

HANDBOOK
of
GRACE LUTHERAN SCHOOL

7300 Division Street

River Forest, Illinois

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www.graceriverforest.org

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FOREWORD

This handbook has been prepared to acquaint parents, students, and friends with the procedures, policies, and operation of Grace Lutheran School.

Specific questions not answered in this handbook should be directed to your child's teacher, the school office, or the principal.

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MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

Mission

Our mission at Grace Lutheran Church and School is to bring in, build up, and send out disciples for Jesus Christ. Our school prepares children for a life of discipleship by helping them to grow in faith, knowledge, and character.

Philosophy

Education at Grace Lutheran School is a shared effort between teachers, students, parents, and congregation. Together we seek a strong spiritual, academic, and moral foundation for our students, trusting in God's promise in Proverbs 22:6: "Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray."

We seek to educate the whole student—mind, body, and spirit—and to develop in students a lifelong love of learning. We strive to provide an intellectually challenging environment that is responsive to the needs of all students. We believe that learning occurs in the classroom and beyond—on the playground and playing field, in worship, in song, and in service.

Goals

These are our goals for Grace students:

Faith Formation: Students will develop a relationship with God that leads to on-going spiritual growth and active involvement in the Christian community.

Academic Excellence: Students will master a challenging and enriching curriculum that meets or exceeds established learning standards.

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

ADMINISTRATION

Grace Lutheran School is owned and operated by Grace Lutheran Church for the purpose of providing a Christian education for children from the congregation and the community.

The congregation's authority is exercised in meetings as described in the church's constitution and bylaws which are available on the congregation's web site (www.graceriverforest.org). The affairs of the school are executed through the Board of Elementary Education, which consists of six members of Grace Lutheran Church elected by the Congregation, along with the Senior Pastor and the Principal as *ex officio* members. The school faculty offers its professional advice in the policies of the school, particularly in matters of curriculum and materials.

The Board of Elementary Education meets on the second Thursday of each month. Parents are welcome to attend meetings and to bring concerns and questions about the school to the attention of board members. Call or email the school office for contact information.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment in Grace Lutheran School is open to all children. Returning students, members of Grace Lutheran Church, and siblings of students already enrolled in the school are eligible to enroll for the next school year during the early enrollment period from January 1 to March 1. Open enrollment for other students begins on March 15. Admission to the school depends on the number of openings available in each grade.

Entrance requirements

Grace Lutheran School follows the guidelines set forth by the Illinois State Board of Education concerning age of entry into school. Children entering three-year-old preschool must be three years old before September 1 of the year of entry. Junior kindergarten students must have reached their fourth birthday before September 1 of the year of entry. Children entering Senior Kindergarten must have attained their fifth birthday before September 1 of the year of entry.

Financial support

Grace Lutheran School is supported financially by the members of the congregation and the parents of pupils attending the school.

The cost of educating a child is determined each year by the Board of Elementary Education. This figure is included in enrollment information. Families are asked to respond to the cost of educating their children by making and fulfilling a financial pledge to support the school. Enrollment in the school is not complete until parents have turned in a pledge card. We urge parents to consider their contributions in the light of the blessings God has given them. Some parents pledge an amount beyond the cost of educating their own children to support the ministries of Grace Lutheran Church and School.

Parents are expected to make regular contributions during the school year and to fulfill their annual pledge by the end of the church's fiscal year on June 30. Parents receive quarterly statements from the church business office tracking their contributions as well as reminders from the school office.

Contributions can be made via the offering plate at worship services, by check or credit card at the school office or church business office, or online at gracriverforest.org. The online contribution site includes the option of setting up regular contributions using a credit card or automatic withdrawal from a checking account.

Medical examinations and health records

The Illinois Board of Education school code and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) require the following medical exams prior to school entrance:

- Preschool, junior kindergarten, senior kindergarten, and sixth grade students must have a completed physical exam, dated within one year of the starting date of the school year.
- Senior kindergarten, second grade, and sixth grade students must have a completed dental exam, dated within one year of the starting date of the school year.
- Senior kindergarten and first grade students who have not attended kindergarten must have a completed vision exam.

All students coming from out of state and all students entering school for the first time must provide medical, dental, and vision exams dated within one year of the starting date of the school year. Those students transferring schools within Illinois may use forms from their previous school. Health records are required of all new students on or before the first day of school.

Forms and fees

When enrolling a child in the school for the first time, parents must submit an enrollment form, pay the enrollment fee, and make a pledge of financial support for the school. When enrolling a current student for the next school year, parents may pay the full enrollment fee or half the fee during the early enrollment period from January 1 to March 1. The remainder of the enrollment fee must be paid at registration in August.

A packet of forms and information is sent to each school family early in August. Parents should read this material carefully, complete the enclosed forms, and return the material at registration night, usually the fourth Wednesday of August from 5:30-8:00 pm. Registration provides the opportunity for parents to pay fees, turn in forms, meet/greet the classroom teacher, pick up classroom information and/or material, enroll students in extracurricular activities, and register for extended care, bus transportation, band, and orchestra. If parents cannot attend registration night, they should make arrangements with the school office to register at a later time, before the first day of school.

Birth Certificates. In accordance with the Missing Children Records Act the school office needs a copy of your child's birth certificate.

Emergency Contact Form. This should be reviewed and updated annually.

Medical forms. See page 7 for specific requirements.

Photo permission form.

Enrollment fee. The enrollment fee covers books, instructional materials and certain supplies. The enrollment fee also includes an activity fee to defray the cost of snacks, materials, and activities at class parties. All books furnished by Grace Lutheran School are to be returned at the end of the school year. When books, materials, or equipment are damaged, students will be asked to pay replacement costs.

Accident insurance. Parents may purchase accident insurance for their children at the time of registration. This insurance covers the child during the school day and during school-sponsored activities such as field trips, sporting events, etc. This is a voluntary program. Rates are subject to yearly revision.

