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# Bethlehem Lutheran Church & School

**Our Vision:** Changing Lives through Christ

**Our Mission:** Sharing Christ's Love & Caring for all People

## **School Mission Statement**

At Bethlehem, we are more than a school, we are family. We partner with families to educate, engage, encourage, and empower our children both in the Christian faith and through excellence in learning.

We want every child to:

**BELIEVE** in the amazing love of Jesus;  
**LEARN** in an environment of academic excellence  
**GROW** into bold defenders of the Christian faith; and  
**LEAD** in their family, community, and world.

## STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Bethlehem Lutheran School strives to develop a Christ-centered educational environment focused on academic excellence that will permeate each child's life. The school assists families in carrying out the vision and mission of the church. Bethlehem Lutheran School is a unique Christian community which fosters the spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, emotional, artistic, and physical growth of children in a spirit of forgiveness and love. This spirit finds its roots in the Gospel that Jesus Christ is the Promised Savior who died and rose so that all people might serve our Lord faithfully and live with Him eternally. Faith and the Christian life come by the power of the Holy Spirit.

At Bethlehem Lutheran School, God's Law and Gospel are vital components of all aspects of life and learning. Christian education occurs daily in all subjects and activities. Christian teachers who are academically prepared and state certified are committed to using effective, best practice teaching and learning methods and materials to foster the Christian education of all children. The school community worships frequently, and through projects and the Christian life, witnesses our faith to the community. As members of the body of Christ, the school community, supports, encourages, admonishes, and witnesses to one another. In a variety of ways, acts of Christ-like compassion and love for all people are encouraged.

### CREDO OF BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN SCHOOL

**WE BELIEVE** that Christian education is a vital aspect of God's mission -- to make disciples of all men -- commanded by Him to the church through the Great Commission. Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:16; Acts 1:8

**WE BELIEVE** that the purpose of Christian education is to teach the Christian faith through instruction in God's Word as found in Holy Scripture, and learning to live a life of discipleship. Matt. 7:24; John 1:12.

**WE BELIEVE** that God's people need to learn their proper relationship to God and their fellow man. Eph. 4:7-16; John 13:35; Gal. 6:10; Mark 10:42:44

**WE BELIEVE** that effective Christian education is carried on through high quality learning programs that relate the Christian faith to all activities and areas of life. I Corinthians 14:40

**WE BELIEVE** in a strong emphasis developing Christ centered morally responsible citizens for this life, and on nurturing of souls on their path to eternity. Hebrews 10:24-25

**WE BELIEVE** that a Christian educator is committed to provide, to the best of his ability, a complete education for God's people by meeting their spiritual, mental, social, physical, and emotional needs. Gen. 2:7, Matt. 4:4.

**WE BELIEVE** that the uniqueness of our Christian education rests in this: Christian education views the student through the cross of Christ; Christian education has the Father's given reasons for educating man. Prov. 22:6, Is. 54:13. Christian education is empowered by the spirit for accomplishing its purpose. John 20:21-23

**WE BELIEVE** that Bethlehem Lutheran School's uniqueness lies in the fact that this Lutheran school tries to meet the learner's needs in a single school setting, striving to combine Church,

school, and family into one strong working unit.

**WE BELIEVE** that a program of Christian education built on a philosophy flowing from a distinct theology must also determine the precise objectives of its curriculum on the basis of the physical, mental, social, and spiritual forces and needs of the local, national, and world communities -- a Christian worldview for Christian education.

**WE BELIEVE** that the **FAMILY** exerts the basic influence on the child's total education, and that the Church and school must equip adults for their important role in Christian education.

## **CHRISTIAN HOME**

While Bethlehem Lutheran School provides a program for systematic Christian instruction for its children, it does not intend to remove any obligation from the parents. We believe the primary responsibility for raising up and training a child comes from the home. Daily devotions and prayer, personal interest in church and school activities, and weekly church attendance are all ways parents can be excellent models of Christian living and influence the overall spiritual growth and training of a child.

We believe parents are the primary faith teachers. It is important for parents to take an active role in their child(ren)'s spiritual growth and educational journey. A positive home to school relationship is key to a child's overall success in school.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

Bethlehem Lutheran School was established in 1916. Bethlehem is a part of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. Bethlehem follows curricular standards comparable to public schools, but strives to maintain the foundation of our mission by embedding a biblical worldview in all that we do. National Lutheran Schools Accreditation accredits Bethlehem Lutheran School. Accreditation was received in May, 2014.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church has delegated the responsibility for the operation of the school to the Head Pastor and Principal.

The Board of Day School formulates, implements, supervises, and evaluates all policies that pertain to the operation of the school. The principal is the administrative agent of the congregation and is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school.

## **FACULTY**

Teachers at Bethlehem Lutheran School are certified by the Michigan Department of Education as required by state law. In addition, some of the teachers are certified by the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. A number of faculty members have earned graduate degrees and all of the staff are lifelong learners participating in continuing education courses along with professional development workshops and seminars. Our highly qualified, loving faculty and staff members possess a true passion for sharing the gospel through Christian education. Every student is treated individually and cared for as one of our own.

