

Zion Lutheran School Parent-Student Handbook

2025-2026



Zion Lutheran School

520 E. Main Street

Pierce, NE 68767

School Office: 402-329-4658

zlschool@zionlutheranpierce.com

Church Office: 402-329-4313

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1. Our Mission:

Zion Lutheran School is empowered by the Holy Spirit to follow Christ's example, Zion equips students to grow spiritually as they succeed physically, academically, and develop socially and emotionally. (SPASE)

Since 1903, Zion Lutheran's Congregation has been committed to providing its children with a Christ-centered education. Zion Lutheran School is open to the children of sister congregations and the children of Pierce and surrounding communities. It is established to assist parents in their parental responsibility for the spiritual, social, emotional, physical, and mental training of their children.

2. Objectives:

We believe that Christian education is a vital aspect of God's mission, commanded by Him, to the Church through the Great Commission. We believe that the purpose for Christian education is to teach the Christian faith through instruction in God's Word and learning to live a life of discipleship.

We believe that God's people need to learn their proper relationship to God and their fellow men. We believe that effective education is carried on through quality learning programs that relate the Christian faith to every aspect of life.

We believe that the family exerts much influence on a child's total education, and that the Church and school must equip adults for their important role in Christian education.

We believe the uniqueness of Christian education rests in this:

Christian education views the pupil through the cross of Zion.

Christian education has the Father's given reasons for educating man.

Christian education is empowered by the Holy Spirit for accomplishing its purposes.

We believe the Lutheran School's uniqueness lies in:

Adequate time for Christian instruction.

The impact of professional teachers who are Christians.

The plus of the "Body of Christ."

The fact that the Lutheran school tries to educate the whole child (spiritual, mental, social, and physical) in a single school setting.

Following these beliefs, the members of Zion Lutheran Church strive to provide quality education through their school by providing opportunities for comprehensive school program, which fills the needs and interests of all students. It will also prepare them for their entrance into a high school program. These opportunities must and shall be offered regardless of sex, race, ethnic origin, or economic status.

In establishing and maintaining our curriculum, our first and foremost concern is the individual Christian child, and his/her Christian principles. The school is committed to the principle of providing opportunities for each student to attain his/her maximum development within the limits of his/her capabilities.

3.A. National Lutheran School Accreditation:

Zion Lutheran School maintains National Lutheran School Accreditation status. Every five years, the school goes through a self-study process which leads to the development of an on-going plan for school improvement.

Zion Lutheran School was reaccredited in the Spring of 2024. The approved system certificates are on display in the school office.

3.B. State Approval:

Zion Lutheran is a non-public, state-approved elementary school. It *meets and exceeds* the standards of the Nebraska Department of Education. The teachers at Zion Lutheran School are individuals with unique, God-given talents and abilities. Our teachers are certified by the Nebraska Department of Education. The School Board makes every attempt to secure teachers trained in schools of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod and certified by the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod as Ministers of Religion-Commissioned. All teachers are thoroughly instructed in Christian doctrine and in the philosophy of Christian education.

Zion Lutheran annually exceeds the 1032 minimum hours of instruction needed every year to stay accredited. Zion Lutheran School's school year is concurrent with the Pierce Public School calendar. Kindergarten through 8th Grade will consist of approximately 173 days or 1,121 hours per school year. Weather may affect and reduce the projected number but will never exceed the minimum requirement for days/hours. Zion Lutheran School's regular school day hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 3:20 p.m.

3.C. ADMINISTRATION (New for 2025)

Zion Lutheran School is operated by the authority of, and under the supervision and control of the Voter's Assembly of Zion Lutheran Church. It is supervised by the Board of Parish Education, under the authority given by the Voters Assembly of the congregation. The Board of Parish Education meets monthly and conducts special meetings as needed.

Teachers/Staff:

Mr. David Beikmann *Principal*

Mrs. April Anson *Office Administrator*

Miss Sydney Slater *Preschool*

Mrs. Misty Steffen *Kindergarten*

Mrs. Jennifer Rohrich *Grade 1*

Mrs. Elizabeth Gleason *Grade 2*

Mrs. Kelly Stonacek *Grades 3-4*

Mrs. Susan Harstad *Grades 5-6*

Mrs. Sierra Fleer *Grades 7-8*

Mr. Mike Sindt *Instrumental Band*

Mrs. Tara Oestreich *Paraprofessional*

Mrs. Brooke Kilcoin *Paraprofessional*

Ms. Holly Koehler *Lunch*

Mrs. Mallory Rowley *Lunch*

Mrs. Amy Miller *School Nurse*

Mr. Derek Jareske *Director of Christian Education*

2025 Board of Parish Education: *New members to be elected for 2026

Tyler Krueger – President

*Jodi Beacom – Vice-President

Laura Benes – Secretary

Andrew Wolff

Blake Stonacek

Jeff Meier

4. A. Admissions: SCHOOL ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

- The Nebraska Legislature has changed the law governing when children begin kindergarten in public schools. Starting in the 2012-13 school year, students may enter kindergarten if they turn five years of age on or before **July 31**, a date that was previously October 15.
- Admission to Zion Lutheran School shall be open to all and shall not be denied based on race, creed, color, or national origin.

