

# Parent Handbook

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2018-2019



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## WELCOME TO:

# Northdale Lutheran School

Dear Parents,

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you and your children to Northdale Lutheran School! More and more families in the Tampa community are entrusting their children to our teachers at NLS. Our student population, like the Tampa community, is increasingly more diverse as we grow as a school. This brings us joy as we look forward to the day when believers of every nation, tribe, people and language stand before the throne of God in heaven (Revelation 7:9). Every effort of our school is focused towards strengthening our students for this life and that life to come.

We appreciate the confidence you have shown in allowing us to train your children. We eagerly look forward to partnering with you in educating and enlightening the next generation of young leaders.

The administration, teachers, and staff of NLS value excellence in education, and we hold ourselves accountable for a thorough education of the whole child – mind, body, and spirit. Every aspect of our school conveys dedication to excellence: a safe, structured, and nurturing learning environment, a desirable student-to-teacher ratio, and well-maintained and expanding facilities, just to name a few.

We trust that this handbook will help you better understand our program of quality Christian education at Northdale. We encourage you to carefully read and discuss it with your children and welcome the opportunity to answer any questions.

May God bless our continuing efforts with another outstanding year of educating the mind, and enlightening the heart!

In Christ's service,

Mr. Dane Mattes  
Principal

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## A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

Northdale Lutheran School is a member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). WELS has a rich tradition of academic excellence in its preschool through grade 12 school system. The WELS has operated highly regarded schools across the United States, the Caribbean, and elsewhere in the world for over 150 years. Currently WELS churches and associations operate 398 early childhood centers, 337 elementary schools, and 25 high schools across the nation.

Northdale Lutheran is part of one of the largest private school networks in America.

The Wisconsin Synod has provided excellent instructors to these schools by training its own teachers since 1884. Each of our teachers has a minimum of a Bachelor of Science in Education degree. Continuing education for our teachers is also a priority through participation various in-services, conferences, seminars, and classes. It is gratifying to report that, on average, students attending WELS schools annually tend to outperform their peers by a considerable margin on national achievement tests. We humbly thank God for His blessings upon our schools.

Northdale Lutheran is proud to continue this rich tradition of academic excellence in the Tampa community!

### **Accreditation**

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod School Accreditation (WELSSA) has established the standards for accrediting our school. These standards and the WELSSA Commission have been formally recognized and approved by the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA). NCPSA has established accreditation procedures to facilitate the appropriate application, review, and recognition of qualified and credible accrediting associations serving private schools.

Northdale Lutheran School has received exemplary accreditation. We have proven compliance with WELSSA's educational standards and are a member in good standing. Schools working toward accreditation must complete a comprehensive self-study, host a site visit team of educators outside the school every five years, and develop and implement a school improvement plan to maintain accreditation. The school files an annual report detailing their progress in meeting their goals and staying in compliance with the WELSSA standards.

Standards to be met include:

- 1) The School's Mission and Implementation
- 2) The School's Relationship with the Congregation
- 3) The School's Relationship with the Home
- 4) The School's Relationship with Students
- 5) The School's Relationship with the Community
- 6) The School's Relationship with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
- 7) The School's Plan for Enrolling Students
- 8) School Climate
- 9) School Governance & Administration
- 10) Professional Personnel (Faculty and Support Staff)
- 11) Curriculum
- 12) Instruction
- 13) Student Services
- 14) Physical Facilities
- 15) Information Management

Northdale Lutheran School was awarded five-year full accreditation in 2011 and again in 2016. The annual School Improvement Plan is available on request from the school office.

## STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

On the basis of race, color, sex, national and ethnic origin, no student will be denied the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available at Northdale Lutheran School. This school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational and admissions policies, scholarships and loans, athletics, and other school-administered programs.

## PHILOSOPHY

### **A Christian School...**

Northdale Lutheran School is dedicated to providing excellence in education for all its students. Our degreed teachers are committed to achieving this excellence by maintaining high academic standards; a safe, disciplined, nurturing environment; and pro-active home-school communication.

In cooperation with our parents, NLS will provide the knowledge and experience students need to become responsible and caring family members who will be productive citizens and leaders in the multicultural and technological society of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

NLS offers a comprehensive and varied curriculum, with all subjects being taught from a distinctively Christian perspective. This challenging curriculum is designed with flexibility to meet the needs of each student as it encourages exploration, critical thinking, problem solving, and sound study habits. The ultimate goal is to cultivate and maximize each student's unique talents and abilities so he/she will be well equipped to serve as a valuable member of today's society.

Our educational philosophy maintains that each child progresses at an appropriate academic level. To that end our objective is to maintain class sizes of approximately ten students per grade level. The dedication and energy of our teachers ensures that no child left behind or falls through the cracks.

At NLS each child's individual interests are encouraged and rewarded. Our teachers tailor their teaching to challenge each student, not to a class average. The diverse learning environment at NLS affords its students the opportunity to grow as scholars, musicians, artists, athletes, leaders, citizens – and most certainly as Christians – all to God's glory.

### **Dedicated to Excellence...**

Faith... wisdom... confidence... perseverance... joy... strength of character – such are the inner qualities gleaned from an education that touches not only the mind, but also the heart. NLS is dedicated to enlightening the hearts of its children.