Milk. Grace Lutheran School participates in the USDA school nutrition program that provides low-cost milk. White and chocolate milk are available for order. Milk for the entire school year is ordered and paid for at registration in August.

Class Pictures. Students' pictures are taken in the fall of each school year and prints and class composites are delivered before Christmas. Payment is made at the time pictures are taken. Eighth grade graduation portraits are taken in late winter.

Field trips. Parents will be informed of planned field trips and will receive permission slips requiring their signature. A \$15.00 fee is collected at registration to cover the cost of transportation for field trips. Some field trips may involve additional fees.

Athletic fee. Students who participate in after-school sports pay an athletic fee of \$25 per sport, with a maximum fee for the school year of \$100 per family.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

School hours

Preschool	8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Junior Kindergarten	8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Senior Kindergarten	8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Multi-Age Early Childhood Program	11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Grades 1 through 8	8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. 8:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. (Thursdays)
Extended Care	3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Arrival

All students will enter school via the Bonnie Brae doors. The outer doors at the Bonnie Brae entrance open at 7:30 a.m. Students may wait between the doors until 8:00 a.m. Students proceed to their classrooms at 8:00 a.m. A bell at 8:20 a.m. indicates that all students should be in the classrooms. Students entering the school after 8:25 a.m. will be considered tardy. Classes begin at 8:30 a.m.

Dismissal

Preschool, junior kindergarten, and senior kindergarten students will be escorted by teachers to the Bonnie Brae doors for dismissal at 11:30. Those students not picked up by 11:45 will be taken to the school office and must be picked up there. Parents will be charged the extended care rate of \$6.25 per hour.

Children in the multi-age early childhood afternoon programs and in grades 1-8 will be dismissed at 3:00 p.m. On Thursdays, these students are dismissed at 2:15 to allow time for faculty meetings. When school is in session for only half a day, grades 1-8 are dismissed at noon.

The faculty will supervise students for 15 minutes after dismissal. The playground and classrooms are not supervised after school hours and teachers cannot be responsible for children who have been dismissed.

Children should leave the school grounds promptly after dismissal unless they are involved in a school-related activity such as an athletic event or scouting. If children have not been picked up within 15 minutes following the end of their school day, they will be taken to extended care and parents will be billed for the time they spend there. Students remaining at school because of a sibling's after-school activities must register for and go to extended care.

Pick-up and parking. The school bus will load students on Bonnie Brae. All students not riding the school bus will be escorted to the Division Street doors for afternoon dismissal. Parents will not be permitted to pick up students at the Bonnie Brae entrance to the building.

Parents picking up students may park in any of the spaces on the south side of Division Street. Students may walk to cars on the south side of the street. Cars may also park on the north side of Division Street or in the park district lot. Parents and students must cross Division Street at the Bonnie Brae crosswalk.

Other pick-up times. Students who must be picked up before regular dismissal times or after sports practices and other after-school activities will leave the building through the Bonnie Brae entrance.

Leaving school grounds

Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds or building unless accompanied by an adult, including before or during after-school activities. This includes trips to the Seven-Eleven store at Harlem and Division.

Bus transportation

Grace Lutheran School operates a bus to provide transportation for those who desire it. Due to lack of time “door to door” service is impossible. A transportation route is determined based upon the principle of trying to serve the greatest number of people in the time available. That may mean that the bus will be passing the homes of some, while others will have to walk several blocks to meet the bus. Transportation is furnished in the morning and afternoon.

Good behavior is essential on the bus for the safety of the children. Inappropriate behavior may result in loss of riding privileges.

Bicycles

Students may ride a bicycle to school if they understand safety rules of the road. Bicycles are to be secured to a bike rack on the southwest corner of the building. Students are responsible for their bicycles and should provide their own chain and lock. After a pupil has arrived at school, the bicycle is not to be used until classes are dismissed for the day.

Absent or tardy

Please notify the school office between 8:00 and 8:30 a.m. when a child will be absent or tardy. After any absence, parents should send a note explaining the cause of absence. Unreported absences will be investigated to insure the student’s safety.

When a child is late for school, the child must first report to the school office where an admittance pass will be issued to the child. This pass is then given by the child to the teacher. A letter or email will be sent to parents if a student is tardy five times in a trimester period. Chronic tardiness will be noted on a child’s school records.

Students who arrive late miss important class time. Late arrivals disrupt the classroom, the teacher, and other students. Parents should plan their morning schedule to allow sufficient time to get children to school on time.

While at school a child is expected to participate in all classes, including gym. However, if there are circumstances limiting participation, parents should communicate this in writing to the school. In some instances a doctor’s recommendation may be required.

Family vacations

Children who are taken out of school for family vacations miss academic material covered during their absence. We urge parents to plan vacations to coincide with vacation time on the school calendar. If vacations must be taken when school is in session, it must be with the

understanding that teachers are not responsible for preparing assignments ahead of time, for preparing make-up work, for scheduling and giving make-up tests, or for rescheduling parent conferences.

Emergency school closings

The principal may close the school, delay the start of the school day, or dismiss school early when such alteration in the regular session is required for the protection of the health and safety of students and staff members. In the event of school closings or a delayed opening time, you will be notified by a room parent phone tree. Administrators, students, parents, and employees can also check for school closings on the school web site, on the public site www.emergencyclosings.com (search for Grace Lutheran School), or on local TV and radio stations:

Radio stations

WGN	720 AM	WBBM	780 AM
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Television stations

WBBM	Channel 2	WGN	Channel 9
WMAQ	Channel 5	WFLD	Channel 12/32
WLS	Channel 7	CLTV	Cable

Crisis management

The school administration has adopted a crisis management plan that includes, but is not limited to the following: fire and tornado drills and severe weather precautions and procedures. The entire crisis management plan can be viewed upon request in the school office.

Telephone

Students may use the school telephones in case of an emergency or when asked by a teacher to convey a message to parents. Students should not call home for permission to visit another child after school. Such arrangements should be made before coming to school.