The Zion Lutheran Board for Parish Education reserves the right to give preferential treatment when considering admission according to the following scale:

- Priority shall be given to children where at least one parent is a member of Zion, Pierce or St. John, Pierce.
- Second priority shall be given to the members of other Lutheran Churches.
- Third priority shall be given to mission prospects.
- Fourth priority shall be given to members of other churches.
- Non-member enrollments are subject to approval by the Board of Parish Education.

4.B. PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT

Enrollment schedule: Deadlines are non-negotiable. Once each deadline has passed, each student enrollment will be handled on a first-come, first-serve basis. Incomplete paperwork brought to the school office will not be accepted.

First day of Second Semester –January 31: Enrollment for currently enrolled pre-school students only.

February 1-End of February: Siblings of currently enrolled Zion students and/or a member of Zion Lutheran Church may enroll during this time.

March 1 and following: Round-up date will be announced. (Pierce Paper/Facebook/Zion website) – Open enrollment begins for next school year ONLY.

Class enrollment caps: PK 3: 9 PK 4: 9 PK 5: 9

Class enrollment age cut-off dates:

3's: Must be 3 by August 1 and potty-trained

4's: Must be 4 by August 1

5's: Must be 5 by October 1

To be eligible for the Zion 5-year-old program, the student must turn 5 by October 1 OR have completed one year of 4-year-old pre-school in any pre-school program.

To hold a spot for a pre-school student, a family MUST HAVE ALL the following:

1. Registration Sheet

2. Copy of Birth Certificate: The hospital keepsake certificate will not be accepted. If the certificate needs to be replaced, Zion has the DHHS form, APPLICATION FOR CERTIFIED COPY OF BIRTH CERTIFICATE, available for families to send in. The cost is \$17.00.

3. Copy of Social Security Card**4. Copy of Immunization Records****5. Deposit: equal to one month's tuition**

Your spot is secured when the office receives ALL 5. Again, incomplete paperwork will not be accepted.

Zion must be notified by August 1 of the current school year if a preschool student is not attending. The deposit will not be returned after August 1.

4.C. STUDENT NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY

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

5. FEES & TUITION (New for 2025) *Please also see: ZION LUTHERAN SCHOOL FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS*

Members of Zion Lutheran Church: \$1,000.00 per child. Book fee assistance (not scholarship) will be arranged for those who provide a statement of need for financial assistance. Determination is made based on free and reduced qualifications. If you do not qualify for free and/or reduced meals, you will not be given assistance.

Non-member tuition for families with more than one child enrolled in grades K-8 will be \$2150.00 for the first child in the family and \$1600.00 for each additional child. No tuition will be charged to new member prospects during the first year of enrollment. Parents will be expected to take the Adult Information Class and join the church during the initial year of their child's (ren's) enrollment. Those who do not become members during the first year will be charged tuition beginning the second year of enrollment.

Preschool payments are due on the first of every month:

The cost for the three-day class is \$100/month. The cost for the two-day class is \$70/month.

Payment plans can be arranged with the school office.

5.A. ZION LUTHERAN SCHOOL FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Each fall, on Back-to-School Sunday, a set of clipboards with sheets attached provides a quick and easy method for parent signatures. Because people move through the stations relatively fast, there is a concern that not all the information is thoroughly seen.

One of those signature sheets is labeled “Financial Obligations”. It states the following:

I understand that I am responsible for meeting all financial obligations incurred while my child is a student at Zion Lutheran School and promise to make all payments on time according to the schedule set by the school. I understand if my account is not kept up to date, it may jeopardize continued enrollment of my student. I show my agreement by signing below.

Zion Lutheran School office administration is available Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.- 4:00. p.m.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your account, would like to set up a personalized payment plan, would like to prepay, delay a payment, or any other matter, please contact the office during those hours. We will be more than happy to work with our families to help find a plan that works for them. We appreciate all communication and look forward to serving you each year!

6.A. CURRICULUM

The Concordia Curriculum Guide (CPH, 2008) serves as a guide to implement standards and methods and develop the content for our instructions. The curriculum of the school has been developed to provide a well-rounded education. The core of the curriculum is our Bible-based religious training.

Zion Lutheran School offers all subjects required by the Nebraska Department of Education to be considered an approved school by the state as listed in Rule 14.

Reading and Language Arts- Shurley English

Mathematics- Saxon

Social Studies- Houghton-Mifflin-Harcourt (7th/8th), Social Studies Weekly

Science and Health- Nancy Larson

Physical Education

Art / Music

In addition, a course in religious education is offered to all students and must be attended by all students who are enrolled in the school. All students are required to complete the course work in these religion classes.

All grades are involved in formal religious education. The Confirmation Class (Grades 7 & 8) is instructed by the pastor or synodically-trained teacher. Christian education at Zion Lutheran is not, however, merely teaching “Religion” as a subject. It describes our total approach to everything we do. It is the way we view all subject areas, the way we relate to one another, and the way each of us relates to God. We strive to have our Christianity permeate our total lives.

The teachers and administration make a concerted effort to review the curriculum yearly and revise the curriculum periodically to give our students the best possible education. Towards this end, we will work closely with the area public schools to develop curriculum that will prepare our students for their continued education.

6 Instruction/Curriculum

6.A. COMPUTERS/TECHNOLOGY

Zion Lutheran School is aware of the ever-changing use of technology in society. To keep pace with current trends, it is our desire to provide our students with as much access to the most up-to-date computers/Chromebooks as circumstances allow.