Our commitment, parents, is to assist you in your God-given responsibility to "...bring up children in the training and instruction of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4) Christian education is Christ-centered education. The Savior and His love for us are at the heart of all we think, do, and say. Parents and teachers alike have confidence in the Lord's command and promise which says, "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." (Proverbs 22:6)

Northdale Lutheran School is a place where children learn to fold their hands and bow their heads and talk to God. It's a place where the Bible serves as the framework for absolute guidance and truth. It's a place where love for God and His Word are instilled and nurtured in our precious children. It's a place to learn Bible stories and apply them to everyday life. It's a place to mold and shape the hearts and minds of impressionable children for a life of faith. In short, NLS is a place where children grow in their relationship with the Lord on their journey toward Christian maturity.

## **School Establishment and Governance**

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Northdale Lutheran School began in August of 2000, and presently serves students in kindergarten through eighth grade. It is maintained and supported by Northdale Lutheran Church, a member congregation of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). Control and supervision of the school is exercised by the voting membership of Northdale Lutheran Church through its Ministry Leadership Team (MLT) and the appointed School Ministry Board (SMB).

## **MISSION/VISION/OBJECTIVES STATEMENTS**

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### **Mission**

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Northdale Lutheran School exists to assist families by providing an excellent education in a safe, Christian environment.

### **Vision**

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- 1) It is our vision that families will grow spiritually as they are connected with God's Word.
- 2) We also envision the educational growth of our students in preparation for levels of higher education.
- 3) Finally we envision that with God's blessings we will see growth in Church membership, school enrollment, and the continuance of quality education.

### **Objectives**

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The Christian education program of Northdale Lutheran School strives to provide for the complete educational welfare of each child, and to guide him or her in the maximum development of his or her spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical abilities. Parents and teachers must work together in their common goal of training God's children to walk in His ways. The objectives of the school are as follows:

- To provide daily opportunity to each child to grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior through the diligent teaching of God's Word.
- To provide the best possible environment to nurture the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical development of each student.
- To provide for the spiritual and earthly welfare of the child by means of complete Scriptural education, as well as teaching all secular subjects from the Christian viewpoint.
- To teach children to faithfully use their time, talents, and treasures to glorify God, and to provide opportunities for service in a setting of Christian fellowship.
- To offer assistance in Christian parenting for all families.
- To equip children with the Word to carry out their God-given responsibility to make disciples of all nations.
- To recognize individual differences among students and provide a stimulating learning environment in which they may grow according to their God-given ability.
- To recognize the students' emotional needs and to help them recognize their worth in Christ.
- To set a clearly defined Code of Conduct and teach all students respect for rules and for the rights of others as God's Word directs us.
- To encourage continued parental involvement in the school's affairs in order to fulfill its objectives.

## FACULTY & STAFF LIST

### *Administration:*

Principal Dane Mattes  
Pastor Charles Vannieuwenhoven  
School Ministry Board Member Nick Koren (Chairman)  
School Ministry Board Member David Mosakowski (Secretary)  
School Ministry Board Member Jim Smith

### *Teachers:*

Lynn Marggraf (Kindergarten & 1st Grade)  
Aimee Hardman (Grades 2-3)  
Christopher Haring (Grade 4)  
Amy Vannieuwenhoven (Grades 5-6)  
Dane Mattes (Grades 7-8)  
Pastor Charles Vannieuwenhoven (Catechism, Grades 7-8)

### *Support Staff:*

Jean Roate (office support, aide, tutor, after school care)

### *Volunteers:*

At Northdale we seek to develop and maintain a thriving volunteer community. We thank our volunteers for their many and varied services to Northdale Lutheran School. Their work is often done behind-the-scenes and without recognition. They are a blessing to this ministry.

## CURRICULUM

The curriculum at Northdale Lutheran School seeks to educate the mind and enlighten the heart through the timeless truths of God's Word. Northdale's curricular framework is balanced and comprehensive. Its design promotes cognitive growth in all of its objectives, activities, strategies, and resources. The curriculum takes into account the wide range of cultural backgrounds and learning styles of its students, offering flexibility to remediate the struggling student while at the same time enriching the gifted learner. The Northdale Lutheran student will be fully equipped with the tools needed to succeed in and out of the classroom.

### **Religion**

The key component of Northdale's religion curriculum is the ChristLight series, which presents both Old and New Testament Bible stories in an exciting, colorful, and memorable way. Each lesson has a key truth that is meaningfully discussed and applied to the children's lives. This comprehensive curriculum gives students a strongly-rooted foundation in God's Word, equipping them to live as children of God. Memorization skills are enhanced as students commit Bible passages to memory. Every Wednesday morning the students gather for a brief chapel service in the church. Parents and friends are invited to join the students for this devotion. The devotions will include the collection of offerings for our school mission projects. During Advent (December) and Lent (March/April), the chapel services are conducted in a more formal worship service where members of Northdale Lutheran Church are also in attendance.

## **Language Arts**

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A clear understanding of the English language is imperative for success in all areas of the curriculum and everyday life. Northdale's language arts curriculum accomplishes this through its integration of reading, phonics programs, writing, spelling, grammar, and oral expression in a sequential and developmentally appropriate order.

### *Reading:*

Students develop a love for reading through phonics-based instruction that incorporates thematic units of high quality literature, poetry, short stories, and plays. The curriculum emphasizes listening and comprehension skills, while developing the ability to read critically. Each classroom has its own selection of age-appropriate literature along with the larger school library.