Lunch procedures

Please discuss with your children the amount of food included in their sack lunches. We do not like to see food wasted. Students eat lunch under the supervision of a staff member. Keeping the environment in mind, we encourage the use of reusable containers and utensils. We also encourage students to use the blue recycling bins .

Grace Lutheran School participates in the school nutrition program that provides low-cost milk. White and chocolate milk are available for order. Orders for milk for the entire year are taken at registration. There are no refunds in case of absences.

Parties and treats

Birthday or special day parties are permitted on school time, provided they are conducive to wholesome fun and extend hospitality to all. Check with the classroom teacher prior to bringing a treat. Please do not bring treats containing peanuts, nuts, peanut byproducts, or nut byproducts. Accidental exposure to nut or peanut products may trigger a life-threatening allergic response in some children. Healthy snacks, such as fruit, popcorn, yogurt, bagels, muffins, crackers, fruit juice, or vegetable sticks, fruit bars, etc. are preferable to cupcakes, cookies, soda, and chips.

Invitations to after-school or weekend parties should not be handed out in school unless all the children in the class, or all the boys or all the girls, are invited. We encourage families to plan parties that emphasize including, not excluding, a child's fellow students. Grace Lutheran School and Church facilities are not available for personal parties.

Selling items at school

Children are not permitted to solicit contributions or sell things at school unless the organization is sponsored by Grace Lutheran Church or permission is granted by the principal.

Money

Children are discouraged from bringing unnecessary money to school. If a parent considers it necessary for a child to carry a larger sum of money for use later in the day, parents should direct the child to ask the teacher to keep the money until the end of the school day.

Electronic devices

Students are allowed to bring cell phones to school, but their use is restricted. Cell phones must remain turned off completely during school hours, from 8:15 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. They may be used only in the main entrance area of the school or outside. Any device that is used or goes off during school hours will be immediately confiscated. The parent/guardian must come to school to pick it up. Do not try to contact your son or daughter by cell phone during the school day or during after-school activities; please call the school directly.

Electronic entertainment devices may only be used before or after school and must be kept in lockers. Personal listening devices must be turned off and not worn inside the school building. Teachers may permit use of these devices during the day at times such as recess.

Students are discouraged from bringing cell phones, iPods and other electronic devices to school. The school is not responsible if these are lost, stolen, or broken.

Lost and found

Lost articles are turned in to the school office where they may be claimed by the rightful owner. Unclaimed articles are stored in the office area and are displayed for parents on the parent-teacher conference dates. Unclaimed items are given to a charity.

Lockers

Individual lockers are provided either outside or within the classroom and in the physical education program. Students' backpacks should fit into their lockers. Locks are provided to secure athletic clothing.

Visitors

Visitors must enter the building through the Bonnie Brae entrance and may be asked to sign in at the reception desk. Parents are welcome to visit the school, but are encouraged to make an appointment with the school office.

Homework, gym clothes, lunches, etc., brought to school by parents or others should be dropped off at the school office rather than taken to the child's classroom. Staff will ensure that the items are properly distributed.

COMMUNICATION

Regular communication between school, teachers, and parents fosters cooperation, community, and student success. Parents, school, and teachers communicate in many ways.

Web site. The Grace Lutheran Church and School web site (gracriverforest.org) includes information about school activities, news, and links and forms for parents to download. Use the pull-down menu under "Our School" to access the school home page, the school calendar, weekly news and events, and other important information.

The Friday Principal Note is sent to parents via email and posted on the Grace web site on Friday afternoons. (Use the pull-down menu under "Our School" and choose "School News and Events"). Paper copies of the Friday Principal Note are available from the school office.

Tuesday Folders. In grades 1-6, graded homework, classroom announcements, permission slips, teacher comments, etc., are sent home on Tuesdays in a designated folder. Parents are to sign the form inside the folder, indicating that they have seen the material, and send the folder back to school with the child.

Classroom newsletters prepared by teachers are sent home via Tuesday Folders and/or distributed via email.

PowerSchool gives parents of students in grades 5-8 web-based access to teachers' records of student assignments, grades, and tests. Parents receive more information about using PowerSchool at the beginning of the school year.

Phone. Teachers check their school voice mail several times a day. When you leave a message, please include information about the best time for a return phone call. During the school day, the receptionist can connect callers to teachers' voice mail. After hours, use the extension numbers found in the school directory to connect with voice mail.

Email. Teacher email addresses at graceriverforest.org consist of the person's first initial and last name (for example, kgrigg@graceriverforest.org). Eileen Maggio, the School Administrative Assistant, can be contacted at office@graceriverforest.org.

Handbooks. This Parent Handbook includes information for parents of students in all grades. In addition, Grace School publishes an Early Childhood Handbook and a Junior High Handbook.

School directory. The school publishes a directory early in each school year. It includes contact information for student families as well as information about contacting Grace teachers and staff members.

Weekly student intercom announcements are made on Monday mornings (Tuesday if there is no school on Monday). Eighth grade students plan these announcements with the assistance of staff.

Direct mailings. Critical information, for example, re-enrollment information, is mailed to parents during the school year.

School parents may also receive Grace Church newsletters, including *Grace Notes* and *Sunday Is Coming*, by mail or email.

HEALTH

School nurse

The services of a part-time registered nurse (RN) are shared by Grace Lutheran, St. Luke, and St. Vincent Ferrer Schools in River Forest. On selected days the nurse is available and will administer appropriate care in the event that a child becomes ill or has an accident during the school day. If the child becomes too ill to remain at school, parents will be contacted for instructions. Emergency contact forms should be reviewed annually. Please keep the school office advised of changes in your contact information. It is assumed that the parent will provide for the child's transportation in the event of illness or minor injury. Due to new federal regulations, children with minor cuts, scrapes, and bloody noses will be encouraged, under supervision, to provide care for themselves.