Our current goals are to produce basic computer literacy (understanding and how to use it), develop keyboarding skills in grades kindergarten – 8, and make use of the computer as an educational tool in various subject areas.

Internet skills are also introduced and closely monitored. iPads are also being used in K-4 as well.

Use of school computers for personal business, social networking, or shopping during school operational hours is strictly prohibited. Students are not allowed to participate in social networking at home on a school owned computer. They are not to alter computers in any way, including passwords and screens. Permission by a teacher is needed if alteration is wanted.

Please note separate yearly “Acceptable Use” computer policy document will need to be signed and returned before permission is granted for computer use. Cyberbullying is prohibited on any school issued device.

6.B. CHOIRS

Our schools’ teachers will work with K – 8 grade students to rehearse songs that can be sung during church services.

These performances are scheduled throughout the school year. It is requested that you continue to make every effort for your child to be in church on the Sundays he/she sings. If you find it impossible to be there, please inform the director beforehand.

6.C .REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued every quarter. All report cards should be discussed between parents and children.

Parents are encouraged to view their child’s progress through Sycamore.

GRADES

Grades: Kindergarten receives a checklist of skills mastered.

The grading scale for grades 1 – 8 is as follows:

100% A+	97 – 99% A	93 – 96% A-
90 – 92% B+	87 – 89% B	84 – 86% B-
80 – 83% C+	76 – 79% C	73 – 75% C-
70 – 72% D+	67 – 69% D	65 – 66% DBelow
65 F	No Paper “0”	

HONOR ROLL

For grades 4th through 8th the honor roll is as follows:

“All A’s” Honor Roll – Must have all A’s in the core subjects (see below)

“A Average” Honor Roll – 92.5% to 100 % (value needs to be 93-100)

“B Average” Honor Roll—83.5% to 92.4% (value needs to be 84-92)

The numeric average is determined by the average of Religion, Memory, Mathematics, Language Arts (Reading, Spelling and English), Science and Social Studies grades for a quarter.

6.D. ACHIEVEMENT TESTING/MAPS TESTING

The students in grades 1st through 8th grade will be participating in **MAP® - Measures of Academic Progress®**.

Understanding each student's academic level gives their teacher the power to help them excel. MAP computerized adaptive assessments are the tools that make it possible – providing educators with the detailed information they need to build curriculum and meet their students' needs, one child at a time.

7. OPERATING PROCEDURES

7.A. SCHOOL SAFETY (New 2025)

All school entrances will remain locked throughout the day. The west activities entrance will be open from 7:30-8:00 a.m. to allow students to arrive at school. The doors will automatically lock at 8:00 am. Visitors to the school can enter through the main doors of the school. **Visitors must then check in at the school office.** The west activities entrance will again be open for daily school dismissal and sports practices from 3:20-5:00 p.m.

GENERAL SAFETY AND CONDUCT GUIDELINES

1. Every child must be supervised by an adult on school property before, during, and after school.
2. Always show love, respect, and concern for everyone.
3. Always show respect for school property. Appreciate God's gifts given through the time, talents, and money of our parents and members.
4. Use all playground equipment safely.
5. Look carefully in all directions when chasing any object that has gone into the street.
6. No running in the hallways, library, or the classrooms.
7. No playing in the hallways or classrooms during school events.
8. Keep to the right when walking in the hallways and stairs.
9. Take turns when getting a drink or using the restrooms.
10. There will be NO CHEWING OF GUM IN SCHOOL.
11. Knives and guns cannot and will not be brought to school (zero tolerance policy for weapons).
12. All students must be picked up on the south side of the school by 3:25 pm. This ensures that students are properly supervised and accounted for as they leave school for the day. This is for the safety of the students.

7.B.BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL SUPERVISION

Students may enter the west activities entrance any time after 7:30 a.m. and must report to the school gym. A teacher will be on duty in the gym each morning from 7:30-7:45. After school: Students **MUST** be picked up by 3:25 pm on the south side of the school. Students are not permitted to be in other parts of the school unless they are participating in a school sponsored program, such as sports, quiz bowl, etc. and have adult supervision.

After school, we will still use the west activities door.

Students who participate in the Faith Weaver Friends Program are not allowed to remain at school until the program starts at 5:15 p.m.

7.C. PLAYGROUND/GYM

Students will be under strict supervision while they are on the playground or in the gym. If students are allowed to play unsupervised on the playground or gym while parents are volunteering or at meetings, the parents are responsible for all discipline and/or injuries of the child.

7.D. LOST AND FOUND

Zion keeps a lost and found bin by the school office. The items left for two weeks will be given to Goodwill.

7.E. TOYS AND ANIMALS

Comic books, matches, knives, candy, gum, toys, and animals should not be brought to the school. (Unless they are items for Show and Tell in the lower grades). Such items will be confiscated if brought to school. Teachers should be contacted if animals are brought to school. They are not permitted on the school bus.

TREASURES FROM HOME

Any toys, musical devices/headphones or other items not needed for schoolwork are not to be brought to the school without the permission of the classroom teacher. Such items may be confiscated and kept at the school office until the end of the school day.

7.F. DAMAGES

A certain amount of wear and tears on textbooks, school desks, and school property is to be expected. However, excessive damages inflicted by pupils to any school property will have to be compensated for by the student.

7.G. SCHOOL PICTURES

School pictures are taken of all students in the fall. **Please make this day a priority.** The primary reason for student pictures is for school records, which is why everyone is to be photographed. Special packages are prepared that may be purchased by parents, but this is strictly voluntary.