### *Writing:*

Students are taught to be proficient writers in a step-by-step composition process that includes phrases, sentences, paragraphs, reports, letters, poetry, journals, and short stories. Grammar is taught and stressed in all writing lessons. Students are encouraged to exercise their free expression and creativity.

### *Spelling:*

The spelling component of the curriculum develops the sound/spelling connection in language, provides dictation practice, and incorporates and reviews vocabulary words in weekly units.

### *Oral Expression:*

Students develop public speaking skills through experiences in show-and-tell, oral reports, and class presentations.

## **Mathematics**

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A thorough mathematics curriculum is critical for success in our ever-changing world. The traditional math approach at NLS gives students a firm foundation in computation, math concepts, problem solving strategies, and data interpretation. This foundation is constructed through daily instruction and review in a cumulative manner. Our teachers incorporate hands-on instructional strategies when appropriate through the use of manipulatives and real life applications to build mathematical knowledge.

## **Technology**

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The development and use of modern technology continues to evolve and shape our lives. In order to gain proficiency in this technological age, technology education at NLS begins in kindergarten. Students are given the opportunity to develop familiarity with the physical structure and operation of various forms of personal computing devices to supplement cognitive growth. Each classroom is equipped with high-speed Internet access for use together with technology devices (tablets, Chromebooks, and/or desktop computers). Technology is integrated into teacher instruction and student learning in a way that enhances educational learning opportunities.

## **Science**

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The science curriculum at NLS leads children to a greater appreciation of the awe-inspiring world in which they live. By means of textbook investigation, hands-on experimentation, special group projects, and technology-aided presentations, students discover various aspects of physical, earth, and life science. Special emphasis is placed on developing skills such as observing, comparing, hypothesizing, predicting, measuring, testing, and interpreting.

## **Social Studies**

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The scope of study in Northdale's social studies curriculum includes exposure to a variety of social science disciplines: world cultures, values and customs, history, geography, sociology, current events, economics, and civics. Instruction and activities in these areas are structured to help young students develop skills such as critical

thinking, decision-making, cause-and-effect relationships, and reading charts, maps, and graphs. This curriculum aspires to give students the necessary tools to be active, well-adjusted citizens and leaders in today's world.

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### **Music**

Northdale's music program contains the integrated components of music theory, voice development, and music appreciation. Basic elements such as notation, rhythm, and music terminology prepare the children to read music and explore musical instruments. Students practice note reading and rhythmic exercises through the use of recorders, boomwhackers, xylophones, drums, and other percussion instruments. Vocal skills are developed through pitch exploration, ear training, and daily classroom singing. Students are introduced to famous composers and some of their works. In an effort to showcase the musical talents and accomplishments of our young musicians, several public performances are planned through the year.

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### **Art**

Concepts such as line, shape, form, color, pattern, design, and composition are developed in an art curriculum that allows children to express their creativity and discover their talents. Young artists learn to value not only the product, but also the process. The children also enjoy exposure to well-known artists, their unique styles, and classical works. Other goals include development of fine-motor skills, improvement of hand-eye coordination, and experiences in collaborative learning. Student art work is displayed in classrooms and hallways as part of an on-going art fair.

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### **Physical Education**

The goals of Northdale's physical education program include: instruction in the rules, skills, and strategies of team and individual sports; physical fitness and cardiovascular development; practical experiences in leadership, teamwork, and sportsmanship; and development of a positive self-image in a safe, structured environment. Expectations include participation in all games and activities, respect for peers and instructors, proper care of equipment, and cooperation. The PE program is designed to enable each child to achieve success while developing an interest in life-long physical activity. Participation in PE for students with medical problems or physical limitations will be modified as needed.

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## **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

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### **Individual Music Lessons**

Individual piano lessons are offered by one of our teachers. The cost for this service is \$22 for each 30-minute lesson, and the payment will be made directly with the teacher. For more details, please contact Miss Marggraf at the school (813-961-9195 or [lynn.marggraf@northdalelutheran.org](mailto:lynn.marggraf@northdalelutheran.org)).

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### **Theater Program**

Students with an interest in acting have a variety of opportunities within the theater program to develop their talents both on and off the stage. Our annual spring musical production by grades K-8 is the centerpiece of the theater program. Whether it is acting, singing, dancing, or working behind the scenes, young performers will reap many benefits from their involvement in theater while at the same time delighting appreciative audiences.

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### **Athletics**

In our athletic program, our coaches encourage students to develop personal commitment, teamwork, and good sportsmanship. Northdale Lutheran offers organized after school athletic programs including flag football, basketball, soccer, and track and field to help young, aspiring athletes learn the rules and develop their skills. Active participation in athletics strengthens friendships, enhances team building skills, improves coordination and strength, and promotes physical well-being. The children ultimately learn to view sports competition as both fun and rewarding. Dates and times are released seasonally. As Northdale grows and expands, the athletic program will also grow, thereby offering additional sports in years to come.

## **After School Clubs**

As our school grows we seek to provide additional opportunities for all students to develop their interests and use their God-given talents. We are eager to explore additional opportunities for after school clubs that will allow students to do so. After School Club programs are approved on a case by case basis by the principal.

## **FACULTY**

The dedication, professionalism, and training of any school's faculty are determining factors in assessing the degree of excellence of that educational institution. In order to facilitate the exceptional academic quality for which NLS was established, Northdale's classroom teachers possess at minimum a Bachelor of Science in Education degree and are required to maintain or pursue state and WELS certification. Additionally, in order to ensure staff expertise in a broad sphere of disciplines, teachers are encouraged to earn advanced specialist degrees in areas of interest, attend professional development seminars and workshops, or seek enrollment in a post-graduate program at an accredited university.

