjects. Students are immersed in a Christian atmosphere, surrounded by teachers, administrators, and school employees whose very presence is a testimonial to the Lutheran faith and way of life.

III. FAMILY WORSHIP POLICY

- St. Peter Lutheran School families are encouraged to maintain regular and faithful worship attendance. We do not feel that church and school are working in harmony with the home if the family is not regularly attending worship.
- If families without a church home have enrolled their children in St. Peter Lutheran School, it is assumed that they are seeking Christian training for their children. Since worship is essential for Christian growth, these families are invited to worship at St. Peter Lutheran Church.
- Parents who are not members of the Lutheran Church are encouraged to attend classes on the church’s teachings so that they may understand the principles of Christianity which their children will be taught. Pastor conducts these classes throughout the year.

IV. STUDENT WORSHIP LIFE

- An important part of the Christian education that we offer to a child is the opportunity to participate in a rich worship life. A child is to become aware that his or her entire life should itself be an act of worship. Believing that our role at St. Peter Lutheran School is to assist the home and the church in the task of training young people, we feel that it is of utmost importance for all of our students to be in regular attendance at a church with their families.
- Teachers will informally ask students about where and how often they worship in order to encourage the importance of their worship life.
- All students are expected to participate in the following events.
 - A. The children of the school participate in a special Christmas Service/Program for school families and the congregation each year.
 - B. The students honor God through song during worship service throughout the school year as set by the administrator.

V. CHAPEL

The entire student body meets weekly for a formal worship service on Wednesdays. Students are encouraged to dress their best for all Chapel services. All students are given the opportunity to

participate in supporting God's work through various mission projects, which are chosen by the school, by bringing a monetary offering each week.

VI. TUITION, BILLING, FEES

1. Tuition Contracts and Payments

The purpose of this policy is to define a sound, consistent and verifiable method of collecting and accounting for tuition and fees, which applies to all parents at St. Peter Lutheran School.

When you (re)enroll your student for the upcoming year, you will be given a tuition agreement which includes a technology fee for each student. When you sign this agreement, you are entering into a commitment to pay the full amount stated on the contract by May 15th of that school year.

Tuition payments can be sent by mail or placed in the locked tuition box located in the hallway outside the office. We will accept cash, checks or money orders made out to St. Peter Lutheran School. A receipt will be returned to the family for each payment. You also have the option of setting up a monthly electronic withdrawal directly from your account. These forms are available in the office.

2. New Family Discount

Any family that is enrolling their children in our school for the first time will receive a discount of 50% off of their tuition for the first school year.

3. Past Due Accounts

Parents that become delinquent in payment of tuition will jeopardize their child's continued enrollment at St. Peter Lutheran School. Parents must make arrangements with the school for all delinquent tuition. Special cases will always be prayerfully considered by the School Board.

All family account balances will be reported to parents monthly.

Accounts that are one month in arrears will receive a form letter of concern from the school administrator. The letter will include a request to contact the administrator if unusual financial conditions are present.

Accounts that are two months in arrears will receive a telephone call from the school administrator requesting a meeting with the family involved. During this meeting, a letter will be delivered that states that if the unpaid amount is not paid within 30 days the child/children may not be allowed to continue at St. Peter Lutheran School.

One week before a termination of enrollment the School board chair will call the family and arrange a meeting with them and an elder to review the consequences for non-payment and encourage a payment plan that would allow an extension of the time limit for the debt to be paid if indeed there is a financial need for the extension.

A family may not be allowed to re-enroll their child/children for the next school year until all

accounts are paid in full. All outstanding tuition and fees are to be paid by May 15th for all existing students; otherwise report cards and/or transcripts may be held until full payment is received.

4. **Non-Sufficient Funds**

For any check made out to St. Peter Lutheran School (for tuition, fundraisers, etc.), that is returned by the bank for non-sufficient funds (NSF), the party who signed the check must make a CASH payment to the school to cover the check within 10 calendar days of written notification. That person will also be responsible to pay to the school any fees that the bank charges to the school or church account for the NSF check. Individuals who give an NSF check may be required to pay by cash or by cashiers check for any future payments. Written notice will be given of this decision.

5. **Financial Assistance**

The following are opportunities for financial assistance to help with tuition costs:

- A. **The Camburn Scholarship** was established to assist with tuition by offering \$500.00 to at least four eligible families each year with a financial need, applied for and determined eligible by the requirements established by the founders of the fund.
- B. **Scholarship Funds** are received through various fundraising events held throughout the year, and dollars are granted based on a family's financial need. A limited amount of funds are raised depending on the number of events held and monies received.
- C. **Adopt-a-Student** was established to create a relationship between a congregation member and a school student with the option of contributing towards their tuition.
- D. **The SCRIP program** is based on rebates from the sale of retail gift cards which can be purchased by school families or other purchasers with the rebate given to a certain student, the School General Fund, the Church General Fund or the Building Fund.

The grant amounts may vary according to the amount in the fund. A limited number of scholarships, based on a family's financial need, may be granted.

Scholarships are available to anyone without regard to race, color, national and ethnic origin, or church membership. Those wishing to receive a portion of these funds must contact the administrator and complete and return the application by Sept. 15th. If family income status changes after this date, the family can consult the Principal or Board Chairperson for consideration of scholarship funds. The School Board will review the application at the next monthly meeting and assign amounts from zero to partial payment depending upon financial need and funds available. Notification of any scholarships and grants will be made as soon as possible.

6. **Financial Support by Congregation Members**

Congregational families are expected to support the total work and mission of the church through their gifts of time, talent, and money. When all our families give a percentage of their blessings back to the Lord through their work and offerings, we are giving witness to our faith and helping to spread Christ's love to others. Currently, the majority of the expenses of the school are financed by these gifts and offerings.

