



# Hope Lutheran School

Parent Handbook

2024-2025

## **WELCOME TO HOPE LUTHERAN SCHOOL!**

The purpose of the Family Handbook is to outline policies and procedures that all families need to be aware of throughout the school year. It is impossible to state every possible circumstance that may arise. We recognize that we may need to address issues not listed in this handbook. Because of that, we reserve the right to enforce rules on a case-by-case basis as they occur.

We thank you for your strong commitment to your child's education at Hope Lutheran School. Your choice of a Christian education for your child is worthy of praise.

Hope Lutheran School has high expectations of both its faculty and students. We ask for your continued support at home as we work together to train these children up in the way that they should go. (Proverbs 22:6)

We invite anyone who has no church home to come and worship at Hope Lutheran Church. Our service is Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Bible class/Sunday school hour is at 8:30 a.m. All are welcome.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us. We are always willing to talk with you about anything. If you need to get in touch with your child's teacher, please send a note with your child or call the school office (529-8080), and the teacher will contact you as soon as possible.

God's Blessings,

Staff of Hope Lutheran School

### **Vision Statement**

Through a foundation of faith in Jesus Christ, Hope Lutheran School will be a place that nurtures strong relationships within a community and demonstrates a love for learning with high academic expectations.

## **Classical Lutheran Education**

Hope Lutheran School as a member of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod acknowledges and accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed Word of God, verbally inspired, and acknowledges and accepts all the confessional Writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580 to be a true and genuine exposition of the doctrines of the Bible. As part of the historic Christian Church, we believe that we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, according to Scripture alone, to the glory of God alone.

For those seeking to love education, we believe it starts with the mastery of the liberal arts and the ability to read, write, and think within the realm of truth and proper logic. It is by revelation we know of God; furthermore, it is through our knowledge of Him, His Word, and His creation that we can serve Him best in this present world. We do not believe the answer to education is in drowning our students in information that blows to and fro in the halls of academia. It is essential that they learn the skills, fundamentals, and ability to discern so that the knowledge they obtain can be applied correctly to all of their life.

While the progressive educational movement runs a perpetual race to discover how to educate their students satisfactorily that offers up no lasting pedagogy, leaping from one fad to another and shifting from one technology that soon becomes obsolete to the next novel version of itself, we believe that the fundamentals of reading, writing, and speaking are beyond satisfactory to the proper education of the child that congruently develops the mind, which is part of that child rather than a disparate device that will be left behind at year's end. To this end, we seek to firmly establish in the child the values of the Classical Christian system: Justice, Temperance, Fortitude, Prudence, Faith, Hope, and Love. These values will guide the student in their academic

career and the vocational, family, civic, and spiritual life that continues after their institutional learning and instills in them a love for God's Beauty. Additionally, we elevate the Lutheran distinction through the Small Catechism in our religious teaching. Therefore, by the agency of a Classical Lutheran Pedagogy manifested in our curriculum, we yearn to instruct the children in these *vias veritatis* (ways of truth). Through Latin, Literature, Religion, Mathematics, History, Composition, English, Logic, and Science, all weaved together with the crimson thread of Christianity; we fashion these young minds into an Acropolis of scholarly excellence.

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

### HOURS

School hours are:

Preschool (Age 3) ..... 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Pre-Kindergarten (Age 4) ..... 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Preschool/PreK Enrichment ..... 11:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Kindergarten ..... 7:55a.m – 3:00 p.m.

1 – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade ..... 7:55 a.m. – 4:05 p.m.

Expanded Track Monday – Thursday.....4:05 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Office hours..... 8:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

The school doors open at 7:45 a.m. and close at 7:55. Students arriving before 7:45 a.m. will go directly to the Gym to be signed into Early Morning Care. Likewise, students who are not in class by 7:55 are considered tardy and must sign in at the office.