7.H. CHAPEL AND OFFERINGS

Weekly chapel services are held in the church each WEDNESDAY at 8:10. Parents and friends are welcome to attend. We encourage parents to send offerings with their children each week. This teaches them to give willingly and faithfully when they provide for their own livelihood. Home stewardship training is important. We are all financially responsible for our church and school. Make Christian stewardship a family activity. We recommend that all students dress accordingly for chapel services (see dress code).

7.I. BULLYING POLICY FROM ORIGINAL COMPREHENSIVE HANDBOOK

The Board of Education recognizes the negative impact that bullying has on student health, welfare, safety, and the school's learning environment and prohibits such behavior on school property or at school sponsored events.

Bullying is defined as an intentional and repeated form of aggression toward a person or persons physically, verbally, or emotionally and usually involves an imbalance of power. Bullying causes physical and/or psychological discomfort or harm.

Students who are involved in bullying may be forced to serve time before or after school; be suspended in-school or be suspended out-of-school. Multiple instances of bullying will result in expulsion.

Bullying is NOT allowed at Zion Lutheran School. If you see it occur, please tell an adult.

7.J. STUDENT EMERGENCY DRILLS

In the interest of student safety, the pupils are instructed in the proper safety procedures to be followed in case of an emergency. Fire and tornado drills are rehearsed in accordance with regulations of the State Fire Marshall and state law. Yearly intruder drills will be conducted to teach children how to shelter in place and, when appropriate, leave the scene.

8. Health Policies

8.A. IMMUNIZATION

Parents must present an up-to-date immunization record conforming to the education laws of the State of Nebraska.

We request a doctor's physical for kindergarten students, 7th grade students, and any child transferring in from another state.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding immunizations, please contact the school office at 329-4658.

8.B. SCHOOL NURSE – HEALTH CHECKS

The school nurse will do our annual health checks. When she finds a health problem, a written recommendation is sent to the parents. The decision for action always rests with the parents.

8.C. EMERGENCY DOCTOR CARE

In case of emergency doctor care, we will contact the home/family and use your family physician whenever possible. In case parents are not home, we will use your family doctor if he/she is available in town; otherwise, we'll use our own judgment. Bills incurred are the responsibility of the parents or guardian.

8.D. FIRST AID/MEDICATION

Minor first aid will be administered at school. In case of illness or accident, the home will be notified immediately.

If the parent or emergency contact cannot be reached, a doctor will be called. **Parents must complete the parental medication permission for granting written consent and authorization to school personnel to dispense medication, including aspirin.** Non-prescription medication must be sent to school in the

manufacturers' bottle and prescription medication in the prescribed bottle or container. All medication prescribed or over the counter must be turned in to the school office or to the child's teacher and cannot be kept in the student's desk, book bags, or lockers.

Upon completion of the form indicated above, staff members will dispense the medication as per the parent's and/or doctor's request. The school cannot keep an inventory of any over-the-counter medications on hand to dispense, including, but not limited to cough drops, pain reliever, etc. We can administer only what is sent to school with a permission form.

8.E.ASTHMA

With the common missions of preventing deaths in schools from asthma or anaphylaxis, the two groups, "Nebraska Board of Education" and "Attack on Asthma Nebraska," partnered together to provide schools with one emergency plan. Personal inhalers may be kept on-person if necessary.

Life threatening asthma consists of chest tightness, wheezing, inability to speak and blueness around the mouth.

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction response after ingestion of a food, medication or exposure to animals, molds or bee/insect stings with symptoms of hives, difficulty swallowing, itching and swelling.

Zion Lutheran School has trained its staff members to respond to such life-threatening conditions. All staff members have been made aware of the protocol and symptoms to watch for. If a student presents with the above symptoms, the team will be activated and follow this protocol:

Assess the victim----Call 911-----Give Epi-Pen and Albuterol treatment-----Call Parents/Doctor

All victims given the Epi Pen MUST be transferred to a medical facility.

The schools Epi-Pen and Albuterol do not replace your child's own prescribed medication for asthma/allergy control and management. Please make sure that your child has their needed inhalers or Epi-Pen on themselves or at school and let the school be made aware of these needed medications.

If you do not want your child to be treated by this protocol, you must let the school know as soon as possible.

8.F. ASBESTOS AWARENESS

Zion Lutheran Church and School do have limited asbestos containing materials. These are limited to the ceiling tiles (friable) and floor tiles (non-friable). The ceiling tiles are regularly monitored. In a test of the friable material in May 1983, there were less than 1% of asbestos present. At this rate, the asbestos is at a safe level.

The areas of possible non-friable asbestos (floor tile) are in excellent condition and pose no health hazard. A follow-up three-year inspection took place in the summer of 2010, 2013 and 2016. An Asbestos Management plan is kept in the file of the school office and is available for review during normal school hours.

9.B. ABSENCE POLICY AND MAKE-UP WORK

Regular attendance is important to the progress of the child and the maintenance of school standards. Absences for reasons other than illness are to be avoided. When a student knows he/she will be gone from school, his/her teacher should be informed PRIOR to the day of absence. Teachers will provide the students' assignments prior to the day of absence. Absence for 2-4 hours shall count as half a day. Absences longer than 4 hours shall be a one-day absence.