## WHOM WE SERVE

Bethlehem Lutheran School is the primary mission of the congregation of Bethlehem Lutheran Church. We offer our Christ-centered education to as many students as we can accommodate. To keep within best practices of effective classroom instruction, the following parameters have been set for each grade:

Kindergarten-20:1 Student to teacher ratio  
1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>th</sup> Grades-20:1 Student to teacher ratio  
4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grades-25:1 Student to teacher ratio

(Adjustments to these limitations can be made when deemed necessary by the building principal.)

## AGE

As required by state law, children enrolling Kindergarten must be five years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>. Those entering first grade must have reached their sixth birthday on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>. If students do not meet the September deadline but turn 5 or 6 before December 1, a waiver may be granted if both the school and parents are in agreement.

## REGISTRATION DOCUMENTATION

State law requires us to see a copy of the child's birth certificate at the time of registration for Kindergarten. Specific immunizations and prior school records must also be on file at the time of registration. Bethlehem will send a Release of Records form requesting all records (CA 60, Achievement Tests, Special Education Evaluation, etc.) from the previous school. Acceptance is conditional upon the receipt of these records and indication of probable success in the grade for which the student is enrolling. Bethlehem Lutheran School has all rights to final approval of student enrollment and registration requirements. All required forms must be completed and signed prior to a child attending class.

## REGISTRATION FEES

At the time of initial enrollment and/or registration, all families will pay a family registration fee. Additional fees may apply for materials based on each grade level. Fees must be paid on the day of registration. Students will not be placed on classroom rosters until these fees have been paid.

## IMMUNIZATION

The parent/guardian of a child enrolling in a school for the first time must submit a certificate showing required immunizations have been given; or a physician-signed waiver that the required immunizations could not be given because of medical contraindications; or a parent/guardian signed waiver that for religious or other reasons the immunizations have not been given (The Revised School Code (Excerpt), 380.1177). Additionally, all other state requirements regarding current up-to-date immunization schedules are required. **As of 2015, the waiver must be presented to the Saginaw County Health Department and a copy must be given to the school office.**

## FINANCIAL POLICIES

**Families of returning students MUST submit their Financial Aid Application by May 1st to guarantee eligibility for financial aid consideration.**

- Actual costs per student are over \$7,500. Bethlehem Lutheran Church annually provides over \$275,000 in support for the operation of Bethlehem Lutheran School. This equates to over \$2,500/student.
- Financial grants will be awarded strictly based on proven financial need.
- Families with any remaining balances from previous school years will not be re-enrolled unless balances are paid in full.
- Family fee MUST be paid on or by registration day or your student(s) will not be enrolled. This includes the following: Administrative Costs, Books & Materials, Technology Fees, Assessment Fees
  - K-8 Family Fee-\$425
  - Families with ONLY a preschool student- \$200
- Band/String Fees of \$85 will still apply and must be paid at registration. All other fees (lunch, latchkey, field trips) can be paid in a timely manner throughout the school year.
- All other student costs/fees are included in per student tuition.

## Tuition Breakdown by Monthly Payments

<u>Church Member Rates</u>	<u>12 Month</u>	<u>11 Month</u>	<u>10 Month</u>
<u>1 Child- 3,100.00</u>	<u>258.00</u>	<u>281.00</u>	<u>310.00</u>
<u>2 Children- 5,150.00</u>	<u>429.00</u>	<u>468.00</u>	<u>515.00</u>
<u>3 Children- 6,100.00</u>	<u>508.00</u>	<u>554.00</u>	<u>610.00</u>
<u>4 Children- 6,800.00</u>	<u>566.00</u>	<u>618.00</u>	<u>680.00</u>
<u>5 Children- 7,570.00</u>	<u>631.00</u>	<u>688.00</u>	<u>757.00</u>

<u>Community Member Rates</u>	<u>12 Month</u>	<u>11 Month</u>	<u>10 Month</u>
<u>1 Child-4800.00</u>	<u>400.00</u>	<u>436.00</u>	<u>480.00</u>
<u>2 Children-7625.00</u>	<u>635.00</u>	<u>693.00</u>	<u>762.00</u>
<u>3 Children- 9,600.00</u>	<u>800.00</u>	<u>872.00</u>	<u>960.00</u>
<u>4 Children- 10,625.00</u>	<u>885.00</u>	<u>965.00</u>	<u>1,062.00</u>
<u>5 Children- 11,650.00</u>	<u>970.00</u>	<u>1,059.00</u>	<u>1,165.00</u>

<u>Minimum Tuition- Financial Aid Qualified</u>	<u>12 Month</u>	<u>11 Month</u>	<u>10 Month</u>
<u>1 Child- 1,200.00</u>	<u>100.00</u>	<u>109.00</u>	<u>120.00</u>
<u>2 Children- 2,100.00</u>	<u>175.00</u>	<u>190.00</u>	<u>210.00</u>
<u>3 Children- 2,800.00</u>	<u>233.00</u>	<u>255.00</u>	<u>280.00</u>
<u>4 Children- 3,650.00</u>	<u>304.00</u>	<u>332.00</u>	<u>365.00</u>
<u>5 Children- 4,450.00</u>	<u>371.00</u>	<u>405.00</u>	<u>445.00</u>

### Preschool Rates

<u>(5-Day) 2,175.00</u>	<u>182.00</u>	<u>198.00</u>	<u>218.00</u>
<u>(3-Day) 1,350.00</u>	<u>113.00</u>	<u>123.00</u>	<u>135.00</u>
<u>(2-Day) 1,050.00</u>	<u>87.00</u>	<u>95.00</u>	<u>105.00</u>

### Preschool 2.0

5-Day \$85/Week

Preschool Stretch  
(3:15-5:30 p.m.)