VII. ACADEMIC YEAR CALENDAR

St. Peter Lutheran School follows the St. Johns Public School calendar as closely as possible for major holidays. St. Peter may have additional scheduled days off that do not align with the public calendar. Every effort will be made to distribute a school calendar to parents the first week of school. Please note that our calendar is contingent upon the St. Johns School District making public their school year calendar. Due to contract negotiations, their calendar may not be publicly released until after school has started.

The school year shall consist of a minimum of 1098 hours [180 days 2022-23 by State Mandate], which includes a maximum of 30 minutes of recess time per day. An hour of instruction shall be 60 minutes of teacher-pupil contact for the purpose of teaching the school's educational objectives.

VIII. SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

School cancellations/delays due to inclement weather are announced on Lansing area radio stations and WLNS TV 6. Messages are also sent out on Classtag to all families. Because of busing, we will follow the decisions of the public schools in these instances. If it is announced that St. Johns Public Schools are not in session, the same will be true of St. Peter Lutheran School. However, if the rural road conditions near the school are deemed to be unsafe for travel, St. Peter Lutheran School and Preschool may be canceled. All efforts will be made to contact parents before 8 am via text, email, or phone call. It is important to note that when the decision to cancel school is made, it is because we are thinking of the safety of our students and parents first and foremost. If weather conditions are such that early dismissal is necessary, parents will be contacted to pick up non-bussed students. Students will be expected to follow their regular after-school routine unless other arrangements have been made. If the procedure is different for an early dismissal, students should be informed ahead of time, and the office should have the information on file. Please turn to your local radio and TV stations and continue checking email for more information if the weather may warrant early dismissal.

IX. ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

1. Arrival

Students may be dropped off beginning at 8:15am and will be marked tardy if they are not in their classroom by 8:30am. Students who arrive at school tardy will need to be brought into the building and signed in at the office by an adult. **Parents may not enter the school building with their child, unless they are entering the office. This policy is to respect the teachers' time before school. It is also a procedure to ensure the safety of our students and our faculty at all times. The same will apply if dropping off an item for a student. Parents need to take the item to the office and allow the office staff to then get it to the child.**

2. Dismissal

Students will be released from the main entrance of the school at 3:45. Any student who has not been picked up within ten minutes of dismissal time will be walked back into the school to wait in front of the office for their ride. When the driver arrives, they must sign out the student on the form in the office.

Students will be dismissed at 12:00 pm on half days and no lunch will be provided, please provide extra snacks for your student(s) and Dismissal will be at 1:10 pm for Early Release Days.

It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to call, or notify, the office or teacher if someone other than the normal driver will be picking up your child. Please make every effort to call before 3:00 pm to ensure time for your child's teacher to receive the message. We will let your child know of the change and verify that the individual is on the emergency form. Please note, individuals who are not on the form will not be allowed to pick up your child. Please be sure to add anyone who may pick up your child from school.

If students need to be picked up before the end of the school day, they must wait in the office. Parents, or a designated adult who is on the emergency contact form, will need to come into the office to sign the student out.

X. ACADEMIC POLICIES and EXPECTATIONS

1. Grading Evaluation/Scales

The academic grade – indicates the individual progress of a student in relationship to class standards as set by the teacher and the curriculum. Grading is the basis for academic evaluation at St. Peter Lutheran School. We believe that academic standards, tests and evaluations should provide measures for students to evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. This should equip them to grow and advance toward their vocational goals.

- **We make every effort to assist students individually**, so that each student has an opportunity to succeed, and to be challenged academically. We encourage parents and students to communicate with teachers. It is important that both the parents and teachers work together to help our students be successful in school. Teachers will be proactive and keep parents informed of any academic concerns.
- **Report cards** will be issued by trimester during the school year.
- **Conferences** will be scheduled at the completion of the first trimester and second trimester. They will also be scheduled as needed at the end of the school year.

2. Grade Advancement/Retention

Students must successfully complete each grade level before moving on to the next. If a teacher feels that a child is not doing the type of work which will lead to success at the next grade level, the following procedure should be followed:

- A. The teacher should inform the parents and administrator of the concern and discuss alternatives that will be in the child's best interest.
- B. If retention is being considered, the student's parents will be notified. A conference will be held with the teacher and administrator by the Spring Parent/Teacher Conferences to discuss options of such consideration.

- C. The teacher will keep updated and accurate anecdotal records and reports on the child's behavior and progress, as well as reports of all individual parent conferences during this observation period.
- D. A special placement meeting with the administrator, teacher and parents will be scheduled prior to the end of the school year. The administrator will then take an official school position on retention of the child.
- E. If the parents are not in agreement with the school's position, they may give a signed statement to the School Board regarding why they do not agree.
- F. The School Board will then make a final decision.

3. Academic Withdrawal

If the teachers and administrator at St. Peter find that the learning needs of the student are not being met by the staff and resources available to our school, the following steps will be taken.

- A. A meeting with the administrator and teacher will be set up to address concerns for the student and start discussing options for best meeting the needs of the student.
- B. If it is agreed by the administrator and the parent/guardian that our school cannot meet the needs of the student, the parent/guardian will begin the enrollment process for a different school.
- C. If the parent does not agree on withdrawing the child, the case will be brought before the school board where a final decision will be made.

4. Special Services

If either a parent or a teacher expresses that a special need may be affecting a child's academic success, the family will be asked to complete a referral to Clinton County Regional Educational Service Agency (CCRESA). CCRESA personnel will contact you within 10 days if a parent makes the request, or 30 days if the teacher makes the request. Some services that may be provided by CCRESA include:

- Academic and psychological testing and assessment for students with special needs.
- Social Work.
- Speech Therapy.
- Occupational and/or Physical Therapy.

The parent/guardian or school administrator may decide that it is not in the child's best interest to continue at St. Peter if the services that are needed can not be provided.