## **LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

Respect and educational purpose characterize the classroom environment at Northdale. The NLS code of conduct promotes responsibility, respect, civility, and academic excellence in a safe learning and teaching environment. This learning atmosphere is relaxed but orderly – a place where instruction can take place and the joy of academic accomplishment can be experienced. In maintaining structured, disciplined classrooms, the teacher provide an educational setting where children can focus more readily, apply themselves better, and realize greater success in their quest to learn.

## **DISCIPLINE**

In keeping with Northdale's mission to develop Christian character and instill self-discipline, faculty and staff members strive to clearly communicate all school rules and classroom guidelines regarding student conduct. These rules and guidelines are shared with the parents at the start of the school year. Conformity to these rules is expected at all times, whether in the classroom, on the playground, or elsewhere on the school campus. Students are expected to follow these rules out of love for God, respect for their teachers, and consideration for their fellow students.

The staff assumes the role of parent when the children are left under their care each day. The principal and teachers use their discretion whenever discipline is deemed necessary. Parents can rest assured that all discipline is carried out in the spirit of Christian love by teachers who genuinely care about each child. Discipline comes from the word "disciple" – to teach. Discipline is our way of teaching children to make proper choices. Discipline, then, is viewed not as punishment, but loving correction. No form of physical, corporal, or emotionally abusive disciplinary measures are used at any time.

Discipline is administered for the following unacceptable behaviors and may lead to suspension, confiscation of material, and/or other disciplinary action:

- Being disrespectful, rude, or disobedient to school personnel
- Using inappropriate, vulgar, or obscene language
- Stealing or possessing items not belonging to you
- Violation of dress code
- Failing to complete assigned school work
- Tardiness (5 or more per quarter)

*Detentions are to be served on Friday of each week from 3:15-4:00pm. Please note that students not picked up at 4:00pm will be signed into the After School Care Program. In addition, detentions take precedence over any extra-curricular activities.*

- Cheating on tests or homework
- Harassment of fellow students
- Vandalizing/defacing school property (parents will be financially liable)
- Leaving class/school without permission
- Skipping class
- Being out of class without permission
- Attitude and examples which are detrimental to the welfare of other students
- Gambling
- False pulling of fire alarms (fee may be incurred)
- Possession of water pistols, toy guns, knives, radios, electronic games, iPads, cell phones, or any other electronic equipment, or possession of illicit substances. (Cell phones or other devices brought to school should be given to the teacher for safe keeping at the beginning of the day.)

### **Disciplinary Procedures**

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In the event that a student fails to observe the NLS Student Conduct and Discipline Policy, a discipline process is initiated as follows:

1. The infraction is brought to the student's attention.
2. The incident is documented by the teacher.
3. By means of personal counseling, the teacher and student work together to achieve resolution. This may result temporarily in extra duties or the loss of privileges for the student. Whenever consequences are administered, they will be consistent, logical, and motivated by love for the child.
4. Parents may receive a phone call, hand-written note, or email message from the teacher indicating concern for the student's behavior and inviting parental involvement.
5. Ongoing infractions may result in student conferences with the principal and/or pastor.
6. A teacher or administrator may request a parent conference in which behavioral issues are identified and solutions are discussed.
7. A student can be placed on probation for repeated violations. The student will remain on probation until the next marking period.
8. A student may be suspended for continued violation of school rules. The types and quantities of violations are taken into consideration. A suspension may be 1-5 days and may be served at home or in the school as directed by the administration.
9. If a student persists in his/her lack of cooperation as indicated by an unwilling spirit, rebellious behavior, or unacceptable attitude, the parents will be asked to withdraw the child.

Parents with questions or concerns about disciplinary actions should address them to the principal. The principal will then decide on the proper course of action; whether that is through counseling, scheduling a meeting with the teacher, or a referral for other counseling or therapy services.

As disciplinary situations arise, we will approach our concerns with prayer and Christian love, always seeking to arrive at peaceful and proper solutions that are in the best interests of the child.

Disciplinary procedures for unacceptable/inappropriate behavior by students may include, but are not limited to:

#### **Classroom teachers may discipline by:**

- Warning/counseling
- Time out
- Loss of privileges
- Recess or lunch detention
- After school detention
- Referring students to administration

**Students referred to administration may be disciplined by:**

- Warning/counseling
- Detention
- Parent conferences
- Action taken will be based on the severity of the offense and in accordance with the physical development of the student involved. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - In-school suspension
  - Out-of-school suspension
  - Probation
  - Loss of privilege to take part in extra-curricular activities
  - Legal action (court)
  - Recommendation for alternative school

**Bullying**

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*Definition:*

An imbalance of power: Children who bully use their power – such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity – to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people. This behavior is repeated consistently over a period of time. (Bullying is malicious behavior and involves more than joking behavior between friends or a child with a strong personality.)

*Repetition:*

Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying may involve but is not limited to: name-calling, slurs, rumors, jokes, false accusations, intimidation, stalking, innuendos, demeaning comments, pranks, social isolation, gestures, cyber-bullying or other verbal or written conduct. Cyber-bullying includes the following misuses of technology: teasing, intimidating, or making false accusations about another student by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital images, or website postings (including blogs and social network sites). This definition includes students who either directly engage in an act of bullying or who, by their behavior, support another student's act of bullying.