Included in  
Preschool 2.0 Price

3-Day \$55/Week

2-Day \$45/Week

## **FINANCIAL GRANT ASSISTANCE**

Additional financial assistance is available through a standard financial aid grant process. Families in need of additional assistance must complete the required forms from the FACTS Financial Aid Service and return to the company by May 15th of each year. Applications received after this deadline will receive a 25% reduction in aid. Assistance is based on a formula determined by the company and is based on family income as well as other factors to determine the amount of tuition families would be able to pay. If the amount exceeds a family's ability to pay, an appeal may be presented to the tuition committee in writing. The committee will meet to discuss any additional assistance options.

## **SMART TUITION**

Tuition payments for grades PS-8 are paid through SMART TUITION services over an 11 or 12-month period and include various payment options. All families must be enrolled in Smart Tuition and signed up for ACH payments on the day of registration. Families wishing to waive ACH withdrawal will be charged a \$100 processing fee.

## **DELINQUENT PAYMENT GUIDELINES**

The purpose of this policy is to detail the steps that will be taken to collect tuition when families have not met the tuition obligations. All tuition payments are to be made on a regular monthly basis to SMART TUITION unless payment is received in full by registration day in August. SMART TUITION contacts families by email and/or telephone if a payment has been missed and assesses late fees for payments received after the due date. On-time payments are imperative to avoid accruing large additional fees. Special appeals due to extenuating circumstances will be referred to the tuition committee. This committee is empowered by the Board of Day School to make exceptions to the policy as deemed appropriate.

- If payments are not made within 30 days of the due date, families will receive a letter reminder from the tuition committee. Accounts not reconciled will be reported to the Credit Services of Michigan at 45 days past due.
- If the account becomes 60 days past due, the parent/guardian will be contacted by the school principal or a member of the tuition committee, and the student(s) will be de-enrolled from Bethlehem Lutheran School until the balance has been paid in full or a satisfactory payment plan has been approved by the Board of Education.
- Applications for registration for the next school year will not be accepted from families whose tuition payments are more than 90 days past due until the arrears are brought down to one month or less.



## **CHURCH ATTENDANCE**

Because we sincerely care for and love our families, we encourage regular church attendance. Worship is a way to grow your personal relationship with Jesus Christ, fellowship with other believers, and spend time in God's word. Students are not required to attend Bethlehem Lutheran Church, but we invite anyone who may not have a church home to join us for Sunday morning or Monday evening worship services. If there is anything we can do to encourage or support you in your walk with the Lord, please contact the school office. Teachers will record church attendance each week.

## **CURRICULUM**

At Bethlehem, we fully believe that a Christian education is what sustains our students throughout their life. In keeping with the mission and vision of our school, Bethlehem's curriculum is focused on the biblical truths provided in the Word of God. A biblical worldview is embedded in all instruction. In keeping with the Christian philosophy of education and with respect to the requirements of the State of Michigan, our children receive a high quality education in the following areas:

- Faith Studies
- Reading and Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Fine Arts, Physical Education, Technology, and Foreign Language

Our teachers who are instructional experts carefully map out the curriculum for each content area. Using a variety of standards, instructional approaches, programs, and resources, our teachers develop a clear scope and sequence that ensures instruction in each of the core competencies expected at each grade level. These core competencies are then assessed through both formative and summative assessments. The NWEA Measures of Academic Progress is administered two times a year (September and May) to determine individual student growth. The data from this assessment is used to determine academic levels and to assist teachers in planning to meet individual student needs.

## **SPECIAL COURSES**

### **LIBRARY**

Our school has a large library filled with a variety of books from different genres. Each grade level has an assigned library time. In addition to this time, students can access the library at other times according to their needs and the teacher's direction.

Books purchased or borrowed outside of the school library can be brought to school, but must contain content appropriately aligned with the vision and mission of Bethlehem Lutheran School.

Teachers or librarians reserve the right to restrict books that may include questionable material. If school personnel questions content or is unsure of age/grade appropriateness, Bethlehem reserves the right to deny student reading or request permission from the parents.

## TECHNOLOGY

Bethlehem teachers and students use various innovative technology components throughout the school day. Students are expected to treat this equipment with care and respect their responsibility as users of technology. Use of technology is based on individual teacher's discretion. Should a student misuse any hardware or software, loss of privileges will occur. Parents may be charged for replacement or repair accordingly. Every student and parent must sign a technology agreement each school year.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The P.E. program is aimed at the development of the child's physical strengths and coordination used in fundamental skills. Gym shoes are necessary for these classes, and may not be worn during school time in the classrooms, except under extraordinary circumstances. Bethlehem competes in the Tri-County Lutheran League in the following sports: soccer, volleyball, and basketball. The track teams compete with other Lutheran schools in the area. The major goals of these teams are to develop Christian sportsmanship, grow as a team player both physically and mentally. Academics remain our top priority, so students participating in athletics must maintain passing grades.

## MUSIC

Each student in grades 5-8 must participate in one music course.