When the nurse is not on the premises, parents may leave messages for her with the school office. In a medical emergency, River Forest Emergency Medical Services will be called to

provide ambulance transportation to a nearby hospital. The school nurse, principal, or other school personnel will accompany the child. Please keep school personnel and the school nurse informed should your child have an existing condition, i.e. asthma, life-threatening allergy, serious medical condition, etc., that could potentially lead to an acute episode.

Medication

Grace Lutheran School policy forbids school personnel to administer any type of prescription or non-prescription medication to students without a signed order from a physician. Students are not allowed to bring medication of any type to school.

If medication is required during the school day, it must be sent to school in the original container or duplicate pharmacy container, labeled with the child's full name, name of the medication, dose, time, route, date of prescription, special directions for administration, doctor's name, pharmacy name, address, and phone number. The medication must be accompanied by a completed, signed physician order form that is also signed by the parent. The required form can be obtained from the school office or the school nurse. All medications are administered under adult supervision. Medication orders are in effect for one year from the date signed by the physician. All medication orders must be renewed annually for the medication to be administered at school.

All medications will be sent home or discarded at the end of the school year. In some situations, the parent may bring the medication to school to administer the dose to the child at the required time (for example, eye drops). The child will be excused from class to come to the office to meet a parent who will administer the medication.

Hearing and vision screenings

Hearing and vision tests are done by the school nurse who is a certified vision and hearing technician. Vision screenings are done for students in preschool, junior kindergarten, senior kindergarten, first, second, and eighth grade. Hearing screenings are done for students in preschool, junior kindergarten, senior kindergarten, first, second, and third grade. New students, special education students, and students referred by teachers may also receive vision and hearing screenings. Parents can also request that their child be screened. All children who fail the first screening are re-screened. Results will be mailed to parents *only* if the child fails both the initial screening and re-screening, indicating a need for follow-up.

Communicable disease

A child who has a sore throat, earache, discharge from the ear or nose, undiagnosed skin rash or eye infection or a temperature above 100° F. should be kept home. Children should not return to school until the temperature has been normal for 24 hours. If there is doubt that the child should be re-admitted, the principal or nurse may request a medical doctor's certificate.

All cases or suspected cases of contagious disease must be promptly reported to the school office. The Illinois Department of Public Health requires the reporting of many

communicable diseases. All communicable diseases require exclusion from school. Please contact the school nurse if you have questions about any communicable disease to which your child may have been exposed or with which she/he has been diagnosed. Children with an infectious disease diagnosis should remain at home until they are free of acute symptoms and have received appropriate treatment (i.e., antibiotics when indicated) for 24-48 hours. Some examples of when children may return to school after a communicable disease include the following:

Chicken pox: after skin eruptions have scabbed over;
Conjunctivitis (pink eye): when both eyes are returned to a normal condition;
Pediculosis (head lice): when proper treatment has been instituted and all nits removed;
Strep throat/scarlet fever: at least twenty-four (24) hours after the start of antibiotic treatment. Medication is to continue for seven to ten days depending upon the prescription.

Children suspected of being infected with a reportable infectious disease for which isolation is required shall be refused admittance to the facility while acute symptoms are present.

ACADEMICS

Homework

Homework serves an important function in the learning process. Research shows that homework leads to higher achievement. Through their homework assignments, students practice skills, reinforce concepts, and prepare for upcoming classroom experiences. As students handle both long and short-term assignments, they must also learn to manage their time.

Students are responsible for recording their assignments in their assignment notebook each day and carrying home all the necessary books and materials required to complete the assignment. There will be consequences in school for not completing homework; these will depend on the age and grade level of the student. Teachers will communicate with parents when incomplete homework becomes a persistent problem that jeopardizes a student's academic progress.

Parents can help students by providing a consistent time and place for homework to be done. Parents should provide supervision and support in the homework process, but students should do their own work. Plagiarism—presenting someone else's words and ideas as if they were your own—is not acceptable. Parents of students in grades 5-8 can monitor their child's completion of homework by checking PowerSchool. (See page 13 for details.)

Reporting pupil progress

Teachers keep up-to-date records of each child, and in grades 1-6, share the child's work with parents via Tuesday Folders, which contain students work and comments from the teacher. Parents are asked to review the material in the folders. There may be assignments that need to be corrected or information about homework or classroom activities. Once reviewed, the folders are to be returned to school the following day. Parents of students in grades 5-8 can also monitor homework and tests using PowerSchool.

Parent-teacher conferences

Student progress is reported to parents in individual conferences in November, February and May. Scheduling information is sent home prior to the conferences. Progress reports are issued rather than traditional report cards with letter grades. Children's progress is evaluated in light of the child's potential and instructional learning level.

We encourage parents to meet with teachers about their children's progress at any time throughout the school year. Please contact your child's teacher to set up an appointment. Teachers can answer questions and discuss a child's progress more effectively in a scheduled meeting than in a chance encounter.

Assessments, screening, and testing

Achievement tests are given in grades 2 through 8 in the spring. Cognitive ability tests are given in grades 3, 5, and 7. Parents receive reports on these assessments at the end of the school year.

An informal screening is administered to all new students prior to acceptance into the school. If there is a need for additional testing, Grace's Special Education Coordinator will facilitate the process. The River Forest Public School District evaluates students in River Forest parochial schools upon request. The public school district also provides speech and language testing and remediation services at Grace.

Student records

Cumulative records for all pupils are kept in the school office. At the close of the year, teachers complete records for the current year and return them to the office.

Procedures for promotion, acceleration, or retention

Any change of placement for a child will be thoroughly studied by the child's teachers and principal prior to the discussion with parents. If a student is to be retained, this decision is usually made by the end of April. Documentation of all proceedings concerning any change in placement is provided for parents and students.

BEHAVIOR

It is impossible for good teaching and learning to take place in a classroom unless order is maintained. Students must adhere to a code of good behavior, not only for their own benefit, but also for the welfare of others.