This policy prohibits bullying that occurs either:

- On school premises before, during, or after school hours;
- On any vehicle used as part of any school activity; or
- During any school function, extracurricular activity or other school-sponsored event or activity.

*Reporting Complaints:*

Each student and parent has a duty to report any bullying to the school immediately. If a student experiences (or a parent witnesses or learns of) any incident of bullying, the incident must be promptly reported to the principal, pastor, or faculty member.

*Disciplinary Action:*

Any student found to have violated this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include: temporary removal from the classroom, loss of privileges, detention, counseling, parent conference, suspension, expulsion, and/or notification to the appropriate authorities. This disciplinary action may be unique to the individual incident and may vary in method and severity based on the discretion of the administration.

False reports or accusations of bullying also constitute a violation of this policy and may subject the offending party to appropriate disciplinary action.

### **Anti-Harassment Policy**

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Northdale Lutheran School is committed to providing a positive and productive learning environment free from sexual or racial harassment. Sexual or racial harassment shall not be tolerated in the school. Harassment of students by employees, other students, or others having business or other contact with the school is strictly prohibited.

All forms of harassment are prohibited at school, on school property, and at all school-sponsored programs or events. Harassment may result from verbal or physical conduct or written or graphic material. Harassment may include, but is not limited to: verbal harassment or abuse; pressure for sexual activity; repeated remarks to a person with sexual, discriminating, or demeaning implications; unwelcome touching; or suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning a student's grades, participating in extracurricular activities, etc.

All victims of harassment and witnesses of such harassment are encouraged to report the incident immediately. Reports should be made to the principal, pastor, or faculty member. An investigation by the principal is required in order to resolve the problem. If a person's alleged behavior is found to be harassment, that person will be subject to discipline under the employee or student code of conduct.

### **After-School Detention**

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It is important for students to accept responsibility for their actions. The purpose of after school detention is to correct minor behavior problems. Detention notices are given to the students to take home to their parents. We realize that students may unwillingly misplace or forget to take the notice home, so we will make reasonable efforts in following up with a phone call.

In looking at a student's past behavior and facts of an incident, the principal may assign a different penalty. The number of days of detention will increase for repeated offenses. The principal, after consultation with the teacher, has the final decision for disciplinary action. School community services may be substituted for detention in some instances.

Detention will be assigned for the following infractions – as deemed necessary:

1. Habitual refusal or failure to do homework.
2. Habitual refusal or failure to do classwork.
3. Infractions of the teacher's code of conduct and classroom policy.
4. Excessive tardiness.
5. Failure to abide by school policies and procedures (dress code, etc.)
6. Detentions will typically be served on Friday afternoons from 3:15-4:00pm.

### **Disciplinary Probation**

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Under certain circumstances, a student's behavior may warrant a more severe disciplinary intervention. Probation is intended to serve as a formal and serious warning to the student and his/her parents. During the probationary period the student must be all the more intent upon improving his conduct. It is also a period during which a student violating school rules is subject to further disciplinary action. At the discretion of the principal, probationary status may include one or more sanctions such as restriction of participation in school activities and/or other privileges.

*Conditions:*

- A student can be placed on probation for repeated violations of school rules.
- Student progress will be reviewed periodically.
- Disciplinary probation can be started at any time during the school year.

- Parent cooperation is expected in monitoring concerns.
- Duration of the probationary status will be a minimum of one marking period.
- Both student and parents must meet school requirements.
- Student failure to improve conduct may result in a recommendation for alternative schooling.

### **Suspension and Expulsion Policy**

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In-School Suspension (ISS) – The principal may institute an ISS for discipline purposes. The student will be placed in a physical setting where there will be appropriate supervision by a designated person. Any disruption by the student in this setting will result in the student being sent home.

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) – The principal may suspend any student from attendance at school or any school-related activity on or off campus or from attendance at a specified class or classes.

The final authority to expel a student from Northdale Lutheran School rests with the School Ministry Board.

### **Documentation**

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The school will use the approved form to document discipline occurrences. Parents will be notified of such cases. In extreme cases, a student may face suspension or expulsion at the discretion of the principal in consultation with the School Ministry Board. All such forms become part of a student’s permanent file.

### **Categories of Offenses**

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3<sup>rd</sup> Level Offenses (Zero Tolerance): The School Ministry Board has established a zero-tolerance policy for serious offenses involving or related to the following:

- 1) Drugs
- 2) Alcohol
- 3) Assault (defined as a physical attack with the intent to inflict physical harm)
- 4) Bomb threats
- 5) Destruction of school property
- 6) False fire alarms
- 7) Possession of any type of weapons
- 8) Any other offenses as determined by the principal

The consequences of the above violations will result in immediate parent notification followed by mandatory out-of-school suspension (defined as a period of time the student must remain away from school) or expulsion from Northdale Lutheran School. Final determination for an expulsion from Northdale Lutheran School is given by the School Ministry Board.

2<sup>nd</sup> Level Offenses: Major offenses that are serious acts of misconduct, which include but are not limited to the following:

- 1) Misuse of school property
- 2) Disorderly conduct
- 3) Defiance, disrespect or profanity directed at a NLS teacher, employee, or student
- 4) Fighting, aggressive behavior (defined as physical aggression that leads to harm)
- 5) Physical mischief
- 6) Theft
- 7) Plagiarism or Collusion
- 8) Pattern of continuous disruptive behavior
- 9) Academic dishonesty
- 10) Any other offenses as determined by the principal

The above violations will result in parent notification and mandatory in-school suspension (defined as a period of time the student will be removed from the classroom and placed in a designated detention area) or out-of-school suspension (defined as a period of time student must remain away from school).