- **CHOIR:** Special opportunity for praising God through song is given through two school choirs. Students in grades 1-4 (Choir I) and 5-8 (Choir II) meet during the school day to prepare a variety of anthems for the worship service. The choirs participate in worship services once or twice a month.
- **STRINGS:** Instruction in violin is available at Bethlehem beginning in Kindergarten. A qualified string instructor teaches lessons before school. Strings is a full year commitment.
- **BAND:** Those interested in playing a band instrument may begin in 5th grade. Both beginning and advanced band meet three times weekly and are taught by a qualified instructor.
- **HANDBELLS:** Bethlehem handbell groups practice before school once per week. Handbells is a full year commitment.
- **PRAISE BAND:** Opportunities to participate in the praise band will include vocal, instrumental, or technology components.

## INJURY/ACCIDENT REPORTS

Faculty and staff of Bethlehem Lutheran School will take precautions to ensure the safety of all students in classroom, the gym, on the playground, and around the school grounds. However, sometimes accidents do occur. The following policy will be in place to respond to and report accidents and/or injuries:

All accidents and major injuries occurring on school grounds or while under school supervision shall be reported immediately to the school office and the principal. A written accident report must be filed with the school office. The report should include the actions taken at the time and any other pertinent information regarding the incident.

First aid supplies are stored in the school office. A child without a health care provider's written order may take no over-the-counter medication, including aspirin or its equivalent. An adult must supervise administration of any medication permitted only with a signed medical release form.

## DRESS CODE

Bethlehem students are permitted to dress in styles that are current. As a Christian school we expect clothing worn to school to be neat in appearance and display modesty. General guidelines to assist in determining acceptable dress are provided below. **Please note: Teachers' may use their discretion when determining violations to the dress code as they are the ultimate experts on classroom climate and dress code infractions that negatively impact the teaching and learning environment.** Also, expectations for students in preschool through 4<sup>th</sup> grade may vary from students in 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade due to developmental differences. Ultimately, the school principal will address and provide opportunities to remediate any concerns related to student dress.

### General Guidelines

- All clothing must be clean and in good repair.
- Shorts may be worn (to chapel also) up until October 15<sup>th</sup> at the start of the school year and beginning April 15<sup>th</sup> to the end of the school year. Words or writing should not appear on the back of shorts and shorts should be of adequate and reasonable length and display modesty. Shorts must have a button/zipper – No athletic or pajama shorts.
- Boy's pants/shorts must be worn at the waistline as to not expose under garments. Athletic pants can be worn. Traditional sweatpants are not allowed.
- Girl's tops must provide adequate coverage on top and bottom so as not to be exposing in nature and should display modesty. Spaghetti straps tops are not permitted.
- Girl's skirts/dresses should be of adequate and reasonable length and display modesty.
- T-shirts and tops of all types should have an over the shoulder cut. They may contain pictures, logos, and wording (except chapel day) but they must not be objectionable, inappropriate, demeaning, or derogatory in nature. No secular band shirts of any type permitted.
- Hairstyles are to be modest and not extreme in nature. Boys and girls hair should not hang over their eyes. Boys hair length should not exceed the top of a collared shirt. Extreme coloration from natural color is not permitted. Boys must be clean-shaven.
- Boys may not wear pierced earrings to school or school functions. Additionally, other body piercings outside of earrings for girls are not permitted.

- Shoes appropriate for seasonal weather are required. Flip flops are discouraged as this type of footing increases chance of injury on the playground.

Our appearance at school and school functions sends an important message to everyone around us. This message should convey respect for God and for ourselves and be positive in nature.

### **HOMEWORK POLICY/LATE PAPER POLICY**

Depending on grade level, homework may be assigned each evening. The amount depends on the grade level, ability level, and study habits of each individual student. Parents can assist by providing encouragement and a quiet place to study. If assignments are consistently difficult for a child, the teacher should be contacted so the work can be adjusted accordingly and differentiated assignments can be provided.

Each teacher develops classroom late policies. Completing assignments on time enhances the teaching and learning process, so it is encouraged to remain current with classroom assignments and project expectations. If a student is absent, he/she will be given one extra day for the number of days absent to turn in the missing work. If an absence occurs, it is the responsibility of the student to find out what assignments were missed. It is not the teacher's responsibility to pursue the student for the absent/late/missing work.

### **REPORTING TO PARENTS**

Report cards are issued four times each year at the end of the quarter, which is approximately nine weeks in length. The report cards provide a picture of a child's progress both academically and behaviorally. Mandatory parent-teacher conferences are held in the fall and in the spring. However, parent-teacher conferences can be scheduled at any time to review the report card grades or to go over current progress or concerns. Parents are urged to consult the teacher at any time if there are questions or concerns. All parents have access to the online student management system, Jupiter Ed.

### **GRADING SCALE**

100-93 A  
92-90 A-  
89-87 B+  
86-83 B  
82-80 B-  
79-77 C+  
76-73 C  
72-70 C-  
69-67 D+  
66-63 D  
62-60 D-  
59-0 F

## **GRADING POLICY/PHILOSOPHY**

Bethlehem Lutheran School understands that grading can be both subjective and objective. Teachers are given the autonomy to grade students in accordance with individual growth and not always in comparison with other students' achievements. Individual needs will be met through differentiated instruction, which sometimes means accommodations and modifications need to be made for some students based on specific needs or skill sets. Teachers will notify parents of classroom grading policies and procedures at the beginning of the year.