Our intent is to create an atmosphere that is student-centered and mindful of diversity in which certain rules and procedures have to be followed. This requires a spirit of shared responsibility among students, teachers, parents/guardians, and staff. Shared responsibility promotes the growth of self-disciplined citizens in our educational community.

Discipline

Christian discipline is the application of self-control and orderliness as motivated by the teachings and example of Christ. Teachers and parents nurture and supervise children in accordance with the Gospel. Discipline at Grace Lutheran School is understood to be a learning process aimed at the development of Christian character.

We strive to prevent problems by giving our students constructive direction and positive reinforcement. All efforts are made to work positively with our students and to shape their behavior by providing logical consequences to their actions. We believe that positive disciplinary measures help students develop self-worth and self-control, diminishing the need for other disciplinary actions.

Student responsibility. Initial responsibility for appropriate behavior belongs to the individual student. Each student is responsible for:

- Arriving at school on time ready for the activity of the day;
- Accomplishing assigned learning tasks; homework needs to be completed carefully by the student and turned in on time;
- Enhancing personal learning opportunities as well as those of the class by helping to maintain a productive learning environment;
- Functioning in a safe and orderly manner at school and when traveling to and from school;
- Treating adults and fellow students with respect and consideration, and recognizing their rights and needs as members of the school community;

School responsibility. It is assumed that the principal, teachers and other staff members will exhibit respect toward all the people they encounter at Grace and will also be competent stewards of the property and materials provided. Principal, teachers, and staff will strive to create a disciplined environment by:

- Providing supervision to ensure a safe and secure atmosphere for all;
- Setting and enforcing limits at school that are fair and consistent and take into consideration the uniqueness of each student's needs;

- Acting as role models for students by exhibiting high personal standards of courtesy, respect, trust, honesty, and language.
- Communicating with students and parents about academic and behavioral concerns;
- Maintaining a school environment that will assure each child an opportunity to learn.

Parent responsibility. It is assumed that parents will exhibit respect toward all the people they encounter at Grace and will be competent stewards of the property and materials provided. Parents must model and practice Christian discipline at home. Cooperation between the school and home is essential for effective student behavior. Parents are responsible for:

- Seeing that their child arrives at school on time with the proper materials, in appropriate attire, clean, and in good health;
- Familiarizing the child with school rules and procedures;
- Monitoring the child's progress and behavior at school by reading the Tuesday folder, checking PowerSchool (grades 5-8), and responding to communications from teachers, principal, or staff members;
- Supporting the school by discussing expectations for student behavior with their child;
- Working with the school in modifying the child's behavior when necessary.

The principal. The principal works with students, teachers, and parents when problems with discipline occur. The principal may also establish procedures for using additional resources in handling behavioral problems. Teachers, parents, and principal may together initiate a plan for evaluating and modifying student behavior. The results of this plan may affect the student's future placement in the school.

Procedures for maintaining a Christian, well-disciplined environment in the school may include detention and suspension. Upon recommendation of the principal, the Board of Elementary Education may expel a student guilty of serious misconduct.

Communicating about behavior problems

When a student continually misbehaves, the teacher has the responsibility to seek support from the principal and/or parents to help the child understand the problem and to implement a plan for modifying the behavior.

When a student or parent has a concern about discipline, he or she should first discuss the issue with the teacher. If the problem is not resolved, the student or parent should present the concern to the principal. Parents are expected to use discretion in discussing discipline issues with other parents.

Day-to-day disciplinary problems (talking out of turn, running in the hallways, misuse of materials, late or missing assignments) will be handled individually by the teacher, and if necessary, the principal. Normally parents are not contacted about minor disciplinary problems. Parents will be contacted about continual disruptive behavior, destruction of personal or school property, use of profanity, violent behavior, and other behavior that causes the student to be removed from the class setting and which calls for more serious intervention. In most cases, parents will be informed and be part of the follow-up and consequences.

Respect for property

Students are expected to view school property as a gift from God that should be valued and treated with respect. Accidents do happen, but damage or destruction to property of the school and others will have to be paid for by the offender.

Bullying

Every student has the right to feel safe. It is the responsibility of the school staff to provide a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment in which learning can take place. No student should be subject to bullying, aggression, and violence. The school is committed to ensuring that a supportive, caring, inclusive, safe and civil environment exists in order for students to learn and achieve high academic standards.

Harrassment or bullying is regarded as a serious matter and will not be tolerated. Please see the Grace Lutheran School Policy on Bullying (2007) in the appendix for specific information on bullying.

School social worker

A school social worker from Lutheran Child and Family Services works at Grace one day each week. She assists the faculty and staff in maintaining a positive social environment in the school.

Dress policy

Cleanliness, appropriate dress, and safety are important ingredients for good school manners and healthy living. Parents are encouraged to teach their children the value of proper appearance, modesty, and cleanliness. Students' clothing choices are a means of self-expression, but these choices must be consistent with the values of the school community. We must also recognize that some clothing is too casual for the important business of education.

Here are some guidelines for students and parents:

- Practice moderation when choosing clothing, hairstyles, or make-up.
- Students may not bring fragrances, lip gloss, or make-up to school.

- Appropriate tee shirts and athletic shirts are permitted. Some logos are acceptable, for example, names of colleges or schools, state emblems, vacation spots, etc. Logos representing alcohol, smoking, violence, or anything inconsistent with school philosophy are not acceptable.
- Sleeveless shirts are not permitted in grades 5-8.
- Pants and shorts for students in grades 5-8 should have buttons, snaps, and/or zippers rather than elastic waists.
- Midriffs are to be covered through the normal range of motion.
- Shoes and socks are to be worn at school at all times. Shoes and socks must be worn outside on the playground equipment. Sandals are permitted only in grades 7 and 8 and must have a heel strap.
- Dangerous and/or inappropriate footwear such as flip-flops, clogs, crocs, platforms, and wheeled shoes are not permitted. Where the design of the shoes requires, shoelaces must be worn and tied.
- Gym shoes are required for all physical activities.
- Headgear should be removed upon entrance to the building. Caps, hats, bandanas, jackets, or outdoor vests are not to be worn in classrooms.
- Shorts are permitted in warm weather. Students in grades 5-8 must wear shorts of appropriate length and styles. Baggy athletic shorts, spandex styles, and cut-offs are not permitted.
- Children are expected to go out for recess, weather permitting. Attire for cold weather should include hats, scarves, mittens or gloves, and boots.
- Please mark all clothing with the child's name, especially boots, mittens, coats, and gym clothes.
- Field trips may require special attire.