1<sup>st</sup> Level Offenses: Other acts of misconduct that interfere with orderly classroom procedures, school functions, extracurricular programs, approved transportation, or a student's own learning process will be subject to a range of consequences determined by the classroom teacher. When 1<sup>st</sup> Level Offenses become habitual, the behavior becomes "Disorderly Conduct" as found under 2<sup>nd</sup> Level Offenses.

Students may be disciplined for engaging in other objectionable conduct even if the conduct is not outlined above.

### **Plagiarism and Collusion**

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Plagiarism may be defined as the appropriation of passages, either word for word, or in substance, from the writings of another and the incorporation of those passages as one's own written work offered for credit. It is always assumed that the written work offered for credit is the student's own unless proper credit is given to the original author by the use of quotation marks, proper citations, or other explanatory inserts. The copying of reports and homework, or the unchanged use of essential ideas or conclusions of such work, as well as improperly cited use of other themes, books, or pamphlets are all examples of plagiarism.

Collusion may be defined as collaboration with another person in the preparation or editing of notes, themes, reports, or other written work offered for credit unless the instructor specifically approves such collaboration in advance. Examples of collusion include extensive use of another's ideas for preparing a creative assignment and undue assistance in the preparation or editing of written materials.

Charges of plagiarism and collusion are considered serious disciplinary offenses.

## **ADDRESSING CONCERNS**

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### **Appropriate Procedure for Parent or Student Concerns**

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Northdale Lutheran School's administration, teachers, and school staff work very hard to maintain an environment that nurtures academic excellence for our students. Differences of opinion need not create a divisive relationship between school and home. For the sake of the children, there is a mutual benefit if these differences can be resolved through communication and understanding.

To work towards this common goal, the following procedure is used to resolve issues and concerns (in keeping with directives from God's Word found in Matthew chapter 18).

- Maintain a calm and respectful attitude that will set a tone where real listening can occur and understanding can emerge.
- Step 1: The first attempt to deal with a concern related to a classroom situation should be between the student and the teacher. Please encourage your student to speak to the teacher before or after school, or during other available times, to resolve a concern.
- Step 2: Parents or students with grievances or concerns regarding general school policies or procedures should set up a meeting with the principal to discuss these items of concern. The administration will then decide on the proper course of action; whether that is through counseling, scheduling a meeting with a teacher, or referral to other therapy or counseling services. Concern's regarding your child's academic performance should be brought to his/her classroom teacher through a scheduled appointment.
- Step 3: If the matter is between the home and the principal, a conference with the principal is the appropriate starting point. If satisfaction is not accomplished, then the matter may then be referred to the School Ministry Board.

### **Addressing Concerns to the School Ministry Board**

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When issues or concerns about the operation or policies of the school arise, and you have not received a satisfactory resolution after following the steps listed above, we ask that you inform the principal of your desire to

meet with the School Ministry Board. Arrangements for a meeting with the board chairman will be made in as timely a fashion as possible.

## **HOME - SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

NLS desires to build a culture where parents and teachers join hands as partners in providing the finest education possible for the young people entrusted to our care. To that end, the staff of NLS is truly committed to maintaining open channels of communication with the parents and/or guardians of our students. The following list outlines some of the important avenues designed to promote efficient and effective home-school communication.

### **Teacher Home Visits**

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Teacher home visits occur in the weeks prior to the start of the school year. The purpose of the home visit is to help teachers, parents, and students develop relationships with one another and present classroom procedures and goals. Home visits are conducted for all children except those who may remain with the same core teacher for a second year in a row. The principal attends the home visit when possible for all families new to Northdale Lutheran School.

### **Parent Orientation Night**

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In August, parents are expected to meet with the principal and teachers at a Parent Orientation to discuss the school's philosophy, policies, and procedures. Classroom visitation and a question-answer session provide parents with helpful insights and information they will need for a successful school year.

### **Student Progress Reports**

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Parents are encouraged to check in regularly with their child's teacher regarding academic and behavioral progress. On request, a written progress report document will be provided to the parent at the midterm of each quarter.

### **Parent-Teacher Consultations**

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Mandatory Parent-Teacher Consultations will take place at the midpoint of the first and third quarters. These consultations are 20-minute sessions and include discussion of the child's academic progress, attitude, behavior, and interaction with students and school staff.

### **Teacher Availability**

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If at any time during the school year parents have questions concerning their child's progress or behavior, they are encouraged to contact the teacher and arrange a mutually convenient time to meet. The teachers will make every effort to return your contact no later than the following day.

### **Classroom Visitation**

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Parents are welcome to visit their child's classroom with the approval of the classroom teacher. We will do our best to honor these requests, but parents are asked to recognize that it may not always be possible. Parents may also participate in field trips and other special school-sponsored events.

### **Volunteering**

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Parents are encouraged to take an active role in volunteering at Northdale Lutheran. Parents have the opportunity to sign-up to assist in and out of the classrooms. Please contact the principal or your child's teacher if interested.

Each volunteer is required by Florida law (SB 1712) to have taken a training course in Ethical Student Conduct. Northdale Lutheran School uses a program entitled *Protect My Ministry* which includes a background check component in compliance with this state law. All volunteers are required to complete the background check (updated every three years) and Child Safety Training course (updated every three years) before any volunteer activity can begin.