## **HONOR ROLL/MERIT ROLL**

At the end of each grading period a list of students in grades 5-8 will be published as an Honor Roll (all A's) and a Merit Roll (all A's and B's).

## **VALEDICTORIAN & SALUTATORIAN**

Each year a valedictorian and salutarian are chosen from the 8th grade class. The selection is made based on grade point average in core content areas throughout 6th-8th grade years. A+'s will be considered A's when determining grade point averages.

Art, music, band, technology, spanish, and physical education are not used in the selection process.

The valedictorian(s) and salutarian(s) give a short address to the congregation on graduation day.

## **BETHLEHEM AWARDS**

The point system utilizes a percentage of total possible points for males/females at each grade level in 5th-8th. Each year the total points possible will be determined based on such areas as academics, sports participation, extracurricular, and service activities.

The Bethlehem Emblem and Medallion will then be awarded on the basis of the following percentages. The emblem will be awarded if a child accumulates 50% of the total possible points and the medallion requires 75% of the total possible points.

## **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

The school provides a yearly calendar as required by the State Department of Education. Emergency closing days are determined for the safety of all concerned. Where possible, the schedule attempts to coincide with other school systems in the area. Additionally, the school provides an annual calendar of events to assist you in planning your personal schedules with enough advance notice. Information regarding the school calendar and activities can be found on the school webpage:  
[www.bethlehemsaginaw.org](http://www.bethlehemsaginaw.org)

## DAILY BELL SCHEDULE

The school doors (near playground) will open at 7:15 a.m. Students are asked not to arrive before that time. All children grades K-8 will enter only through the main entry door located on the west side of the building at the Weiss entrance. Preschool students may enter with a parent on the east side of the building using the buzzer door.

Upon arrival between 7:15 - 7:50 a.m. the students will go directly to the gym where there will be an adult on duty for supervision. At 7:50 a.m. the students will be dismissed to their classrooms to get prepared for the beginning of the instructional day.

Grades Kindergarten through 8th have a staggered noon hour from 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. School will be dismissed at 3:15 p.m. **Children should be picked up as soon as possible after school is out. The building is to be cleared by 3:30 p.m.** Siblings of older students attending sports practices will need to be picked up or go to latchkey. Students **WILL NOT** be in the building after school hours without adult supervision.

**AFTER 3:30 PROCEDURE:** A teacher is on duty after school near the pick-up area (on the west side) until 3:30. Any children not picked up at that time will go to extended day and normal extended day fees will be charged.

## SIGNING IN AND OUT OF SCHOOL

If a student needs to be picked up during school hours for reasons such as illness, injury, doctor, or dentist appointments, please be sure to follow the required procedures. Report to the school office and sign your child out in the appropriate binder. Students will only be allowed to leave with parents, guardians, or emergency contact persons unless a written note is presented. No exceptions! This is to ensure the safety of our students.

## LEAVING THE SCHOOL PREMISES

Students may not leave the school during the class day except with a parent or designated adult. Likewise, if an athletic event takes place after school, students may not "go to a store" or "to a friend's house" then return for the event. Students must make after school arrangements prior to the beginning of the school day. The telephone is not to be used for "last minute permissions." Athletes will be supervised after school in a designated classroom.

## SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Please listen for the name BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN when you have doubts as to whether we will have school or not because of inclement weather. **DO NOT CALL THE PRINCIPAL OR THE TEACHERS.** Watch any of the following for the announcement: ABC12; WNEM-TV5. School closings will also be broadcast to home phones via the School Reach phone system and on social media no later than 6:30 a.m.

## ATTENDANCE POLICIES

When school is in session, according to laws in the State of Michigan, children of school age must be in school. Students are expected to be in school unless circumstances such as illness, doctor's appointments, family emergencies, etc. arise. If a student is absent for more than 2 consecutive days due to illness, **a doctor's excuse is required**. Discretion and good judgment should be used when keeping students home from school. For their own sake, and for the well-being of others, students should remain at home if they are ill. Students may return to school after a fever has returned to normal or 24 hours after vomiting has subsided.

If a child is going to be absent from school, it is the parent's responsibility to call the school with information prior to 9:00 am.

In addition to bringing a written excuse for each absence, each child is required to bring a note explaining tardiness as well as permission for health appointments and for non-participation in physical education or recess activities. Parents are asked to exercise care not to remove children from the classroom during the time of protected instruction and/or achievement testing.

## ABSENCES/TARDIES

Classes will begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. While sometimes mornings can get off to a late start, it is encouraged to have students to school on time. Tardiness impacts the beginning of the day for the student and can impact the flow of instruction for the whole class. Excessive tardiness will result in a mandatory meeting with the school principal and a record will be placed in the student's permanent academic file. The school truancy officer may be notified in the case of excessive tardies and/or absences. Likewise, excessive absences/tardies may have an impact on academic grades and grade level promotion. As per policy, Bethlehem Lutheran School will establish an attendance review committee. The committee will review each student's attendance record after 5 absences or 7 tardies in a quarter. The committee will re-examine each student's attendance record following each 2 additional absences/tardies. Committee will consist of Principal, student's main teacher, and a pastor.