If students or parents need to determine if an article of clothing is acceptable, it should be brought (not worn) to school and presented to one of the staff. In the final analysis, the school reserves the right to exercise judgment for the welfare of the entire Grace Lutheran School community. The staff will provide appropriate alternate attire, if necessary.

COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE POLICY

All students in grades three through eight, and their parent(s) or guardian, must sign an annual Acceptable Use Form to use Grace School computers and access the Internet through the school's network. The form, which is distributed at registration, is to be signed and returned to the school, where it will be kept on file.

INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Library Media Center

The library media center is open during school days from 8:00 a.m. until 3:15 p.m. Students are welcome before and after school, and as permitted by their classroom teachers.

There are eight Windows computers available for student use, as well as microphones and headsets. Each computer has access to the library's computerized catalog and the Internet. Software programs loaded on the computers include Microsoft Word, Excel, Power Point, Photo Story and Audacity.

Access to the library's color laser printer and copy machine is available to students at no cost when instructed by a teacher. Printing and copying for personal use, or to complete assignments that were to be done at home, costs ten cents per page. Punch cards good for fifty pages of printing or copying are available at the school office for \$5.00.

The library media center web site, gracelm.org, includes links to Grace's subscription databases which help students find reliable information quickly and easily. *Electric Library* and Ebsco's *History Reference Center* allow school and home access using Grace's user names and passwords. In addition to databases, the website also includes online book discussions, podcasts of student productions, information on doing effective research, and assignment-related links. Library news and events are published to the site regularly, and an RSS feed is available.

Students through second grade come to the library for weekly story time and may borrow up to two items for one week. Students in grades three through eight visit the library weekly for book selection and sustained silent reading. They may borrow up to four items for two weeks. Overdue notices are distributed on Tuesdays. There are no overdue fines. When students in grades three through eight have had an item overdue for two weeks, they spend lunch and recess in the library until the item is returned or paid for. If an item is lost or damaged, the student is charged the cost of the item, as printed on the overdue notice. This amount includes the cost of processing and cataloging the replacement.

Technology resources

There are two computer labs available to Grace students: a Macintosh computer lab and a Windows mobile laptop cart. Access to computers in the Macintosh lab outside of class times is at the discretion of the technology teacher or technology coordinator. Students have access to Windows based computers in the library media center throughout the school day from 8:00 a.m. until 3:15 p.m.

Students using the Mac lab will be given a user ID and password to access their personal network folders. Students using the mobile computer lab are expected to save their work to personal flash drives so that they may work on projects both in school and at home. Shared

folders are available for temporary file storage when students do not have a flash drive with them. Grace School will not be held responsible for digital files that are lost or damaged while in a shared folder.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

Chapel

Students attend chapel once a week, usually on Wednesdays. There are daily chapel services during Holy Week. Chapel services are led by Grace's pastors, by teachers and students, and by various guests, including parents.

Children experience various leadership roles in chapel services: reading Scripture, ushering, receiving the offering, and singing. Younger students are assigned older chapel partners, upper-grade students who sit with them during worship and help them participate more fully in the service. Children are asked to bring an offering every week to chapel. The offerings gathered are given to designated benevolence ministries.

Holy Communion is celebrated in the worship services that open and close the school year, and on Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday. At Grace Lutheran Church and School we believe that the crucified and risen Christ is present in the Lord's Supper, giving his true body and blood as food and drink. We welcome all baptized Christians to the table where Christ himself is host.

School choirs

All children at Grace Lutheran School participate in choir. Choirs are organized by units. In 1st and 2nd grade, choir is part of general music instruction. The 3-4, 5-6, and 7-8 choirs rehearse twice a week during the school day. Students in grades 7 and 8 may choose to participate in the handbell ensemble in place of choir.

Grace School choirs sing for the congregation's Sunday morning worship services four to six times during the school year and in Wednesday evening worship services during Advent and Lent. Choirs also lead the Children's Christmas Eve Service on December 24. Children in grades 5-8 sing for Easter and for the graduation service at the close of the school year. A choir schedule is published at the beginning of the school year with dates for all choir performances. *Grace students are expected to be present when their unit choir sings for worship services outside the school day.*

Instrumental music

Grace Lutheran School offers a band program, in cooperation with Walther Lutheran High School, and an orchestra program. Students in grade 4 and up are eligible to participate in band, and students in grade 1 and up are eligible for orchestra. Private lessons are available during the school day for an additional fee. The band and orchestra perform at concerts and special events during the school year.

AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Enrichment classes

The Grace Parent Teacher Organization offers after-school enrichment classes in a variety of areas. The Friday Principal Note and the school web site contain more information about classes and schedules.

Scouting

Grace Lutheran Church sponsors Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Girl Scouts. The meeting days for Brownies, Juniors, Cadets, Cub Scouts, and Boy Scouts are announced in the fall. Troops are dependent on parental leadership.

Athletics

Athletics play a vital role in Christian education. One way children worship God is through the development of their talents. Our athletic program emphasizes individual achievement as well as responsibility to the group and growth in mind as well as body. Winning is secondary to the realization that God-given athletic ability is used to the glory of God.

Grace offers a variety of extra-curricular sports for students in Grades 4 - 8. Teams compete after school against other Lutheran schools and participate in weekend tournaments. Grace teams frequently earn invitations to state tournaments sponsored by the Lutheran Sports Association (<http://www.luthsports.org/>). The table below provides more information about extra-curricular sports teams and seasons.