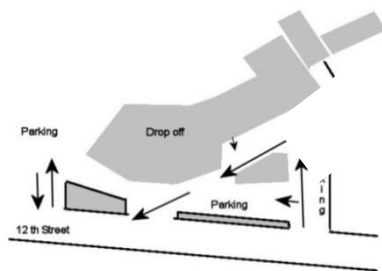
Students not picked up after school by 5:00 p.m. will be charged \$5 per student.

### DROP-OFF

If you are dropping your children off between 7:45am and 7:55am, please drop off your children at the main entrance to the school (The Big Red Doors). If you are dropping them off for early care, please drop them off at the office on the West end of the building.

Preschool and Pre-K families are required to escort their children to their classrooms. Parents of preschool and Pre-K children must sign a check-in sheet before leaving.

The map on this page shows the parking areas and the direction of traffic flow. The traffic within the parking lot is designated as one way—please follow the signs! Upon arrival, you may briefly stop and drop off children. During this time please do not hold up traffic by stopping too long. If you need to wait and watch as your child enters the school or to assist your child out of the car, please park so that you do not hold up traffic.



Please watch for pedestrian traffic!

### PICK-UP

After school, parents must go to the classroom to pick up their children. This gives both parents and teachers the opportunity to speak in person. Please feel free to use this opportunity to express concerns, ask questions and receive updates about your child's progress.

Students who are staying for all, or a portion, of the extended day track can be picked up through the office.

### EARLY MORNING CARE

Early Morning Care is available in the Gym from 7 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. There is a monthly fee of \$35/month (if less than 10 days) \$55/month (if more than 10 days) for using early morning care. Please enter through the office.

### LUNCH ROOM

Our hot lunch program operates daily. Hot Lunch is \$5.00 per meal for K-8. EC lunch is \$3.50 per meal except on Chick-fil-a and Burger King days. Hot lunch will be billed monthly though TADS based on how many meals your child ate. Children are welcome to bring a cold lunch on any day they are not eating hot lunch. If you would like your child to have milk or chocolate milk it is a \$.50 fee per milk.

If you wish to include something warm in your child's lunch, please plan on using a thermos. A microwave oven is not available to heat student lunches, and they cannot use the teacher microwaves.

You are invited to join your child at lunch at any time.

#### *Lunch Room Behavior*

Students are expected to behave properly while having lunch. Proper table manners will be encouraged and quiet conversation expected. Students shall:

- Stay seated until dismissed by the teacher.
- Dispose of trash appropriately.
- Walk, not run.
- Wait in line patiently.

#### CHAPEL

Chapel services are held each Wednesday morning at 8:00am Early Childhood to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. We begin with Praise & Worship, then transition into our chapel service. Services include a short liturgy, a message or skit, prayers, and closing song.

Parents are invited to attend chapel as much as possible.

#### COMMUNICATION

Communication between teachers and parents is extremely important in the development and education of a child. In order to establish open lines of communication, parents may expect frequent updates from their child's teacher regarding academics, activities, fieldtrips, and other reminders. Regular texts and emails may be used to keep parents up-to-date with grades, discipline issues, or special class announcements. Impromptu meetings between parents and teachers are also encouraged.

Please check your Gradelink account for regular emails and any medical or behavioral incidents.

### *Classroom/School Visits*

As a courtesy, please contact the teacher or the school office prior to your visit so we know when to expect you. For the safety of the children, we require all visitors to sign-in at the office before continuing on to the classrooms, playground, chapel, etc. and to sign-out upon departure.

Parents are also encouraged to visit one-on-one with their child's teacher any day after school at pick-up time. However, if your concerns are more serious or personal, please schedule a time to speak privately with the teacher or the Administrative Team.

### *Report Cards and Conferences*

Report cards are issued every semester

Mid-term reports are not sent home every semester. We recommend that families sign into Gradelink to review the current grades. See the office if you need login information.