Additionally, the committee will refer any student with an excessive amount of absences of ten or more per year to proper authorities that deal with student truancy / tardies. These include authorities in both the Saginaw ISD Truant Officer and Family Independence Agency.

A student is deemed to be tardy if arriving in classroom after the 8:00 starting time. A student is deemed absent for 1/2 day if arriving after 8:45 or leaving before 1:30.

## ATTENDANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Daily attendance is important for both academic and spiritual growth.
2. Tardies disrupt the flow of instruction.
3. If you are absent, get make-up work from the teacher and complete it in a timely manner.
4. Parents/Guardians should encourage daily and punctual attendance.
5. The school should be notified of any absences and/or tardies.
6. Teachers should record daily attendance and provide make-up work.
7. Teachers should also communicate with parents/guardians regarding attendance and the importance of punctuality.
8. Administration should keep records of attendance and communicate with parents/guardians about any issues.

## DISCIPLINE

It is important that both parents and teachers have the same understanding about discipline. Both must be working with the child toward common goals by common means, with open and prompt communication between parents and teachers.

Self-discipline means having a sense of responsibility, but a Christian in a democratic society has added responsibilities. He must be responsible not only to himself, his community and country, his family, and the rest of the world, but also to God. All of these responsibilities are seen in the light of God's forgiving love shown to us in Christ. The ultimate source of our power to love others and act responsibly is God's Holy Spirit.

**Christian discipline can be thought of as having four parts:**

1. Admonition
2. Repentance
3. Forgiveness
4. New Life

The words are not important, but what they mean is. The reason for each step and the method must always be love. A child must be able to see what he has done wrong; this is the function of God's word of law. Such admonition is to lead to repentance, real sorrow over what is wrong. Forgiveness must follow. But, if new life, a fresh relationship with God and fellow believers, doesn't happen, real Christian discipline has not taken place.

The new life of the Christian is not just a slight changing of the old life, or the natural ways, but it is an entire transformation, done by the power of the Holy Spirit. Working through the Gospel, the message of God's love, the Spirit creates new life in the believer. The activity of this new life is love-powered.



This new love-powered behavior comes as a result of the Gospel, the Word of forgiveness, never just the Work of law alone. We as parents and teachers can never count on a scolding or punishment to give truly Christ-centered behavior. If we do, we have left out a major portion of what Christian discipline is all about.

Do we seek out a Christian elementary school just because it seems to have better “discipline” or orderliness? A Christian school is, rather, a place where a child’s disorder can be forgiven each day. If we fail to think of discipline as a process of confessing and forgiving, we pass up God’s power. We must never forget that the words “discipline” and “disciple” come from the same root, and that a disciple of Christ is what he is because of God’s forgiveness. This must be the process happening at home and at school.

## **RULES OF CONDUCT**

The most basic rule for Bethlehem Lutheran School is God’s rule of love in Christ Jesus. In following Him we want to show respect for teachers, students, property, and ourselves. The following are general, basic rules for conduct and demeanor; the principles of Christian love and respect apply in all circumstances. Such respect requires that we:

- **Respect God in all that we say and do**
- **Respect relationships in all that we say and do**
- **Respect responsibilities in all that we say and do**
- **Respect property in all that we say and do**

Maintaining a safe school and classroom-learning environment is top priority at Bethlehem Lutheran School. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a Christ-like manner at all times. All teachers strive to focus on positive behaviors being exhibited by students at all grade levels. Encouraging success and appropriate Christian behavior is what we strive for at Bethlehem Lutheran School.

- In preschool through 8th grade, classroom discipline policies and consequences are developed and implemented by the individual classroom teachers. The school principal will follow through and provide additional support as needed. These policies will be clearly conveyed to the parents at the beginning of the year, in the form of a classroom discipline policy. The classroom teacher, student, and parent will sign the agreement in understanding of classroom expectations.

While it is our goal to have all students showing respect to God, each other, and their responsibilities, we recognize there are times when we must provide path corrections.

## CATEGORIES OF MISCONDUCT REQUIRING OFFICE REFERRAL

The specific categories of misconduct, which will result in an office referral, include without limitation the following:

1. Continued Violations of the Basic Rule(s) of Conduct – the act of not conforming one’s behavior to the basic rules of conduct and discipline, and principals of Christian love and respect for persons and property, as described above.
2. Theft – the act of dishonestly acquiring, and/or knowingly and willfully having in possession, the property of another or others.
3. Arson – the intentional wrongful burning of, or attempt to burn, any building, contents, or property on school or church property, or at a school function.
4. Physical Assault/Battery – the act of intentionally touching another individual in a wrongful manner on school property, going to or from school, or at a school function.
5. Fighting – the act of quarreling, which may include fisticuffs or other wrongful bodily contact, on school property or at a school function.
6. Sexual Harassment – unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that substantially interferes with an individual’s peace and happiness at school or at a school function, or which creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment at school or at a school function.
7. Threats – the act of intentionally threatening another individual’s mental or physical well- being, or willfully causing fear or apprehension in another, whether by words, graphic depiction, or conduct.
8. Bullying – the act of intentionally intimidating, harassing, or demeaning another student, by words or conduct.
9. Insubordination – the willful failure to obey a reasonable request by a staff member or other person placed in a position of authority.
10. Vandalism–the act of willful destruction of school or church property or property belonging to another or others on school property or at a school function.
11. Profanity and Obscenity–the act of using profane or obscene language (oral or written), gestures, pictures, or conduct on school property or at a school function.
12. Weapons and Incendiary Devices–the possession of any weapon, using, or threatening to use any weapon, including but not limited to guns, knives, bombs, incendiary devices etc. is not allowed. Students in possession of such weapons may be suspended immediately and could face expulsion after a hearing with the Bethlehem Lutheran School Board.
13. Controlled Substances–the possession, use, or transfer of drugs, alcoholic beverages, or other controlled substances as well as the wrongful possession, use, or transfer of other substances that alter behavior (e.g. glue-sniffing). Any substance that mimics a controlled substance (e.g. near beer) is also included. Students in possession of such substances may be suspended immediately and could face expulsion after a hearing with the Bethlehem Lutheran School Board.
14. Tobacco – the possession, use, or transfer of tobacco in any form.
15. Disruption–the continued disruption of the educational process or the continued disruption of orderly procedures involved in any school activity.
16. Cyberbullying – includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, defaming or terrorizing another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or Web-site postings (including blogs).

17. Academic Dishonesty-Cheating, plagiarism, or any falsification or altering of student's original work

## RESULTS OF MISCONDUCT

Misconduct, as defined above (and such other misconduct not specifically defined above but as may be determined by the principal after consideration of all the circumstances), will result in a DISCIPLINE REFERRAL to the principal with penalties. The penalty(s) which applies will be determined depending on the severity of the misconduct and after consideration of all of the circumstances underlying the matter. Misconduct may result in one or more of the following consequences:

1. **Admonition** – A warning to the student with notification to the parent(s) with or without appropriate consequences.
2. **Separation from Class** – The student is separated from the class for a period of time determined by the teacher or principal (if involved)
3. **Recess Detention** – A student may be removed from recess to serve a recess detention. Students will be asked to write a “Making Better Choices” in which they address what they have done wrong, suggest what they should have done and what they will do in the future.
4. **Detention** – A student may be asked to serve a detention. Parents are notified and normally given a day's notice. Detentions will be held on Wednesday mornings at 7:15 a.m. Students will assist the facilities coordinator in tasks around the school.
5. **In-School Suspension** – The student is suspended from classes but remains in the building under supervision. The parent(s) or legal guardian is notified.
6. **Suspension** – The student is removed from class for the balance of the school day, and the student shall after a decision by the principal be suspended from attending school for a specified period of one to five school days. A meeting is held between the student, parent(s), teacher (if involved), and the principal 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, and the principal solely shall make a determination as to an appropriate term of suspension. A student suspended from school (OSS) will not participate in or attend any Bethlehem-sponsored activity or event for the duration of the school suspension.

A suspension, whether in-school or out of school, is a serious consequence. The homework and the grading of it will be affected by the suspension.

All homework that is assigned while a student is serving a suspension will be subject to a 10% penalty for each day of the suspension with a maximum penalty of 30%. If a one-day suspension occurs, a 10% penalty will be assessed to all work. If a two-day suspension occurs, a 20% penalty will be assessed to all work. If a three-day suspension occurs, a 30% penalty will be assessed to all work. Any penalties beyond three days will have a 30% maximum reduction. This will be applied to all daily work, quizzes, tests, and projects that are due during the suspension.

Suspensions and probations may be recorded on a student's permanent record by the school principal; however, this is normally only done when a behavior is habitual and improvement has not been noted.

**Automatic Suspension** - Misconduct which is determined by the principal, after consultation with the teacher (if involved), to be particularly serious, or a threat to the well-being of others, may result in an automatic suspension of up to five days. The student is removed from class for the balance of the school day, and suspension shall commence the next school day following the incident. A meeting shall thereafter be held between the student, parent(s), teacher (if involved), and principal as soon as possible after suspension is imposed 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), teacher (if involved), and the Board of Christian Day School. After hearing the evidence, and having given all concerned the opportunity to speak, the Board of Christian Day School will determine whether or not the student will be expelled. The student will be suspended until this hearing is held and a determination by the Board of Christian Day School is made.

**Law Enforcement** – In appropriate cases, a referral of the matter to law enforcement authorities also may be made.

## **HARASSMENT/BULLYING POLICY**

Students are to measure their actions according to God’s Word in Matthew 22:30: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” This tells us to respect others and treat them in the same manner as we expect to be treated. Therefore, harassing or bullying another student, faculty member, and / or staff verbally or physically, on school grounds or via the internet or other communication devices such as cell phones, iPad applications, etc. is strictly forbidden. Such action includes communication/activity outside the school that adversely affects the school’s social and academic environment.

Harassment, or bullying includes but is not limited to the following: teasing, taunting, or ridiculing, and racial, socio-economic, or physical attacks, provocations intended to inflict emotional scars; spreading rumors intended to cause damage to another's reputation; exclusion of individuals or certain people from social activities; or any other communication that causes a student, faculty, or staff member distress.