5. Homework

A reasonable amount of homework is expected of all children. Assignments in subjects will depend on the child's ability to finish the work in class, the length of the class study period, and the degree of extra help required. Length of homework assignments should be within reason — possibly one hour except where tests and examinations might demand more time. A small amount of homework may be expected in the lower grades while a proportionately greater amount may be given in the upper grades.

In cases where a student seems to bring home a disproportionately large amount of homework, parents should arrange to discuss the matter with the teacher. It is important that students complete their assignments. Parents should be aware of their child's homework, encourage them, and provide a quiet place for study. If your child is unable to complete an assignment, kindly send an explanatory note to his/her teacher. If assignments seem consistently burdensome, the teacher should be contacted. The administrator should only be called if the concern is not then addressed by the teacher.

Late assignments

Except for excused absences, each teacher will have their own policy to determine how much credit is given for a late assignment.

Make-up work

Students who are absent for any reason will be required to make up work missed in each class. One day is granted for each day of absence. Additional days may be granted solely at the teacher's discretion. A day's absence does not excuse a student from the responsibility for the work due on the first day of the absence. It is the student's responsibility to obtain all make-up work from his/her teachers immediately upon return to school. Failure to obtain make-up work is no excuse for not doing work missed. Parents should follow up with their student(s) to ensure all work is made up.

Parents are discouraged from planning family trips and activities which will cause their child(ren) to miss classes. However, if work is requested in advance it will be due on the day the child returns to school.

XI. STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE PROCESS

1. Teacher Expectations

As teachers at St. Peter Lutheran School, we pray for students and their families. All teachers and staff members work as a team, seeking to provide the best Christian and academic education possible.

2. Student Code of Conduct

It is our mission to maintain and nurture a committed, caring community of Christians. Therefore, we expect you as a student at St. Peter Lutheran School to...

- Respect God: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." Matthew 22:37
 - "You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God" Exodus 20:7a
 - Show your love for God by imitating God's love to Him and others.
 - Only use God's name to praise or honor him.

- “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” Colossians 3:16
 - Avail yourself to the Word of God as offered in chapel and the reading of God’s Word in the classroom.

- Respect all staff members and volunteers in the building: “Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.” Romans 13:1
 - Treat those in authority with respect at all times.
 - Do what they tell you with a cheerful heart.
 - Pray for those that care for you at school.

- Respect others: “You shall not murder” Exodus 20:13
 “We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need” (Luther’s Small Catechism)
 - Show respect for others by not pushing, shoving, kicking, or inappropriately touching others.
 - Bullying will not be tolerated, detailed definition at the end of this section.

- “You shall not commit adultery.” Exodus 20:14 “We should fear and love God so that we lead a sexually pure and decent life in what we say and do...” (Luther’s Small Catechism)
 - Showing respect to others by not touching inappropriately.
 - Jokes, teasing, or other conversation that is not sexually pure, whether spoken plainly or implied, is not allowed.

Respect school property and the property of other students: “You shall not steal.” Exodus 20:3

- Do not take anything that is not yours.
 - Show your love and care for what God has given us by using school items the way they are intended.
 - Be good stewards of school equipment and supplies by not wasting them and by putting things back in their proper place.
-
- “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor”. Exodus 20:16
 - Refrain from spreading rumors, gossiping, or telling secrets.

 - Respect yourself as a child of God: “I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made: your works are wonderful, I know that full well.” Psalm 139:14
 - Since God created you, honor His workmanship by not talking negatively about yourself.
 - Present yourself in a way that honors God with regard to dress and personal hygiene.
 - Complete all work to the best of your ability. Cheating is not honoring yourself as a child of God.

- “Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you.” Ephesians 4:32
These are the expectations of our students, however, we understand that as sinners, we will fail in these expectations. Therefore, we also recognize, as a Christian school, the need for forgiveness. We will forgive one another as Christ first forgave us.

3. The Disciplinary Process

If a student’s actions are not according to our code of conduct, the following steps will be taken to address the behavior(s).

Step 1: Discipline will be determined by the student’s teacher according to their discernment.

Step 2: If behaviors continue to disrupt the learning of the student and/or their classmates or if there is repeated behavior that causes harm in any way to another student, the next step is to meet with the principal. The principal will document the behaviors and determine which of the following will take place next.

- Deep Apology Letter:
Student will write a letter in communication to repair any relationships that were harmed by their actions. The letter will be read by the student to the harmed person(s).
- Parent Contact:
The principal will contact parents and a meeting will be scheduled if necessary.
- Counseling with Pastor:
Student will meet with the Pastor of St. Peter Lutheran Church for counseling sessions. The number and length of the sessions will be determined by the age of the child and the severity of the behavior.
- Extended Time-out:
If the principal determines that they cannot trust the student to alter their behavior, they will be in an extended time-out where they are in constant adult supervision.

This will be between one and two weeks depending on the age of the child and their response to the consequence. If a student has good behavior and is kind to classmates during the first week, they will be allowed to rejoin the classmates on a probationary basis.

- At-Home Suspension
If a student refuses to change their behavior after going through the process of an extended time-out, they will either be suspended from school or they may be asked to leave our school.

- Automatic Suspension

Misconduct that is determined to be particularly serious, or a threat to the well-being of others, may result in an automatic suspension. A meeting will then be held between the student, parent(s), teacher (if involved), and Director of School Ministries as soon as possible to discuss the nature and severity of the matter, and to take steps to ensure that no further misconduct will occur.

- Expulsion

Defined as the removal of a student from the school for a minimum of the remainder of the school year. The principal will set up a meeting with the student, parent(s), school board chair, and Pastor. After hearing evidence, and having given all concerned the opportunity to speak, the committee will determine whether or not the student will be expelled. The student will be suspended until the hearing is held.

4. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is unwanted aggressive behavior that is intentional, is repeated over time, and involves an imbalance of power or strength. Bullying can take on various forms including:

- . Physical bullying - when one person engages in physical force against another person, such as hitting, punching, kicking, pinching, or restraining another.
- B. Verbal bullying - when someone uses their words to hurt another, such as belittling or calling another hurtful name.
- C. Nonverbal or relational bullying - when one person manipulates a relationship or desired relationship to harm another person. This included social exclusion, friendship manipulation, or gossip. This type of bullying also includes intimidating another person by using gestures.
- D. Sexualized bullying - when bullying involves behaviors that are sexual in nature. Examples of sexualized bullying include sexting, bullying that involves exposure of private body parts, and verbal bullying involving sexualized language or innuendos.
- E. Cyberbullying - the intentional and overt act of aggression toward another person by way of any technological tool, such as email, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs). Cyberbullying can involve:
 - a. Sending mean, vulgar, or threatening messages or images.
 - b. Posting sensitive, private information about another person.
 - c. Pretending to be someone else in order to make that person look bad.
 - d. Intentionally excluding someone from an online group.
- F. Hazing - an activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers that person regardless of that person's willingness to participate.

It is your right as a student to tell someone to stop if they are treating you in a way that you do not like. If they do not stop, their actions are considered bullying. Any person who sees an act of bullying, and who then encourages it, is also bullying.

XII. PLAYGROUND POLICY AND SAFETY RULES

Students must follow the directions of the playground supervisor, always stay in view of the playground supervisor, and play in designated areas only. The school building is off-limits during outdoor time. Permission must be given if it is necessary for a student to go inside. Students must be dressed appropriately for the weather, including hats and gloves in cold weather, and boots must be worn in the snow.

Use equipment properly and safely:

- **Slide** – Go down the slide feet first in a sitting position, with one person at a time. Walking up, and jumping off the slide are not permitted.
- **Swings** - Used by sitting on the seat. Swing straight at all times. It is not appropriate to stand in a swing, twist the chains, jump from the swing, or climb on the swing set.
- **Softball and Kickball** - Played on designated fields away from all buildings. Use only softballs when playing ball. Hard balls or baseballs are not permitted as they could cause injury. When playing ball, the catcher is to use a catcher's mask for all softball games.

Activities which are prohibited:

- Spitting
- Bad language
- Throwing rocks
- Piggyback
- Bombardment games
- Imitation of guns or any other weapon
- Tackling or pulling someone down by grabbing them or their clothing.

Playground Supervision:

Each playground supervisor's responsibilities are to:

- provide supervision of the students in the gym or on the playground according to the safety rules;
- allow students to play only safe games;
- refrain from using cell phones to call or text;
- keep adult conversations to a minimum in order to focus on the children;
- and respond to a student injury by keeping the student lying down while the teacher or administrator is called to access the injury.

XIII. DRESS CODE

Updated: 8/9/2021

1. Purpose of a Dress Code

Our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. It, therefore, follows that as we present that body, it ought to be done in a decent and respectable fashion. Our school has been established for special purposes, and endeavors to maintain the highest all-around standards. This same philosophy of high standards carries through in the appearance of the students.

All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." 1 Peter 5:5B

2. Dress Code-Student

- All clothing should be modest, morally appropriate, and not distract from the classroom environment.
 - Tights and thin leggings are acceptable under skirts and dresses.
 - Shorts must go to the student's fingertips when standing up.
 - All shirts must cover the entire shoulder.
- All hats may be worn outside, but not in the building.
- Shoes must cover the entire foot and dress shoes are only appropriate on chapel days.
- The principal (or designated substitute) will make all determinations for any clothing items in question.

3. Recess Dress Code

- Coats appropriate for the weather are to be worn.
- Hats/earmuffs, mittens/gloves, and snow pants are to be worn during cold weather.
- During the winter, when snow is present, students without boots and snow pants may not play in the snow. These students will remain on the cleared sidewalks.

XIV. HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATION POLICIES

1. Illness or Change in Health During the School Day:

If a child becomes ill, or has a change in their health which keeps them from participating in class:

- A. An attempt will be made to contact a parent.
- B. If a parent cannot be reached, an emergency contact name you have provided will be contacted. Parents are urged to list two reliable people and their phone numbers on the emergency contact form. (Please call the office at 224-3178 if the emergency numbers or any other information on your form changes.)
- C. Once the parent or their designee is contacted, it will be determined by staff if the child can stay at school or if they will need to be picked up.
- D. While the child is waiting to be picked up, they will be made comfortable in a location in the Dr. Seuss office.
- E. Staff will provide any necessary information to parents so that they can make an informed decision if medical treatment is needed. Also, parents will be informed if the child will be required to stay home the following school day. In some cases, a medical release from a physician may be required before the child can return to school.

2. Communicable Disease and Illness Notification and Exclusion

Parents need to call the school when your child stays home due to **any** illness. A child should be kept home if they have a temperature of 99 degrees or higher, have any suspected illness or communicable disease, have vomited, have diarrhea, or if they complain about not feeling well. **Children must be symptom free for 24 hours without the aid of fever reducing medication before returning to school.** When children are sent to school ill, staff and volunteers in the classroom are being exposed to the illness; therefore please keep your child home when they are showing signs of sickness. Please note: If a child is repeatedly returned to school showing signs of sickness without a physician's release, you may be asked to provide one before the child is able to

return to class, each time the child is sent home. Chicken pox, strep throat, conjunctivitis, “pink eye”, head lice, measles, flu, and other contagious illnesses must be reported to the office. We will alert all parents in the school when a communicable illness is reported to us. (The name of the child is kept confidential). If your child contracts any of the above stated communicable illnesses, you will be required to provide a note from the doctor stating that your child is able to return to school. The above illness and exclusion policy also pertains to staff and volunteers.

3. Head Injuries

Parents will be called if a student bumps their head, no matter how minor, and informed whether or not there is any concern from the staff about the child’s health. If parents and staff feel comfortable with the child remaining at school, the child will be monitored in class for any signs of concussion. If any signs are observed, the parents will be contacted immediately to pick up their child. A list of the signs and symptoms of concussion will be sent home with the parents as well as an accident form. We will follow current concussion guidelines from the State of Michigan.