Sport	Participants	Season
Cross country	Girls and boys in grades 4-8	September through mid-October
Volleyball	Teams for girls and boys in grades 6-8	September through early November
Basketball	Teams for girls and boys in grades 7-8	Mid-November through early March
	Teams for girls and boys in grades 5-6	February through April
Track	Girls and boys in grades 5-8	Late April and May

Students who participate in after-school sports pay an athletic fee of \$25 per sport, with a maximum fee for the school year of \$100 per family.

Spectators at games

All students are invited to attend athletic events at Grace as spectators. Arrangements should be made prior to the event for the students to be picked up promptly after the event has ended. All spectators are to remain in the gym or entry area. Children planning to stay

for home games are to remain in a designated classroom under the supervision of a staff member until the opposing team arrives.

All student spectators are to go into the gym spectator area and remain in the gym until the end of the game. If they need to leave the spectator area, they are permitted to use only the facilities adjacent to the gym. They are expected to return to the gym after a reasonable amount of time. The faculty hall attendant will supervise. All students must behave in a manner that demonstrates respect and sportsmanship to all participants. Children are not to leave Grace School premises to buy food or soft drinks and then return for after-school activities. No food, soft drinks, or gum will be permitted in the gym.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Grace Parent Teacher Organization (GPTO)

The Grace Parent Teacher Organization exists to

- Enrich the academic experience at Grace through extracurricular activities, support programs, and social events while promoting the intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual growth of our children;
- Foster fellowship, volunteerism, and communication between families and Grace Lutheran Church and School;
- Engage parents and teachers in working together to implement and support programs that enrich the learning environments beyond the core curriculum;
- Create fund-raising programs to sustain these enrichment activities as well as to help meet needs of the school not funded by contributions.

The Grace Parent Teacher Organization sponsors a variety of programs and events throughout the school year: after-school enrichment classes; social events for parents and children, such as the Daddy-Daughter Dance and Mother-Son Bowling Outing, the Grace Family Potluck at the beginning of the school year, and Mardi Grace, a late-winter dinner and auction. Information about GPTO meetings and activities can be found on the school calendar at graceriverforest.org.

School volunteers

Grace Lutheran School encourages parents and interested people to volunteer at the school. Classroom newsletters and the Friday Principal Note frequently contain information about specific volunteer activities. If you have specific interests or skills to offer as a volunteer, please talk to your child's teacher or the principal.

APPENDICES

GRACE LUTHERAN SCHOOL POLICY ON BULLYING (2007)

In Proverbs 22:6, God said, “Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray.” Grace Lutheran School (“School”) believes that Christian discipline is the application of self-control and orderliness as motivated by Christian attitudes. It is the responsibility of faculty and staff to use disciplinary situations as opportunities for training students to learn and assume responsibility for the consequences of their behavior in accordance with the teachings and philosophy of Christ. Faculty and staff members who interact with students shall apply best practices to prevent discipline problems and encourage students’ abilities to develop self-discipline.

To this end, Grace Lutheran School prohibits acts of harassment or bullying (see description below). The School is committed to ensuring that a supportive, caring, inclusive, safe and civil environment exists in order for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment or bullying is regarded as a serious matter and will not be tolerated. Harassment or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student’s ability to learn and a school’s ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers thereby providing positive examples of student behavior.

“Harassment or bullying” is any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e. internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (pda) or wireless hand held device) that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expressions; or mental, physical, or sensory disability or impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic. Such behavior is considered harassment or bullying whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle. Harassment can be a beginning stage in the bullying process.

“Harassment” or “Bullying” is conduct that meets all of the following criteria:

- is directed at one or more students;
- substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits or programs of one or more students;
- adversely affects the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school’s educational programs or activities because the conduct, as reasonably perceived by the student, is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive as to have this effect; and

- is based on a student's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic (see above), or is based on association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics.

There are several types of bullying, all of which are deemed unacceptable to the School and are subject to disciplinary measures.

- Direct or physical bullying which can include, but is not limited to, punching, poking, strangling, suffocating, pinching, shoving, hitting, biting, spitting, hair pulling, finger bending, etc.
- Verbal bullying which can include, but is not limited to, such acts as name-calling, put-downs, insults or verbal threats, cruel jokes, or demands for servitude, money or property.
- Emotional bullying which can include, but is not limited to, rejecting, terrorizing, defaming, humiliating, rating or ranking a person on his or her characteristics, manipulating friendships, playing mean or embarrassing tricks, peer pressure, isolating, hateful looks, and ostracizing on the basis of social status.
- Hate-motivated bullying is based on bias and, behavior can include, but is not limited to, taunting about race, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, and physical or mental disabilities.
- Cyber-bullying is repeatedly hurting someone else through the use of technology. It can include, but is not limited to, tormenting, threatening, harassing, humiliating, or embarrassing a person using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. Types of cyber-bullying include blogs, instant messaging, e-mail, chat rooms, or text messaging.

The School expects students to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, school staff, volunteers, and school community members.

The School believes that standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the students, parents and guardians, staff and community members of the school, producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for school and community property on the part of students, staff, and community members.

Since bystander support of harassment or bullying can support these behaviors, the School prohibits both active and passive support for acts of harassment or bullying. The faculty and staff should encourage students to support students who walk away from these acts when they see them, constructively attempt to stop them, or report them to the designated authority.

The School requires the principal and/or the principal's designee to be responsible for receiving the complaints alleging violations of this policy. All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the principal or principal's designee. All other members of the school community, including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy.

The School requires the principal and/or the principal's designee to be responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy. In so doing, the principal and/or the principal's designee shall conduct a prompt, thorough, and complete investigation of each alleged incident. The investigation is to be completed within three school days after a report or complaint is made.

The School prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment or bullying. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the principal and/or principal designee after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act.