Any person found to be in violation of the Harassment/Bullying Policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from Bethlehem Lutheran School as outlined in the Suspension/Expulsion Policy found in the Parent/Student Handbook

## **ZERO TOLERANCE-WEAPONS POSSESSION**

A student found in possession of a dangerous weapon, as defined by the Board of Christian Education, will be permanently expelled from Bethlehem Lutheran School.

## **DAMAGES/LOST and FOUND/BOOK RENTAL**

At Bethlehem we strive to teach our students how to be good stewards of all of God's blessings. Each year there is a large accumulation of belongings that were not labeled and ended up being lost. Losses should be reported to the school office immediately. It is encouraged to label all backpacks, coats, snow pants, etc. for easy identification. Items not picked up by the end of the school year will be donated to a local thrift store.

All textbooks are rented from the school and they are included in the tuition. If textbooks are lost or damaged, students will be asked to reimburse the school for the loss as well as any damages. Students will be held responsible for any damage to school property or furniture which was defaced, damaged, or not properly cared for.

## **TECHNOLOGY TOOLS**

Technology tools are provided to the students to use to enhance the learning process. These tools belong to the school. Students are responsible for taking extreme caution when transporting such tools to and from school and exercise care when using any technology provided by the school. If such resources are lost or broken, the student will be responsible for any and all replacement costs.

Students must also exercise sound judgment when operating technology tools such as mini iPads, laptop computers, and desktop computers. Only school approved apps, websites, and browsers can be used. If misuse occurs, the school reserves the right to terminate user privileges. Additional disciplinary actions may occur.

## **WIRELESS DEVICES**

Cell phones may be brought to school, but must NOT be in the possession of students during the school day. If found in the on position or in the possession of students, the phones will be confiscated and parents informed. Cell phones are not to be used while at school. The office and classroom phones are available for student use at all times. Other devices such as GPS, Apple Watches, Gizmos, etc. that can be used to track, call, and/or record are not permitted. Parents may speak with the principal and the teacher to receive Board approval in specific instances if necessary.

## COMMUNICATION

Multiple communication modalities will be used to provide up-to-date information to parents:

- **Classroom newsletters and blogs** will be used to share exciting classroom information and upcoming events.
- **The school website and school blog** will be used to share important information with all stakeholders.
- **School Reach** will be used to share quick reminders and updates via telephone and text messages.
- As always, **the school office personnel** are able to answer any questions you may have.
- **The Charger Chat** will be sent home electronically weekly and will also be available on the school website.

School website: [www.BethlehemSaginaw.org](http://www.BethlehemSaginaw.org) *CLICK ON THE SCHOOL TAB.*

School blog: [www.BethlehemChargers.blogspot.com](http://www.BethlehemChargers.blogspot.com)

School telephone: 989-755-1144 ext 213

## CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLAINT

If anyone believes that Bethlehem Lutheran School has violated his/her civil rights, he/she may discuss it informally with the Board of Education's local Civil Rights Coordinator. If the response is unsatisfactory, the following formal steps may be taken:

**STEP 1** - Write a signed statement to the Coordinator above within 5 days of the informal response. The coordinator must respond in writing within 5 days.

**STEP 2** - To appeal the Coordinator's decision, submit a signed statement of appeal to the Principal within 5 days. He will meet with all concerned parties and respond in writing within 10 days.

**STEP 3** - To appeal the Principal's decision, submit a signed statement of appeal to the Board of Education within 5 days. They will meet with all concerned parties within 40 days and respond in writing within 10 more days.

**STEP 4** - If the grievance is still not satisfactorily resolved, appeal may be made to the Michigan Department of Civil Rights and/or the Secretary of Agriculture.

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

Our Lord has given us direction whenever we do not agree with another person. In Matthew 18:15-17, He gives guidelines, which we should follow:

1. Personally go and talk with the person.
2. If you cannot agree, take another person along (Principal) to listen to both sides and attempt to come to some conclusion.
3. If one still is not satisfied, tell it to the church (Board of Christian Education) where they will listen to the complaint at the beginning of the meeting, dismiss the person, and discuss the item in question.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY**

Bethlehem Lutheran School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies and athletic and other school-administered programs. If there is a shortage of classroom space, preference in enrollment is given to members of Bethlehem Congregation.

## **SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION**

The Board of Education has adopted a policy that is available for your information in either the church or school office.

## **GUIDELINES FOR DROPPING OFF/PICKING UP STUDENTS**

1. All students are to be dropped off in the morning from the west (Weiss St.) parking lot. Preschool families may enter through the school office doors.
  - A. Strings and Bells students may be dropped off at the office doors.
2. Parents of students may walk students into school or enter to pick them up but must park in the Hermansau parking lot and be buzzed in by the school or church secretary.
3. When picking up students from Weiss St. parking lot, please form one line along the sidewalk and continue into a U-shape in the upper parking lot as needed. Students will enter cars three at a time at the gym door entrance. Always wait in this line to pick up children. Do not exit your car as this will hold up the rest of the line. All cars must have an approved pick up card provided by the office.
4. Students are not allowed to enter or exit the red doors by the gym for any reason.
5. Any students not picked up by 3:30 will be sent to latchkey and appropriate latchkey fees will apply.
6. We appreciate your cooperation and will remind those who are not aware of or have forgotten these guidelines. Above all, slow down and be cautious.

**Bethlehem Lutheran School is a TOBACCO FREE ZONE**