4. Medical Emergencies

If there is a medical emergency at school and EMS is needed, the following will occur:

- A. Parents/guardians will be contacted after EMS has been called. Parents will be informed of the situation and told which hospital your child is being transported to. A teacher will accompany your child in the ambulance and stay until you arrive at the hospital.
- B. Parents are responsible for any and all fees related to emergency medical treatment and transport. In cases when the parent cannot be reached, the Administrator has been given permission (on your emergency card) to secure emergency medical and/or emergency surgical treatment for your minor child while in care, until you are present.

5. Dispensing Medication

Prior to any medications (including vitamins & over the counter medications) being sent to school, a medication permission form must be obtained from the school office, completed and signed by your physician and the parent or guardian of the student. Parents or guardians must bring all medications to school and pick up any unused or leftover medications. Children are not allowed to transport medication to or from school on the bus. Prescription medication must be in its original container with a written order from the child’s doctor. A written record of all medication distributed will be kept on file in the school office. This procedure is in accordance with Michigan Law governing the dispensing of medication to students, which is based on the theory that prescribed medicine, aspirin, cough drops, or ointments may cause a serious reaction, and if the child has self-administered a medication and becomes unconscious, medical treatment would be severely hindered. Sunscreen, lotion, and bug repellent can be applied only when the proper permission form is filled out. This form must be requested by the parent.

6. IMMUNIZATIONS

Based on the public health code, a child without either an up-to-date immunization record (or a record showing that the child is receiving and will continue to receive the appropriate immunizations), a certified non-medical waiver form, or a physician signed medical waiver form, will be excluded from school until the below mentioned documentation has been submitted.

Michigan recently modified the administrative rules that determine how non-medical waivers for immunizations will be processed. The new rule went into effect on January 1, 2015. The new rule does not take away your right to obtain a non-medical waiver.

A. Non-medical Waivers:

- Non-medical waivers (religious or philosophical (other) objections) will need to be obtained from your county health department; the school will not have them.
- Students will only be allowed to attend school if a waiver from the Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) has been issued. If we have not received a certified, authorized waiver (from MMDHD) a student will not be able to attend school until they have documentation that they are receiving immunizations or they turn in the authorized waiver form or the medical waiver form.
- Parents/Guardians must follow these steps when requesting a non-medical waiver:
 - a. Contact your county health department for an appointment to speak with a health educator. (The Clinton County Health Department can be reached at (989)224-2195.)
 - b. During the visit, there will be an opportunity to have a discussion about immunizations with the county health department staff.
 - c. If at the end of the visit, you request a non-medical waiver for your child, you will receive a copy of the current, certified (stamped and signed) State of Michigan Non-medical Waiver Form.
 - The school will only accept the current, official State of Michigan form
 - Forms cannot be altered in any way (such as crossing out information).
 - d. Take the completed, certified waiver form to the school.

B. Medical Waivers

If your child has a medical reason (a true contraindication or precaution) for not receiving a vaccine, a physician must sign the State of Michigan Medical Contraindication Waiver form; this form is available at your doctor's office (not the county health department).

State Law & Mid-Michigan District Health Department Law for Waivers & Immunizations:

Dear Parent/Guardian:***Key Points Regarding Claiming a Non Medical Waiver for Michigan School and Licensed Childcares.***

Michigan recently modified the administrative rules that change how nonmedical waivers for immunizations will be processed for school/childcare programs. The new rule went into effect on January 1, 2015.

Key Points:

- The rule applies to all children who are enrolled in a public or private:
 - Licensed childcare, preschool and Head Start Programs.
 - Kindergarten, 7th grade, and any newly enrolled student into the school district.
- The rule does not take away your right to obtain a nonmedical waiver.

- Non Medical waivers (religious or philosophical (other) objections) will need to be obtained from a county health department; the schools/childcare centers will not have them.
- Parents/Guardians must follow these steps when requesting a nonmedical waiver:
 - Contact your county health department for an appointment to speak with a health educator.
 - During the visit, there will be an opportunity to have a discussion about immunizations with the county health department staff
 - If at the end of the visit, you request a nonmedical waiver for your child, you will receive a copy of the current, certified (stamped and signed) State of Michigan Non Medical Waiver Form.
- Schools/childcare center will only accept the current, official State of Michigan Form (Current date: January 1, 2015)
- Forms cannot be altered in any way (such as crossing information out).
 - Take a completed, certified waiver form to your child’s school or childcare center.
- If your child has a medical reason (a true contraindication or precaution) for not receiving a vaccine, a physician must sign the State of Michigan contraindication Form; this form is available at your doctor’s office (not the county health department).
- Based on the public health code, a child without either an up-to-date immunization record, a certified nonmedical waiver form or a physician signed medical waiver form can be excluded from school/childcare.

For more information, please visit www.michigan.gov/immunize then click on Local Health Department then click on Immunization Waiver Information. There is a list of all the county health departments on this website, along with their addresses and phone numbers.

XV. STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Our attendance policy is in alignment with the Clinton County RESA Truancy Policy Guidelines and Michigan Truancy Laws. A copy of these will be given to each family at the beginning of the school year.

We strongly encourage students to be present at school daily. Attendance is considered critical for students to gain full value from all school subjects, and is closely correlated with student success and grades.