The School prohibits any person from falsely accusing another as a means of harassment or bullying. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion.

The School requires school officials to annually disseminate the policy to all school staff, students, and parents, along with a statement explaining that it applies to all applicable acts of harassment and bullying that occur on school property, at school-sponsored functions, or on a school bus. The principal and/or principal designee shall develop an annual process for discussing the school's policy on harassment and bullying with students and staff.

The school shall incorporate the information regarding the policy against harassment or bullying into each parent, and faculty handbook.

CONSEQUENCES

Definitions

Service detention. * A period of time before school, after school, or during lunch that a student is separated from peers as a consequence for misbehavior and must perform a service oriented task to be determined. Detentions are to be served with the staff member who issued the detention. The location and time of the detention will be determined by the staff/administrator who assigned the detention.

Suspension. Time (one or more days) a student is not in regular attendance at school. An in-school suspension is served at school in a supervised area. Students who are suspended (in school) are required to complete academic and behavioral assignments and do not have contact with peers during the day. An out of school suspension is served at

home or at a location decided upon by the parents/guardian. Students who are suspended are expected to complete schoolwork being done in classes that day. Students serving any suspension may not participate in before or afterschool activities on the day(s) they are suspended. Students serving an out of school suspension may not be on school grounds on the day(s) they are suspended.

Expulsion. The Board of Elementary Education may expel a student guilty of serious misconduct upon recommendation of the principal.

Discipline referral form. Any faculty or staff member observing a student behaving inappropriately is expected to tell the student to discontinue the behavior. If the behavior continues, a staff or faculty member may fill out a Discipline Referral form and send the student to the principal's office. A copy of the form should be given to the principal.

Parent notification and involvement

Every attempt will be made to notify parents or guardians when any consequence beyond a warning is assigned. The Discipline Referral Form will be sent home with the student and must be signed by the student's parent/guardian and returned to the office. When the principal or teacher feel that a parent conference would be beneficial, every attempt will be made to arrange a conference.

Explanation of levels of consequences

The behaviors that are not allowed are organized into three levels. Level 1 behaviors are considered relatively minor offenses, Level 2 are considered more serious, and Level 3 are considered severe.

In each level of behavior there is a range of possible consequences. When the behavior warrants administrative intervention, the administrator will use his or her discretion in assigning consequences, depending on the circumstances and frequency of the student's behavior.

Any behavior may be assigned a higher-level consequence for that behavior, based on progressive discipline and the seriousness of the offense.

All of the behavior standards in this document apply to students in school, on field trips, at athletic events and on school buses.

A detailed list of consequences is available for review in the school office.

ADOPTION OF A RACIALLY NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Non-Discrimination Policy

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

School Nutrition Non-Discrimination Policy

As required by law, the school announces the following non-discriminating policy: “The school nutrition program is available to all eligible participants without regard to race, color, national origin, handicap, sex, or age. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any USDA-related activity should write to: Administrator, Food and Nutrition Service, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, VA 22302.

NOTIFICATION OF GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL RECORDS (SCHOOL INFORMATION POLICY)

These guidelines explain parents’ and guardians’ rights to your child’s records maintained by Grace Lutheran School. These rights include:

Right to inspect. You have the right to view all of your child’s records maintained in the official school file.

Right to prevent disclosures. The school will not disclose anything to third parties from your child’s records unless (a) you consent in writing prior to the disclosure, or (b) the information is directory information which you have not requested be kept confidential, or (c) the request for the information meets one of the limited circumstances described in the guidelines.

Right to request correction. You have the right to present evidence that the school should amend any part of your child’s records which you believe to be inaccurate, misleading or otherwise violates a student’s rights. If the school decides not to change the record, you may insert an explanation in the record. Once your child turns eighteen, he or she obtains all the above rights.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

The State of Illinois, by law, requires all school personnel, as mandated reporters, to report to the Department of Children and Family Services any allegation/suspicion of child abuse or neglect.

FUNDRAISING PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

Fundraising is a fact of life in every school, and especially in private schools. Fundraising provides money for a variety of things that would otherwise put an undue or inappropriate burden on a school's operating budget. The proceeds of fundraising enable enhancements to the academic curriculum and school environment. They enable programs and activities that deepen our students' and teachers' experiences. We are grateful for the gifts of our benefactors and supporters. The richness of God's blessing is evident in the abundant resources we have at Grace Lutheran School.

The purpose of this Fundraising Philosophy Statement is to convey the principles that Grace Lutheran School believes should shape and guide school fundraising activities, and to help frame the choices that Grace families make in supporting the School. We believe that:

Fundraising activities must be aligned in spirit and conduct with the objectives of a Christian education, and the values shared by members of the Grace Lutheran School community. We intend to approach fundraising in the context of Christian ministry.

In that context, we will encourage Grace Lutheran School children to organize and participate in fundraising that benefits others (such as the Uptown project or Misericordia) so that they understand fundraising as an act of stewardship. We will discourage fundraising that promotes material gain or competition among the children themselves. We believe that fundraising which benefits the School and children is the responsibility of the adults of the community.

Since the School, students, and their families should give higher priority to matters other than fundraising, we will strive to conduct fewer fundraising activities with higher proceeds (rather than a greater number of activities with lower proceeds) to achieve our fundraising goals.

Fundraising that is not related to a specific class project should be organized and conducted by persons other than the School faculty and staff members.

Participation in and contributing to fundraising is voluntary. We believe that every family in the Grace Lutheran School community should find a way to give of their time and talent to helping with fundraising each year.

No student or family should be compelled to engage in fundraising if it causes financial strain or personal hardship.

When children are asked to take an active role in fund-raising, the role should be age-appropriate, and supported/supervised by an adult.

We believe that, as members of the Grace Lutheran Church and School community, families need to understand the goals and processes of fundraising, and are entitled to clear communications on this topic. A School Fundraising Committee will provide resources for, coordination of, and communication regarding fundraising activities on an ongoing basis.