There are no quarter-day absences. A student is counted tardy after 8 a.m. Students must arrive **BEFORE 10 a.m.** to be counted as a full day.

The **school office** should be informed **by 8:30 a.m.** when a student is ill. **You may leave a message on the school office number which can be retrieved when staff arrive.** The office will notify the teachers. Students who are absent will make up any work that he/she has missed. Each student has as many days as they were absent to make up their work. The teacher may extend the time granted according to the circumstances that caused the absence. The make-up work will be assigned at the teacher's discretion.

If a student needs to leave school early, the parents must provide a note or phone call to the teacher, who will communicate this to the office. A verbal request by a student will not be accepted.

Students are allowed ten (10) aggregate days of absence per semester. *Absences verified in writing by a doctor, dentist, counselor or judge for a sickness or injury that prevents a child from being in school, including family emergency will NOT be counted in this total but will be considered an excused absence.* Please bring the doctor's notes for all absences from appointments. If a student accumulates more than ten absences per semester that are unexcused, a letter will go home. Subsequent action will be taken on a per case basis.

Students who are absent because of illness on a day that they are scheduled to participate in an extracurricular activity **must arrive BY 10:00 a.m.** or they will not be allowed to participate in their activity that day or evening.

This includes but is not limited to music concerts, athletic events, plays, practices, meetings, etc. This same rule applies for 10:00 a.m. late starts and early dismissal days as well.

Friday absence: Students must be in attendance by **10:00 a.m. on a Friday** to participate in a Saturday activity.

Exceptions to any of the above rules must have documented administrative approval.

9.D. TRUANCY

Any student who misses school for no apparent reason or is habitually absent or tardy will be subject to the following procedure:

A letter will be sent to the parents notifying them of an abnormal amount of absenteeism and/or tardiness. Parents are responsible for the attendance of their children in school.

If correction is not obtained, the proper officials will be notified.

10.A. Parent Communication- Matthew Chapter 18

We, as a Christian Day School, have adopted the Biblical procedure from Matthew Chapter 18 to address concerns that arise with any of our members. A concerned individual should first approach and try to resolve his or her concern directly with the other party, whether it be a teacher, the Administrator, or other staff member. This encounter is to be founded in love and concern for fellow Christians and at a time a staff member is NOT responsible for students. The preferred communication method is EMAIL. If the concern persists, the next step is to have to have a meeting with the teacher/staff member, parent, and administrator. We do this in the school setting. If these conferences are not effective,, the final step is for the matter to be brought forward to the whole membership. In the case of Zion Lutheran School, the matter is brought to the Board of Parish Education as the governing authority for the Day School.

Following this process permits us to keep in step with God's directions, keep the appropriate people informed, allows us to deal with issues in a fair and equitable manner, helps eliminate rumors and innuendo, and permits us to discover and focus on relevant facts.

10.B. SYCAMORE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

Each family will receive a password to log into their own account. There you will be able to view the lunch menu, an up-to-date calendar, account balances, your child's grades, and the weekly newsletter. You are also able to view the handbook, school supplies list, computer policy, and the sports agreement.

10.C. SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION

Zion Lutheran follows Pierce Public School closings for inclement weather and should be a tag with Pierce's announcement. If school is called off, postponed, or released early because of bad weather or for any reason, it will be announced on US92, 94 Rock, and 780 WJAG. The Zion Lutheran Sycamore text system will be utilized to notify parents of any school time changes or closings. If the Board for Parish Education decides to have school and you do not agree, the ultimate decision of sending children to school rests with the parents. If parents have a question, they should call the Board for Parish Education chairman or principal.

10.D. PHONE CALLS/USAGE/CELL PHONES

Phone calls by students are for emergency and illness purposes only. If a student forgot homework, gym shoes, sports equipment, etc., they will not be able to use the school phone to call home. Incoming calls for students will be given in message form unless it is an emergency.

Cell phones must be turned off and turned into class phone baskets upon entering the school each day. No phones are permitted during the day unless permitted by the school office and/or your student's teacher. Students will be given their phones at the end of the day or following their sports practice. No phones are allowed inside bathrooms/locker rooms. Violations or improper usage will result in a meeting with parents, teachers, and school administration. The student will assume all liability for lost, stolen, misplaced, or misused cell phones.

10.E. PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/Teacher conferences are conducted on a formal basis in the middle or end of the first and third quarters. We ask all parents to attend both conferences. Other conferences are scheduled as the parents or teacher desire. If you have any concerns about your child's progress, contact your child's teacher and set up a conference.

11. DISCIPLINE

CONFLICT RESOLUTION (Care / Concern / Communication)

In conflict situations, persons involved should take steps to resolve the problem by following our Lord's direction as found in Matthew 18:15-17. Zion will use the same process as outlined above in Parent Communication Section 10.

We have incorporated these Biblical principles from the book of Matthew in our process for conflict resolution. This process is being published as a reminder. The steps are set forth below showing the teacher-student application. The steps can be adapted for any situation (i.e. Parent-Administrator).

Each step is not a single event but rather a cycle of meetings to reach an understanding, and only after the cycle and at an impasse is the next step utilized. Beyond the Board level at Zion are the Church Council and Elders.