1. **Absences & Reporting:** On days when your child is going to be absent, **you must notify the St. Peter Lutheran Church & School office phone line, or fill out the Google form on our website.** In addition, you can message the classroom teacher via Classtag. Phone lines open at 8:00 am, (989-224-3178). If a parent/guardian has not contacted the school before 9:00 am a phone call will be made to the parent/guardian. The school is required by law to report daily absences involving illness to the health department.
2. **Single-day** absences for reasons other than illness should be arranged and excused with the student’s teacher at least 24 hours in advance of the absence.
3. **Make-up work from absence:** Students who are absent for any reason will be required to make up work missed in each class. One day is granted for each day of absence. Additional days may be granted solely at the teacher’s discretion. A day’s absence does not excuse a student from the responsibility for the work due on the first day of the absence. It is the student’s responsibility to

obtain all make-up work from his teachers immediately upon return to school. Failure to obtain make-up work is no excuse for not doing work missed. Parents should follow up with their student(s) to ensure all work is made up.

4. **Medical Appointments:** Parents are encouraged to schedule appointments with doctors, dentists, or orthodontists after school hours or on school holidays. However, we understand this is not always possible. A written note or email message should be presented to the teacher prior to the absence and arrangements made for completing assignments and coursework. If your child has a planned late arrival to school, please inform the school office AND teachers and the expected time of arrival. Ask for a doctor's note at the appointment in order to give a copy to the school office.
5. **Planned Extended Absences:** The teacher and the office are to be notified in writing of the absence a minimum of two weeks before the absence is to be taken. Advanced absence forms are available for this purpose and parents are encouraged to use them to report their intentions to teachers and the school office. It is up to the teacher's discretion to provide class work in advance of the vacation period as lesson plans are often made at the conclusion of the week. Homework given prior will only be an estimate of what may be missed during the period of absence and may not be inclusive of all the material covered during the absence. When the student returns from an extended absence, all teacher-preassigned work, including tests, papers, and projects, is to be completed and turned in. For any work not pre-assigned, the student will be given one day for every day absent or a maximum of five days to complete unfinished work.
6. **Tardies:** When a student arrives late to school (any time after 8:30 am), he/she is considered tardy. **Once a student has missed a full class, they are considered absent, not tardy.** A parent or adult ***must*** check the student in at the school office. Absences and tardies are tracked in Sycamore. After five tardies in a trimester, the family will be notified of the concern. After ten tardies in a school year, parents will be required to meet with the principal to discuss an improvement plan.
7. **Student Illness:** Please do keep your child home if he/she is sick. Colds, sore throats, stomach ailments, etc. spread quickly among students and staff. Please follow the guidelines below to determine if your child can return to school.

Illness

Student's Symptoms/Diagnosed Illness	Student may return to school when...
Fever greater than 100 degrees (orally)	Temperature below 100 degrees (orally) for a minimum of 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication
Rash or rash with fever - new or sudden onset	Rash disappears; written or phone consent form medical doctor to school office
Brown, gray, tan or yellowish drainage from noes, eyes, or any other part of the body	Discharge must be gone, or student must have been on antibiotics for 24 hours and have written or phone consent from a medical doctor to school office
Vomiting/diarrhea	symptom-free for 24 hours
Cough: Deep, barking, congested or productive mucous	Symptom-free or student must have been on antibiotics for 24 hours and have written/phone consent from a medical doctor to school office

Strep throat diagnosed by a medical doctor	Must have been on antibiotics for 24 hours and have written/phone consent from a medical doctor to school office; if no antibiotic given, call school office before sending child to school
After an illness of two or more weeks, surgery, or other change in health status	Written instructions from the doctor and parent regarding medications or special health needs much be provided to the school office.

Head Lice - It is common to have cases of head lice and other related problems in the school throughout the school year. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to check students' heads on a regular basis. Students are encouraged NOT to share their clothing/coats, hair accessories, brushes, combs, or hats. Although head lice are not a health threat, they are contagious with direct contact. Active infestation is defined as the presence of live lice or nits found within ¼ inch of the scalp. Therefore, when an active head lice infestation is found, our school practices are:

- a. The child should be restricted from activities of close contact or sharing items with other children.
- b. The parent/guardian will be contacted, and the child should be sent home.
- c. Other students will be checked for head lice only when infestation is suspected.
- d. Parents/guardians and students are expected to follow instructions for treatment/prevention of Head Lice.
- e. A letter should be sent home notifying classmate's parents that an active case of head lice was detected.
- f. Upon return to school, the student must be accompanied by the parent and brought to the school office.
- g. The student will be rechecked for an active infestation prior to re-entry. The primary goal is for the student to be Nit-Free, yet it is within the school administrator's discretion whether the student will be readmitted.

8. **Truancy/Chronic Absenteeism:** Immediately following 5-absences, a letter will be sent to the parent/guardian as a means of notification and to encourage regular attendance. A referral to the Truancy Intervention Program can be made by school staff.

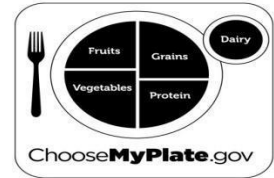
Chronic absenteeism is when students miss 10% or more of scheduled school days (to date). This includes excused and unexcused absences. If a student is chronically absent/truant, the following steps will be taken:

- A. Notification of excessive absences will be made with parents/guardians. A formal letter will go home and also be placed in the student's file.
- B. If attendance issues persist, the administration will notify Clinton County RESA Truancy Intervention Service. An attendance improvement plan will be established in coordination with the student and family.
- C. If improvement is not noted, a second referral for truancy will be made to the Clinton County Truancy Officer

- D. In the case that student absences have impacted their readiness for the next grade level, a meeting will be set up with the student's teacher, the administrator, and the student's parents/guardians to discuss their grade placement for the following year.

XVI. FOOD POLICIES

To provide an atmosphere where children have the best chance for academic success, healthy food is essential. Please always start your child's day with a healthy breakfast.



1. Healthy Snacks

Healthy food provides excellent opportunities to keep students alert, provides good material to grow strong bodies, and quells intense hunger that students do not rush their lunches.

Examples of healthy snacks are: Fresh fruit and vegetables, (prepared to be eaten, i.e. sliced apples or peppers), dried fruit, peanut butter crackers, cheese crackers, nuts, granola bars, or trail mix.