Parent/teacher conferences are held after the 1<sup>st</sup> semester and half way through the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester to discuss each student's progress in schoolwork, achievement, and classroom behavior. Parents and teachers are encouraged to schedule additional conferences throughout the year as needed.

### *Expressing Concerns*

It is extremely important to us that a parent's issues and concerns be properly addressed so that the students receive the best education we can provide. School policy is that parents should first address areas of concern directly with the student's teacher. Our teaching staff is composed of competent professionals who are eager to hear your comments—both positive and negative. If a parent does not feel comfortable addressing specific issues with the teacher, and/or the teacher has not responded satisfactorily to issues already discussed, then please contact the Headmaster (Bryan Northcutt) directly. In the event that the concerns have still not been satisfactorily dealt with, the whole Administrative Team



and, if necessary, Day School Committee may then be contacted.

When a concern is brought to the staff, we are committed to addressing concerns promptly and adequately. To do so, we try an approach known as 24/2/7. That means 24 hours (or one business day) to respond to an issue, 2 days to investigate, and 7 days to resolve. If a concern is brought up on a Friday or before a holiday, we ask that you are patient and wait until school resumes for a staff member to respond.

#### *Proper Etiquette for Electronic Communication*

Although we encourage open and frequent communication with your child's teacher, we ask that you please respect their time at home. With e-mails, we ask that you wait one business day to hear back from someone. This means e-mails sent on a Friday afternoon may not be returned until the following Monday.

### VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is always welcome. If you are interested in ways that you can help, speak with your student's teacher or the PTO.

### SCHOOL CLOSURE

#### *Cancellation of Classes Due to Severe Weather*

If severe weather conditions will prevent a large fraction of the student body from attending classes, Hope Lutheran School may be closed. We follow District 91 and 93 when announcing closures. If either of those districts are closed, Hope will be.

#### *Cancellation of Classes Due to Illness*

If absenteeism due to illness reaches 20% of the student body, the school may be closed. In cases where absenteeism is less than 20% but the potential for the spread of serious epidemic disease exists, advice will be sought from the District Seven Health Department and the school may be closed. In case of

school closure due to illness, notification will normally be made by telephone, email, or by posting signs at the school.

## **SCHOOL POLICIES**

### **ATTENDANCE (K-8)**

We believe that regular attendance is essential for a student to make full use of the educational opportunities offered by the school. Regular attendance develops dependability and responsibility and plays a major role in the student's academic achievement. Chronic or excessive absenteeism can seriously hamper that achievement. Each student's parents are ultimately responsible for ensuring that the student attends school on a regular and timely basis.

We will work with parents to attempt to identify, document, and resolve the underlying causes for excessive absence. Students may not exceed eight absences per semester. In working to avoid absenteeism, the student's parent will be contacted after the seventh absence. Any absence over eight per semester will result in a \$50 fee per absence. Only absences relating to a chronic medical condition and documented by a doctor will be exempt from this policy. This policy does not apply to those in the Hybrid Program.

#### *Notice of Absences*

A parent should notify the school office between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. on the day a student will be absent. During an extended absence, the school office need only be notified on the first day of the absence. If a student needs to leave school early, parents should notify the office directly either through phone call or e-mail. The student must be signed out in the Early Dismissal book in the school office.

#### *Tardiness*

In the morning, school doors open at 7:45 a.m. and close at 7:55. If a child is not in the school building by 7:55 sharp, he or she will receive a tardy slip. The child should give that slip to his or her teacher upon entering the classroom. Students

arriving at school after the doors have closed must go to the school office. A parent or other adult must sign-in the student.

When a child is late to school, valuable learning time is lost to him/her. Plus upon his/her arrival at class, there is a disruption in the teaching/learning situation, which is unfair to the teacher and the other students. Therefore, it is imperative that all students arrive at school on time. Tardiness is considered to be any time after official start time of school as designated in the Family Handbook. Every 5<sup>th</sup> tardy will count as an absence.