1. Teacher-Student.
2. Teacher-Student-Parent.
3. Teacher-Student-Parent-Administrators.
4. Teacher-Student-Parent-Administrators-Board Representative. (Discipline Appeal 1)
5. Teacher-Student-Parent-Administrators -Board Rep.- Bd. of Ed. (Discipline Appeal 2)
6. Teacher-Student-Parent-Administrators -Board Rep.- Bd. of Ed.- Elders

Following this Biblical process permits us to keep in step with God's directions, keep the "appropriate people" informed, allows us to deal with issues in a fair and equitable manner, helps eliminate rumors and innuendo, and permits us to discover and focus on relevant facts.

All of us have the same goals and desires - we are all striving and working diligently to provide our children a good, quality, Christian education. We may run into problems and situations that require loving guidance and correction, and we will follow the communication steps outlined above. We should always strive, however, to be forgiving of each other's shortcomings and to work together to support each other in our common undertaking. As Martin Luther exhorted us, we should put our best construction on everything. **The goal of these steps is always to restore relationships.**

DISCIPLINE: Conduct Counts!

The Board of Parish Education, the staff, parents, and students all must desire to work together in developing the most God-pleasing Christian learning environment possible. With God's help, everyone's cooperation, and prayers, we will achieve this blessed goal.

Good self-discipline begins when the home remains the primary mold of each child. (I Timothy 5:4) Our Christian School is an extension of the home and serves as the parent (In Locus Parentus) for the time. God set forward a model that can apply to a school system of discipline in Matthew 18. As sinful humans we will not lead perfect lives. Hebrews 12:11 shares with us a proper understanding of the need for application of Law and Gospel. "For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant: later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."

11.A. DISCIPLINE Policies

Teachers are expected to engage students at an appropriate level of mutual trust and concern. We will "be there" for our students when needed. We are all about building bridges, not building walls. Our teachers constantly strive to improve and maintain proper Christian relationships. At the beginning of the year, classroom guidelines will be shared. There will be allowable differences in expectations from classroom to classroom because of student age differences.

In the spirit of love and concern for the welfare of the child, sometimes we need to correct and admonish children who require correction in a timely way. Remember - time spent by the teacher dealing with improper behavior reduces the time available for teaching, so matters will be dealt with swiftly and to the glory of God. In case of continued misbehavior and lack of cooperation on the part of the child, parents will be contacted. Unfortunately, failure to adjust to appropriate standards could result in suspension.

11.B. DRESS CODE

Students should wear **clean** and **neat** clothing. Extremes in personal attire will result in a consultation with that student followed by a phone call to the parents. The judgment of the teaching staff will determine what constitutes proper dress and dress appearance. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in parents being asked to deliver acceptable clothing to school. **To set our chapel day apart from the remaining days, it is recommended that students wear clothing appropriate for attending worship in God's House.**

DRESS CODE GUIDELINES FOR Pre K- 8

1. Tank tops, mesh shirts, or muscle shirts are not permissible for any grade level. All shirts and blouses for all grade levels must be below the belt or waistline. There will be no midriff exposure allowed. Rule of thumb: If you can raise your arm and expose the midriff it is not acceptable.
2. If your shirt or blouse has a picture and/or printed message, it **MUST BE** a message and/or picture that presents a positive image. A negative or un-Christian image or message is not permissible.
3. Sweatbands, wristbands, caps, hats, gloves and sunglasses are inappropriate in the classroom.
4. For safety purposes shoelaces shall be always tied and flip flops are not allowed.
5. It is very appropriate to remove caps and hats when entering school or church. Please practice proper etiquette at all times.
6. **HOT WEATHER DRESS CODE:** Seasonal dress is preferred. Rule of Thumb: Shorts shall be at or beyond finger-tip length from the top of the knee when you stand with your arms out to your side.
7. The only type of body piercing acceptable is pierced ears for girls.

DRESS FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND RECESS

All students in grades Preschool-8 are to purchase a regular pair of non-marking soled gym shoes for PE and recess time. Students in grades 5 – 8 are to purchase a regular pair of gym shorts for PE/athletic practice.

11.C. DETENTION

Discipline Detention – Our goal is to help a child reach self-discipline, however, whenever a student becomes a discipline problem for any teacher during the day, parents will be notified as soon as possible that their child is being detained during lunch or during school that day. Detention will normally be the same day as the problem arose, but various circumstances will be given due consideration. Exemptions will not be allowed on the basis that a student rides the school bus.

The basis of discipline detention is determined by the teacher and the principal. It **may** be for (but is not limited to):

1. Disturbances in the classroom which do not promote a quality educational environment.
2. The use of profanity, cursing, swearing, and/or fighting in the classroom or on the playground.
3. Endangering the safety of another person, intentionally or unintentionally.
4. Disrespect for another student, teacher, and/or a visitor.
5. Smoking, (on school property), use of illicit drugs, and alcohol (See drug free policy).

6. Any other violation of the individual teacher's classroom management plan.

Effective home-school communication (both positive and negative) is the key in any situation.

Academic Detention – We will counsel and advise students who miss the mark academically. Parents can always check grades online with Sycamore. Failure to have work completed will usually be dealt with the same day and in a reasonable manner. Academic detention results in limited sports involvement.

11.D. SUSPENSION

Suspension may be administered to those students who do not respond to detention or who commit a serious offense.

Suspension may be administered normally based on documentation by the classroom teacher and/or principal, or other school related personnel for repeated discipline problems or any other disciplinary problem, which detracts from the educational process.