We also encourage responsibility in following proper serving sizes for snacks.

2. School Cold Lunch Policy

Cold lunch means a lunch that is ready to eat.

Proper storage of food is always important. Lunch boxes, backpacks and lockers receive a lot of jostling, so we ask for safety reasons, that no glass be used in the storing of food. A thermos to keep food hot or cold is welcomed and encouraged in providing children with a variety of healthy food choices.

By providing your child with meals that are ready to eat, children may begin eating at the start of the lunch period and take the full time, which will assist in healthy digestion.

3. Vitamins and Supplements

Vitamins and supplements are excellent ways to provide nutrition for your children. However, they are legally considered medications and must be dispensed as such. Please refer to the Dispensing of Medication Policy.

XVII. FIELD TRIPS AND STAFF/PARENT VOLUNTEER POLICY

1. A signed Permission Slip is required to be on file in the school office during the period of each field trip.
2. Transportation will generally be provided using private vehicles. There will be a driver serving as chaperone in each vehicle. The driver/chaperone must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age with a valid operator's license.
3. Field trip chaperones need to have an I-CHAT completed and on file prior to the field trip.
4. All chaperones must sign and return a Field Trip Parent Expectation form before the event.
5. Any volunteer driver must complete a Field Trip Driver Form. The form is to be accompanied with a copy of a driver's license and will remain on file in the school office as required by the State of Michigan.
6. Volunteer drivers must be covered with adequate "No Fault" automobile insurance and medical coverage for the driver and passengers as approved by the State of Michigan. A copy of current auto insurance must be on file in the office prior to transporting children.

7. State of Michigan law requires that any parent driving students on a field trip in their personal vehicle must have a booster in the back seat with a lap and shoulder belt for each student under the age of 8 years old or 4'9" in height. No student of any age will be placed in the front seat at any time.
8. Individuals who provide transportation are to stay with the complete caravan when traveling to and from the event. No other stops will be allowed. Please plan ahead so that refueling is not needed while chaperoning.
9. Chaperones, parent drivers, and parents seeking to participate in field trips are not allowed to bring additional children along. These events are for the students of the school, and will be based on what the students are currently learning, or their focus of study.
10. Chaperones must walk students to and from the school building and are responsible for them until the administrating teacher is present.

XVIII. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT

In order to provide as safe and secure an environment as possible for participants of the ministry of St. Peter Lutheran Church & School, and to minimize the ministry's and the workers' vulnerability to unwarranted accusation, the following procedures have been adopted and will be strictly enforced.

It is the policy of St. Peter Lutheran School that all staff, parent and non-parent volunteers are required to do the following:

1. Sign a statement (which is kept on file) that they have never been convicted of child abuse or neglect and/or have never been convicted of a felony.
2. Preschool volunteers must pass a DHS child abuse background check
3. Not be in a closed stall with children in the bathroom.
4. Be supervised by staff at all times.
5. Have an ICHAT or Live Scan fingerprint to volunteer in the classroom or attend field trips. (if a criminal history is detected it will be reviewed by administration and dealt with on a case-by-case basis.)
6. Report all suspected abuse and neglect, as required by Child Protective Services, when they are volunteering in the classroom by calling 855-444-3911 immediately.

XIX. EMERGENCY DRILLS

Emergency Drills are conducted periodically for fire and tornado, as well as lockdown. During these short drills, parents may be denied entry into the building.

Our lockdown procedures vary depending on the type and location of the threat. For security purposes, details of those procedures will not be made public.

During a lockdown emergency:

- Please remain calm as school and local authorities manage the situation.
- Please do not call the school, teachers, or your child. To the extent possible, information will be shared via our texting service and/or email.

- Students will not be allowed to leave until recommended by the appropriate authorities.
- Parents may be required to present identification.
- If the school property is evacuated, an off-site meeting place will be determined and announced in consultation with public safety officers.

XX. INTERNET PERMISSION AND ELECTRONIC DAMAGE AGREEMENT

We are pleased to offer students at St. Peter Lutheran School access to the Internet. The Internet is a global computer network that is used by educators, students, government, business and a host of other organizations and individuals to communicate electronically. As a learning resource, the Internet is similar to books, magazines, video, CD-ROM, and other information sources, except that it quite literally enables students to explore countless numbers of computers, networks, libraries, and databases throughout the world. Use of the Internet for educational purposes will assist students in identifying resources, gathering information, and developing the technical skills they will need for life and work in the twenty-first century.

It must be clear, however, that although your child's use of the Internet will be supervised, we cannot guarantee that a student will not be able to access information that you might consider to be objectionable. Therefore, it is imperative that both students and their parents be aware of each individual student's responsibility for ethical and appropriate Internet use. Just as students are expected to behave properly in the classroom and school, they will also be required to behave responsibly while using school computers and networks. Technical resources are provided to help students meet their information needs within the context of teacher-planned assignments and school-sponsored activities. Access to these resources, however, is a privilege, not a right. It is permitted only on the condition that a student agrees to act in a responsible manner. School staff reserves the right to suspend or terminate the use of the Internet by any student who violates these policies. Similarly, internet use is subject to all policies and regulations that govern student behavior in other school activities.

Parents/Guardians must take responsibility for any loss or damage to electronic devices belonging to the school or church (ie. computers, iPads, etc.) which is caused by their child, and will be required to reimburse the school for the cost to repair or replace the device(s).

Please review the Student Guidelines for Internet Use that your child will be required to read and sign at school before being granted Internet access. We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to discuss your family's values with your child and how they, too, should affect Internet use. You are not required to grant permission for your child to access the Internet, but we firmly believe that Internet use in an approved educational setting, with specific educational objectives, and under appropriate supervision will prove to be a positive learning experience for your child.