### *Vacations*

Parents are strongly discouraged from scheduling family vacations on school days. Such absences adversely affect the quality of a student's classroom education. If a student will be absent for a vacation, the parent is responsible for making arrangements with the student's teacher at least 2 days before the vacation. Teachers may, but are not required to, prepare assignments in advance of a student's prearranged absence. Such a decision will be left to the teacher.

### *Making up Missed Work*

A student is expected to make up any classroom work missed due to absences or tardiness. Decisions related to specific tasks or projects that a student is required to make up due to absences or tardiness will be made by the teacher. The teacher will work with the parent to agree upon a reasonable schedule for the completion of make-up work. It is the responsibility of the parent and the student to ensure that make-up work is completed in accordance with the agreed upon schedule.

### *Sick Policy*

Do NOT bring your child to school if:

- They have a fever. Make sure your child is fever free for at least 24 hours.
- They have a severe runny nose. Cold weather and allergies can bring upon runny noses, but if nasal discharge is darker in color, then it most likely is a cold.

- They have a sore throat and a headache.
- They have a severe hacking cough.
- They have been throwing up or have diarrhea.

If they have tested positive or spent significant time with someone who tested positive for COVID 19.

### *Collaboration Policy*

Our teachers always have your child's best interests in mind; therefore, they constantly look at methods to enrich their academic experience and progress. The most effective way to do this tends to be through collaboration with other teachers at Hope Lutheran. Thus, Hope Lutheran reserves the right to allow teachers to collaborate to evaluate and determine the best way forward concerning academic or behavioral improvement. At Hope Lutheran School, comprising a multi-grade classroom structure, we reserve the right to transition teachers or students into other classrooms to enhance their academic experience.

### DRESS CODE

It is expected that students will, at all times, present a well-groomed and neat appearance. All clothing should be clean and in good condition. Shirts that have spaghetti straps or high midriffs, show skin when the arm is raised, or carry slogans or graphics not in keeping with a Christian life style will not be allowed. Tank tops and sleeveless shirts will not be allowed. Shorts and skirts must be no shorter than fingertip length when arms are down at sides. For safety, no open-toed sandals, shoes, or “flip-flops” will be allowed.

Hair and hair accessories must not be distracting. Hats are not allowed in the classroom or sanctuary, exception to this is stocking caps or beanies during the cold weather months.

Any style of appearance that draws undue attention to a student will not be allowed. However, periodically there will be special dress days where students are not required to comply with the full policy.

A student who violates the dress code will be allowed to call home to get a change of clothes. If a new outfit from home is not available, the student will wear something over the inappropriate clothing.

All students must wear athletic shoes for Physical Education classes. The shoe must fasten on the foot and stay on the student's feet during PE class. Appropriate socks are also required when wearing shoes.

Each child should have appropriate winter wear during cold weather. It is a good idea to write your child's name or initials on the inside tags in case an item is lost.

No dress code is perfect and additional policies may need to be developed as situations arise. Therefore, interpretation and enforcement of dress code is up to the discretion of the teachers.

In addition to the above principles, the Academy Students (K-8) are required to wear uniforms Monday through Thursday. The dress code is as follows:

For Boys

Tan, black, or blue chino pants or shorts

Navy blue, gray, or white short- or long-sleeved polo shirts

For Girls

Tan, black or blue chino pants, shorts, or skirts

Navy blue, gray, or white short- or long-sleeved polo shirts

Navy blue, gray, or white short- or long-sleeved polo dresses

(gray, navy, tan, or black leggings or shorts (cartwheel/bike) must be worn underneath dresses)

Nice sweaters may be worn, but, the only sweatshirts (and hoodies) that will be allowed to be worn are the sweatshirts provided by the school. One sweatshirt will be provided per

student. Additional sweatshirts can be purchased through the office.