Suspension may be administered for up to three days by the principal. There may also be in-school suspension. In the case of in-school suspension, it will be necessary to hire a substitute teacher to supervise the activities of the affected student(s). It will become the responsibility of the family to pay the expenses involved in such a situation. Suspension should be understood as the step before expulsion from school.

EXPULSION

Students who do not cooperate and do not respond to other disciplinary action may be expelled from school by action of the Board for Parish Education upon the recommendation of the principal. This will be done based on repeated and documented use of discipline detention, suspension, and/or following consultation with the parents or guardian.

RETENTION

There may be times when it is necessary to give due consideration to the retention of a student in the same grade for a second year. Reasons for such action may be quite varied:

1. Immaturity of the student to cope with his age group and/or with the level of study expected.
2. Missing an abnormal number of days, especially unexplained or unexcused absences. (Above 10%)
3. Failure to do the required work, having an "I don't care" attitude, or simply just not working up to one's potential.

Parents will be counseled concerning the possible retention of their child. All social concerns will be considered.

11.E. DRUG FREE POLICY

Zion Lutheran Church and School, its staff and students, are committed to providing a healthful, educational environment that is free from the harmful and detrimental effects of illicit drugs and alcohol. As a redeemed child of our Lord living in citizenship in the United States and the state of Nebraska, we desire to uphold and defend the laws of our country and state.

It is unlawful, therefore, absolutely prohibited, for any employee or student of Zion Lutheran Church and School, to engage in the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs or alcohol, on school premises or as a part of any of the school's activities.

The penalty for the above shall be:

EMPLOYEE – Suspension without pay and eventually leading to permanent dismissal after providing information regarding professional counseling, treatment, and rehabilitation.

STUDENT -- Five-day temporary suspension, during which information regarding professional counseling, treatment, and rehabilitation will be provided to the student and parents (guardians), followed by permanent dismissal from school.

Each employee shall sign the above stated policy upon reading and discussing it as an acknowledgment of their competent understanding of the policy.

11.F. AIDS POLICY

In the event a student or an employee of Zion Lutheran Church and School contracts AIDS and is diagnosed as having HIV positive, Zion Lutheran Church and School will continue to minister to the individual and family in the manner that seems most feasible.

The family or the individual will be asked to meet with the pastors, principal, and chairman of the Board for Parish Education. After meeting with the family and/or individual in the above step, we will then want to meet with the family physician or other medical consultants, to determine the threat of infection to any child in school, teachers, or anyone who regularly has any casual contact with the individual who has the AIDS virus.

If the physicians and/or the medical team agree on the interpretation of the medical records and that the health of the student or employee allows them to perform adequately in school, then the individual may pursue their education or employment.

The child or employee will be allowed to continue to attend Zion Lutheran School with three (3) exceptions:

1. An individual who might exhibit aggressive behavior such as biting others.
2. An individual who is unable to control bodily secretions.
3. An individual who exhibits open sores or lesions that cannot be covered.

The primary concern will be for the health and safety of all, including the individual with AIDS. It will be necessary to have continuing communication between the school and the family as a means of monitoring the progress of the virus. The purpose of this monitoring will be to protect the individual as well as considering the welfare of the student body. As children of the family of God we will be concerned about the spiritual, physical, and educational welfare of all.

12. Food Service/Hot Lunch

12.A HOT LUNCHES

Zion Lutheran School serves hot lunches in the lunchroom and the gym. The lunches are prepared by Pierce Public School. Prices are subject to change at any time during the school year. Please log on to Sycamore and view your child's lunch balances. **All family accounts must maintain a \$5 credit in the hot lunch program.**

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue,

S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

12.B. Food Allergy Aware School

As a Food Allergy Aware School, *ZLS prohibits foods with peanuts, tree nuts, and shellfish listed as ingredients throughout the school and at school events.* For example, foods such as peanut butter, Nutella, Reese's peanut butter cups, granola bars with peanuts, baked goods made with almond flour, etc. are not permitted.

Guidelines

Peanuts, tree nuts or shellfish (like shrimp, crab, lobster, or mollusks) items that are listed as ingredients are prohibited from the following:

- School lunch brought from home for a regular school day or for a field trip
- Student snacks.
- Class/advisory treats (always limited to special occasions and prior arrangements must be made).
- Food provided for after school events on or off campus (practices, rehearsals, games, etc.).
- Concessions or snacks sold at concession stand.
- Special treats brought to campus (class parties, faculty and staff appreciation days, exam treats, snacks, meetings on campus).
-

IN SCHOOL SNACKS AND PARTIES

Each classroom sets its own policy for classroom snacks. For classroom parties and special events like birthdays, please remember that not all parties need cupcakes. Plan the event with your teacher. Zion maintains a separate health and wellness policy which is required of every school in the state. No child is to bring pop or candy for a snack OR lunch or we could lose state funding for our lunch program.

13.A. SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

Students living within the Pierce Public School District or who have brothers or sisters in high school riding the bus have the privilege of using the school bus. Those outside the district must provide their own transportation. The use of the school bus or parents delivering their children is the preferred means of transportation. Walking is always an acceptable and healthy means of arriving and returning

home from school. Students who reside in town cannot ride the bus to the public elementary school and ride/walk from there.

THE BOARD FOR PARISH EDUCATION DISCOURAGES THE USE OF A NEBRASKA SCHOOL DRIVING PERMIT AT ZION.

Safety is our number one concern for discouraging the use of a school permit.