XXI. STUDENT GUIDELINES FOR INTERNET USE

Access to the Internet is offered to help students learn. With the help of teachers, the Internet can be used for researching, studying, and communicating. But the Internet also includes some information that is not appropriate for students and the school environment. Therefore, students must agree to

behave properly when using this powerful learning tool. Inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of these privileges. The following rules should help students understand what type of behavior is expected of Internet users.

1. Students must use Internet equipment only for school related activities.
2. Students may use the Internet only when they have permission from a teacher.
3. Students should not damage or mistreat computer equipment under any circumstances. This includes trying to “fix” plugs, cables, or other parts of the equipment - leave that to your teacher.
4. Students should not access files that do not belong to them.
5. Students should not copy, download, or install any software or programs to or from school computers.
6. Students must not write, send, download or display obscene, threatening, harassing, or otherwise harmful messages or pictures.
7. Students must not share their personal address, phone number, or any other contact information over the Internet. They must not share information about other people either, including friends, fellow students, or teachers.
8. Students should be aware that e-mail and Internet use can and will be monitored and therefore is not private.
9. Students must obey all rules that normally govern their behavior at school when using the Internet.
10. Use of the internet is a privilege and can be withheld due to the following: poor behavior, lack of student participation, late assignments, homework not handed in, missing assignments etc. This is up to the teacher’s discretion.

XXII. PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICE POLICY

Personal cell phones, electronic communication devices (ECD’s), iPads, iPods, handheld games, MP3 players, and tablets are examples of electronic devices that are not permitted to be used in school. However, if a parent allows a student to have an electronic device when at school, the device is to be powered off and kept in the student’s backpack in his or her locker. All phone communication will be provided through classroom and office phones upon permission. Any student who brings a cell phone or personal electronic device onto school property shall assume responsibility for its care. At no time shall the school or church be responsible for preventing theft, loss or damage to such items.

Discipline:

- 1st Offense:** Device confiscated and the parent will be required to pick it up. A writing assignment will also be given that will have the student reflect on the school rule regarding cell phones, and or electronic devices and how a better choice could have been made.
- 2nd Offense:** Device confiscated, parent to pick up, and a second writing assignment.
- 3rd Offense:** Device confiscated and possible in or out of school suspension.

XXIII. WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE

1. Voluntary Withdrawal

Only an authorized parent/guardian having charge of a child has the authority to withdraw a child from school. We require documentation of explanation for all withdrawals. A withdrawal request

form must be completed by an authorized parent/guardian before any records may be released.

We also require proof of enrollment before releasing any documents to another school/organization, i.e. request of transcript from a school on letterhead, or a document signed by parent/guardian declaring intent to utilize a home study program.

If there is any unpaid tuition/fee balance, all student transcripts will be held until paid in full.

2. Hearing

Except in emergencies, all students must be given a formal hearing before being expelled from school, regardless of the reason. If there is an emergency, the hearing must take place as soon as possible after the student is removed. An "emergency" exists when a student's continued presence poses such a threat to people or property or so disrupts the educational process that he/she must be removed before a hearing occurs. Hearings must cover given notice, rules of evidence, records and transcripts, and appeal rights.

Hearings must be held either by the School Board itself or, at the Board's discretion, an impartial hearing board. The School Board can establish its own impartial hearing board. The impartial hearing board may have one or more members, but no School Board member may serve on an impartial hearing board.

At least three School Board members must be present at a School Board hearing and a decision to remove the student must be made by a majority vote with a minimum of three votes in favor of expulsion.

If the student was arrested, police may testify and provide information about the arrest at the hearing if their testimony is requested by the board conducting the hearing, the school principal, or the student or his/her parent(s).

3. Student Who Withdraws With a Hearing Pending

If a student withdraws from school after receiving notice of a hearing but before there is a decision, notice of the hearing must be included on his/her cumulative record and the board must complete the hearing and render a decision. The student must not be excluded from a new school, unless an emergency exists, until a decision is rendered. But the new school board may suspend the student or conduct its own hearing should it choose to do so.

4. Withdrawal Criteria

A student must be withdrawn from school if the School Board finds there is reason to believe the student (1) possessed certain weapons on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity; (2) sold or distributed, or tried to sell or distribute, illegal drugs on or off school grounds.

The mandatory withdrawal requirement covers the following weapons:

- A. **Firearm** - any weapon that can expel a projectile by explosive; or any destructive device, which includes explosives.

- B. **Deadly Weapon** - one from which a shot can be discharged, a switchblade or gravity knife, blackjack, bludgeon, or metal knuckles.
- C. **Dangerous Instrument** - something that, under the circumstances in which it is used, can cause death or serious injury, including an animal.

5. Authorized Withdrawals

In addition to weapons and drug-related misconduct, the School Board may expel a student whose conduct on school grounds or at a school sponsored event (1) is dangerous to people or property, (2) seriously disrupts the educational process, or (3) violates a School Board policy.

In deciding whether conduct seriously disrupts the educational process, the School Board can consider whether, among other things, (1) the incident happened close to a school; (2) other students from the school or a gang were involved; (3) the conduct involved violence, threats of violence, or illegal items; (4) injuries occurred; or (5) alcohol was used.

6. Withdrawal Duration

An expelled student can apply for early readmission to school. Readmission may occur at the School Board's discretion or, if the board delegates the responsibility to him/her, at the discretion of the Administrator. The School Board or Administrator can impose conditions on readmission. Readmission decisions cannot be appealed to court.

7. Student's Cumulative Record

A student's expulsion must be included in his/her cumulative educational record. But unless the expulsion was for carrying a dangerous weapon or selling or distributing illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity, the expulsion must be expunged from the record if the student (1) is neither expelled or suspended for two years after his return to school or (2) graduates.

8. Required Notice Or Referrals To Other Agencies

When a student is expelled for carrying a firearm or deadly weapon, the School Board must report the fact to the local police.

When a student is expelled for selling or distributing illegal drugs, the board must refer him/her to an appropriate agency for rehabilitation.