If a student has three uniform violations, there will be a \$5 fee, and an additional \$5 fee for each subsequent three violations. This, again, is to encourage an environment of excellence and to mitigate distractions in the classroom and office. If uniforms present a financial burden, please consider utilizing Hope Lutheran Church's benevolence program. Ask Pastor for details.

### PERSONAL PETS

All animals that are brought in the building, including during drop off and pick up must have the prior authorization of both the classroom teacher and the Headmaster.

### PERSONAL ELECTRONICS

CD players, video game systems, MP3 players, and similar devices will not be allowed. Cell phones are allowed, but must be turned off and left in the student's locker or back-pack during the school day. Phones (including smart watches) can be used after school *only* – a parent needing to contact their child during the day must call the office. Any student caught using or accessing his or her cell phone during the day without permission will have their phone confiscated. All confiscated items will only be returned directly to the parent.

### COMPUTER USAGE POLICY

In order to facilitate our high academic standards, each student in K – 8<sup>th</sup> grade will have access to our computers. These laptops are the property of Hope Lutheran School and should be cared for by your child. The laptops are for use while at school and may not be taken home. Hope Lutheran School has a firewall system and Internet filter as part of our efforts to protect your child online. Any student found trying to access sites which are inappropriate or unrelated to their schoolwork may have their computer usage suspended or

revoked. Damage to the laptops will be the responsibility of the parents of the student.

### SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

We encourage parents to interact with our school via Social Media. However, at all times we expect that parents will be appropriate with their interactions. Parents should interact with teachers through private phone, in-person, or email, not on the official Hope Lutheran Church and School page.

### DISCIPLINE

To provide a safe and welcoming learning environment for everyone, we strive to ensure that discipline is individualized and age appropriate. We stress Christian values, respect for others, and the rights of others. Foremost among these rights is the right to attend a school and classroom that facilitates learning. Treatment of students will be without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, or socioeconomic status.

#### *Child Guidance:*

Hope Lutheran's child guidance policy consists of three tiers.

The first tier consists of the basic things that we teach all children to help ensure that our school is a positive and safe place to be. As a Christian school we strive to instill the children we serve with a desire to do good to become good and helpful members of society. Teachers are responsible for teaching important social and emotional skills in their classrooms to help children learn how to do this, such as coping techniques, relaxation skills, communication skills, and

more. In this tier is also laid out the school's foundational rules:

1. Respect and care for yourself
2. Respect and care for others
3. Respect and care for personal and school property

The second tier of our child guidance policy is used when behavioral or other challenges arise such as minor disruptions, peer conflicts, stealing, bullying, or persistent foul language. For these kinds of general behavioral challenges, teachers may use appropriate and positive strategies to guide and teach the children. Parents will be informed of tier two actions.

Tier three is for behaviors that require further intervention. If both a student's teacher and the school admin each agree that a child needs a tier three intervention- parents will be asked to come in and meet with the teacher and a member of the admin team to discuss and set a plan for addressing the behavior issue at hand.

Under no circumstances does any Hope Lutheran School staff member use shaming, humiliation, fear tactics, or any form of physical punishment to correct behavior.

**Office Disciplinary Procedures:**

If a student is sent to the office by a staff member, then the office personnel will email the parents describing the reason for the incident.

If a student visits the Office three times in a 30 day period for disciplinary issues, then this will result in an automatic Parent Conference with the Teacher and Headmaster to determine a behavioral plan.

*Suspension/ Expulsion policy:*

Major disciplinary issues may result in suspension or expulsion. Such behaviors may include but are not limited to



intentional violence, physical fighting, continuous disruptions that affect the learning experience of others, and offensive language or gestures.

3 incidents of intentional violence within a rolling 6-month period will result in a 3-day suspension after the first three offenses, and a fourth offense will result in a one-week suspension. If a fifth offense is committed or a child is hospitalized due to violent actions of another student, the offending student will be immediately suspended, and the case will be under review of the Day School Committee for expulsion.