### **The Hurricane Watch & Weekly Teacher News**

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The Hurricane Watch is Northdale's way of keeping parents informed. This weekly newsletter is delivered electronically via email. Parents are encouraged to read it in order to stay informed about scheduled events, upcoming activities, and other informative news. Educational news items, parenting tips, and highlights of student work are also included.

Each teacher sends home a weekly update (included with The Hurricane Watch) that informs parents of curriculum units being introduced, projects students are working on, areas of school work where parents can assist their children, and/or upcoming events. Additionally, student work is saved and sent home at the time specified by your child's teacher, so that parents are aware of their child's overall performance. Parent comments or questions are always welcomed.

### **Website**

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The school website ([www.northdalelutheran.org/school](http://www.northdalelutheran.org/school)) contains helpful information for both current and prospective families. Parents are encouraged to become familiar with the website.

### **Bible Teachings Course for Parents/Guardians**

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All parents and/or guardians are invited and encouraged to attend a basic Bible teachings course conducted by the pastor. The class is held in the evening (weekly sessions) during the fall and spring.

## **ADMISSIONS GUIDELINES**

Northdale Lutheran School is open to all children in the community. Occasionally students may have special needs that the school is unable to meet in an acceptable way. In such cases the school will assist a family in finding alternate education solutions for their child. Children should be five years of age by September 1 to be considered eligible for kindergarten. Exceptions to the September 1 deadline may be considered on a case by case basis. Northdale Lutheran practices a non-discrimination enrollment policy.

In order for a student to be admitted to Northdale Lutheran School, the following must take place:

- Parents submit the Northdale Lutheran School Application form.
- The principal arranges a meeting with the parents to explain Northdale's education program/student expectations.
- Previous progress reports, school records, standardized test results, and any applicable special education documentation are submitted by the parents for review.
- The Student Recommendation Form will be completed and submitted to the school.

Results of these combined evaluations determine eligibility. Upon acceptance, parents complete the Enrollment form and registration fee along with submitting their child's updated immunization, health examination records, and a copy of the child's birth certificate.

Because Northdale Lutheran School maintains high standards and expectations, re-enrollment in succeeding years is based on student achievement, attitude, and parental support.

### **Enrollment/Re-enrollment**

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Enrollment (registration) is held each spring and summer to complete all necessary paperwork and agreements for the upcoming school year. Registration is conducted online. Families without online access or the ability to print any necessary documents may request assistance from the school. Registration must be completed prior to the start of the school year.

## **Probationary Enrollment**

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Northdale Lutheran School believes a positive and constructive working relationship between the school and a student's parents/guardian is essential to the accomplishment of the school's spiritual and educational mission. The school accordingly reserves the right to enroll new students on a probationary period to ensure compatibility and agreement with the school's purpose. This probationary period applies for all new students and is outlined as follows:

- A mandatory parent-teacher conference will take place around the midpoint of the first quarter. The purpose will be to assess how things are going and what steps may need to be taken for the student to continue enrollment at Northdale Lutheran School. A plan of action with an acceptable timeline will be established for these steps to be completed. In most cases we expect that things will be going well and no adjustments will be necessary.
- Another mandatory parent-teacher consultation will be held as a follow-up to the established plan and timeline. The student's enrollment status will once again be reviewed, and a determination will be made of whether Northdale Lutheran School is an appropriate educational setting for the child. The School Ministry Board holds final authority over the decision to dismiss a student. If dismissal from the school is deemed to be the best course of action, Northdale Lutheran School will support the family in finding another educational placement.

## **McKay Scholarship**

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The McKay Scholarship allows Florida families to have a choice in the education of their child. Children qualify for the McKay Scholarship by displaying an educational or physical disability. McKay Scholarship students are given a Matrix Number (504, 251, 252, 253, etc...) with the severity of the disability increasing with the Matrix Number.

Northdale Lutheran School accepts students with the McKay Scholarship with certain restrictions:

- 1) Typically only students with Matrix Numbers of 504, 251, 252, or 253 will be considered.
- 2) The school principal must receive a copy of the student's IEP or 504 plan.
- 3) The principal, appropriate classroom teacher, and SMB will meet to determine if/how we can accommodate the recommendations on the student's IEP. Any resources needed may result in additional fees for the family.
- 4) The principal will meet with the prospective family and discuss the decision of the SMB.
- 5) If accepted, the family and principal will work in conjunction to arrange for any outside resources (i.e. Hillsborough County ESE, Therakids therapy services).
- 6) In some cases, the McKay Scholarship surpasses the amount of tuition and fee costs of Northdale Lutheran School. The school implements private or small group tutors who work directly with McKay Scholarship students. All the excess funds are used to meet the cost of the tutoring services.
- 7) In some cases, the McKay scholarship does not cover the full tuition of Northdale Lutheran School. Families are responsible for the remaining balance.

Parents/Guardians of McKay Scholarship students are required to sign over quarterly McKay Scholarship payment checks to the school. The Principal will notify the families of when to come in to the school office for their signature.

## **Step Up for Students**

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Step Up for Students offers two scholarship programs – an income-based program and a special needs program known as the Gardiner Scholarship. Northdale Lutheran School accepts families receiving either scholarship. Families are required to annually submit renewal paperwork to Step Up for Students.