1. We have a concern for the safety of the children who are driving as well as the brothers and sisters they may have accompanied them.
2. Our second safety factor is the number of lower grade children as they arrive at school and upon the dismissal of them at the end of the day.
3. Our third safety factor is the temptation of the seventh or eighth graders to give someone else a ride. State law permits only the transportation of the immediate family. Parents have been able to transport their children from prekindergarten through sixth or seventh grade for extra-curricular activities. Therefore, it should be feasible to transport them in grades seven and/or eight. We are asking parents of the fourteen-year-old who has the school permit to:

1. **Use the school permit on a very limited basis.**
2. **Parents must communicate with the school prior to any student driving to school. The purpose of the communication is to discuss the particulars of the situation.**

13.B. FIELD TRIPS

Occasionally throughout the year our students may be taken on field trips. Parents will be notified of these beforehand and may be asked to drive or act as chaperones. These trips are to help the pupil become acquainted with community resources and to provide quality educational experience.

PARENT TRANSPORTATION

Parents who volunteer to drive for field trips or athletic events on behalf of the school are a valued asset. To help ensure a safe, comfortable, and enjoyable experience for both drivers and students, the following guidelines have been established and are to be followed by all parents, teachers, and students at our school.

1. Teachers will assign riders to each vehicle honoring the parent's request regarding the number of riders.
2. Drivers will require riders to use all available seat belts.
3. Students are to sit still - keeping hands, feet, and objects to themselves.
4. Students ride quietly, listening to the driver and respecting their wishes.
5. Drivers are expected to notify the teacher in charge of any problem that occurs with a student.
6. Students failing to bring their permission slip will not be allowed to attend the event.
7. Drivers may be offered this money to help reimburse their costs.

8. Drivers will be expected to give a copy of a valid Nebraska Driver's License and proof of current automobile insurance coverage to the school office.

9. Drivers will be expected to drive directly to and from the school sponsored event. There shall be no stopping for shopping. Stopping for a snack or refreshment may be permissible if it was agreed upon by the principal, teacher, and all drivers prior to leaving for the event. Students will then know if they need extra money for the snack or refreshment. Rule of thumb: Plan Ahead!

10. Due to recent legislation, schools are not able to use 15 passenger vans unless a safety conversion has been completed, and documentation is provided to the school.

13.B. Riding Bikes to School

Students may ride bicycles, scooters, skateboards, rollerblades, or other riding devices to school. If appropriate, the devices are to be immediately parked in the proper rack at the school building and left there until school is dismissed. Devices not able to be parked there are to be kept in the school building at a place determined by the homeroom teacher or the principal until school dismisses. Bicycle riding is not permitted on the playground.

Students are encouraged to wear helmets and appropriate safety gear when riding these devices. Parents are to take steps to see that their children are properly equipped and trained. Zion Lutheran School is not responsible for accidents, or injuries. Zion Lutheran School is not responsible for any damage to or loss of a riding device parked at the school.

Students are encouraged to purchase locks for their devices and secure them while at school.

14. A. SPORTS

Students in grades 5-8 can compete against other schools in sports by playing on the Zion Lutheran club team per Rule 14. Zion's sports include football (at PHS), volleyball, cross country (at PHS), basketball, and track (at PHS for grades 7/8) Fourth grade students are eligible to practice in spring track and basketball only **when participant numbers allow.**

Sports activities are a privilege granted to students who have completed their assignments to the best of their ability. Students who have incomplete assignments or are not working up to their ability will lose this privilege. Students that have three or more missing assignments will be considered ineligible for participation in athletic contests.

School policy also states that students must not be failing a subject to be eligible. Students, parents, and coaches will be notified of the student's ineligibility on the Friday before the week of ineligibility.

Parents are encouraged to monitor their students' grades and set personal goals for their students regarding student academic performance. Parent standards need to be communicated to the teacher. Students not setting a good example of Christian sportsmanship will also be excluded.

If a student wants to be a member of an athletic team, he or she will be expected to attend practices. Being a part of the team calls for commitment. Therefore, irregular attendance, inattention at practice sessions, and unexcused absences from practice may jeopardize team participation. If a child must, for an appropriate reason, miss a practice session, we prefer that parents send a written excuse. Junior high football will run from 2:45 to 4:00 each day and volleyball will run from 3:20 – 4:30 (app.) each day. Parents will need to pick up their children following these practices. During the seasons of basketball and track practices will run from 3:30 to 5:00.

There is a non-returnable \$25.00 athletic fee for each athlete for each sport at Zion Lutheran School. This can be paid to the Zion PTLS.

14.B. BAND

Students in grades 5-8 who show desire to take instrumental lessons and who gain their parents' permission, are given released time to take lessons. Students, in most cases, are asked to provide their own instruments. These may be rented or owned by the student. Those students who do well may be asked to play in the Pierce High School Junior Band resulting in excellence for levels beyond middle school.

15. PARENT/TEACHER GROUP (PTLS)

Zion Lutheran School has a Parent/Teacher Group, which strongly supports the school. **All parents are members.**

The group sponsors various events during the school year. This is a great chance to meet other parents of our students and to have an active voice in the promotion and growth of our school. Please plan to attend these monthly meetings. They usually meet on the first Monday of the month.



If you have any questions, please contact the school office.

Zion Lutheran School is empowered by the Holy Spirit to follow Christ's example, Zion equips students to grow spiritually as they succeed physically, academically, and develop socially and emotionally.