Expulsions will be decided at Day School Committee meetings with advance notice given to the parent/guardian that such an action is possible. A suspended or expelled student may not return to class or participate in school functions.

### SEXUALITY AND GENDER

HLCS holds to the belief and statements provided by the LCMS (available at [lcms.org](http://lcms.org)). To state succinctly-

1. Marriage is between a man and a woman.
2. Sexuality is to be enjoyed and utilized within the marriage relationship between a man and woman.
3. God and biology designates gender as male and female. We maintain that the gender at birth is the undeniable gender of any human being that occurs naturally being designated by DNA while explicit in the human anatomy and not altered or fabricated by chemicals or cosmetic surgery.

Any student who proceeds contrary to these statements in behavior, identity claims, or excessive speech will be considered for expulsion.

## PAYMENT OF FEES

Payment of fees is managed by TADS, a billing service. Since your enrollment was done through TADS, you already have an account. Through TADS you will be able to make payments, view balances due and payments made, and find answers to commonly asked questions. Fee payments are made through direct debit from your bank account or by monthly billing.

As part of managing Hope Lutheran School's finances, the Day School Committee established fee payment policies:

- Registration and Curriculum fees are non-refundable. Registration fee must be paid before the school year begins. The curriculum fee can be spread over the 10 month period (see the office), but will be due in full if there is an disenrollment for any reason.
- A \$50 late fee will be imposed when a tuition payment is past due.
- Checks or automatic withdrawals that cannot be processed due to insufficient funds incur a \$35 fee.
- We reserve the right to terminate services for failure to pay.
- In case of delinquent accounts, collection efforts will be pursued.

***If you expect to have difficulties paying your fees, call the school office as soon as possible.***

## ORGANIZATIONS

### PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

As a parent of a child in Hope Lutheran School, you are automatically a member of the school's PTO. The PTO exists to support the school with fund-raising efforts, maintain open lines of communication between parents and school staff, and help parents stay closely involved with their child's schooling. Please make every effort to be involved in the Club activities.

## DAY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Hope Lutheran School is governed by the Day School Committee, which consists of members from Hope Lutheran Church, the Community, and school families.

## AFFILIATION

Hope Lutheran School is a vital part of the ministry of Hope Lutheran Church and is one of over 1,800 Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) schools, which serve more than 200,000 students nationwide.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### *Website*

[www.allabouthope.org](http://www.allabouthope.org)

[Facebook.com/HopeLutheranSchoolIF](https://www.facebook.com/HopeLutheranSchoolIF) (Note: a Facebook account is *NOT* required to view our Facebook page.)

### *E-Mail Addresses*

| Staff Member   |   | Email  |
|----------------|---|--|
| Rev. Garen Pay | Pastoral Advisor/<br>Interim Headmaster | <a href="mailto:gpay@allabouthope.org">gpay@allabouthope.org</a>     |
| Jamie Gibson   | Office Manager                          | <a href="mailto:hlcs@allabouthope.org">hlcs@allabouthope.org</a>     |
| Amy Weary      | Administrative<br>Assistant             | <a href="mailto:aweary@allabouthope.org">aweary@allabouthope.org</a> |
| Brenda Pay     | Early Childhood                         | <a href="mailto:bpay@allabouthope.org">bpay@allabouthope.org</a>     |
| Theresa Bush   | Kindergarten                            | <a href="mailto:tbush@allabouthope.org">tbush@allabouthope.org</a>   |
| Melanie Deede  | First & Second                          | <a href="mailto:mdeede@allabouthope.org">mdeede@allabouthope.org</a> |
| Mandy Hall     | Third to Fifth                          | <a href="mailto:ahall@allabouthope.org">ahall@allabouthope.org</a>   |
| Karma Henry    | Sixth to Eighth                         | <a href="mailto:khenry@allabouthope.org">khenry@allabouthope.org</a> |