Parents/Guardians of Step Up for Students income-based scholarship students are required to sign over quarterly Step Up for Students scholarship payment checks to the school. The Principal will notify the families of when to come in to the school office for their signature.

Students receiving the special needs Gardiner Scholarship will be invoiced quarterly for tuition and fees. Gardiner Scholarship students will be treated similarly to McKay Scholarship students in terms of additional services required to accommodate special needs.

## **TUITION & FEES**

Northdale Lutheran School is a non-profit organization. It is not our intention or policy to realize financial gain from our institution. Our tuition fees are needed to maintain our facilities and offer the level of educational excellence (low student-teacher ratios, well-maintained facilities, current equipment and resources) that is part of our philosophy of education.

Specific information pertaining to registration, tuition, and other fees and schedules is established yearly and included in the enrollment package. General guidelines are as follows:

- A registration fee is paid at the time of enrollment to secure your child's placement. This fee helps cover the cost of classroom materials and textbook expenses. It does not cover the costs of field trips, hot lunches, uniforms, athletic fees, or technology fees.
- Before the start of the school year, a signed tuition contract is required by parents and/or legal guardians.
- Three tuition payment plans are available: annually, bi-annually, or monthly. Any tuition bill less than \$1,000 is due by September 25. Exceptions will be handled on a case by case basis.
- A third-party tuition management system called TADS is used for collection of tuition and other payments. All families will be set up for automatic payment via bank account, debit, or credit card. Any family participating in a monthly payment plan will be charged a maintenance fee by TADS.
- All payments are non-refundable.
- Tuition payments are due the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month.

The procedure for delinquent accounts is as follows:

- Current delinquency – Contact will be made with the family by the principal to arrange immediate payment.
- 30-day delinquency – Contact will be made with the family by the principal to arrange a conference with the SMB to discuss payment.
- 60-day delinquency – Student(s) is/are placed on probation until payment is made.

Should a student withdraw from Northdale Lutheran, we will not release any records for that student until all payments have been made in full.

Northdale Lutheran will not enroll any students for the current year until all balances from the previous year have been paid in full. Exceptions may be allowed in extreme cases, but these will very much be the exception rather than the rule. We have the expectation that all tuition will be paid in the current school year.

## **ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL**

- Northdale Lutheran School office hours are from 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM.
- Classes begin promptly each day at 8:00am and conclude at 3:00 PM.
- Parents are asked to use the designated drop-off/pick-up area in the front of the school (or church for kindergarten students' morning drop off).
- Parents may park and walk up to the school and/or classrooms to drop off or pick up their child(ren). Individuals entering the building at any time are asked to be respectful of the needs of students and teachers as they may be preparing for the school day or engaging in other educational activities.
- Classroom doors open each morning at 7:30 AM.

- At the end of the school day, under teacher supervision, students will be waiting to be picked up at designated areas beginning at 3:00 PM.
- Students who are not picked up by 3:15 PM will be escorted to After School Care.
- Children will not be allowed to walk home from school without parent notification.
- NLS maintains a closed campus. Children may not leave the school grounds of their own volition at any time during the school day. School policy and the safety of our children dictate that the teachers know where the children are at all times.

Families may arrange for special situations where a community after-school program is utilized (Northdale Park, YMCA Youth and Family Center, etc...). The family may work with the principal to determine transportation solutions.

## ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is both a right and responsibility of the parent and student. NLS recognizes that consistent school attendance is essential for academic success and that all absences affect learning. Therefore, a comprehensive student attendance policy has been developed to meet the following objectives:

- To raise student achievement and close gaps in student performance
- To identify attendance patterns in order to design attendance improvement efforts
- To know the whereabouts of every student for safety and other reasons
- To verify that individual students are complying with education laws relating to compulsory attendance

According to Florida Law and Hillsborough County requirements, 17 full-day absences during the course of a school year will result in a mandatory review by the principal, classroom teacher, and School Ministry Board to determine possible repetition of the grade. Absences are no longer defined as “excused” or “unexcused.” Chronic illness and family emergencies that extend beyond the total number of absences allowed will be considered on an individual basis by the administration.

In the event of an illness or emergency arising during the school day, a student should proceed immediately to the office/lobby for assistance and permission to leave the school. It must be recognized that the school is responsible for the student’s whereabouts from the time he/she enters school until he/she departs and, unless otherwise notified, the school assumes the student is attending classes as scheduled.

### *Half-Day Absence:*

Students who arrive to school at 8:30 AM or later will be issued a half-day absence.

### *Full-Day Absence:*

Students leaving school before 12:00 noon or arrived to school after 12:00 noon are charged with a full-day absence.

Students must be in school the entire day to participate in extra-curricular activities. Exceptions are made for pre-approved scheduled appointments. Records of telephone calls or parent contacts pertaining to school attendance will be documented for future reference. Individual student attendance records will be maintained by classroom teachers and filed with the principal.

### **Reporting Absences**

The school office must be notified by telephone (813) 961-9195 no later than 8:30 AM if your child will be absent from school. When a student returns to school after an absence, he/she must bring a written note from the parent citing the reason for the absence.

### **Tardiness & Arriving Late**

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When a child arrives late to school in the morning, students should report to the office before going to class. Children who arrive late will be escorted to their rooms ten minutes into the school day so as not to disturb the classroom during opening devotion.

Students are expected to be on time and have transportation arrangements that will guarantee their punctuality.

- Students will serve an after school detention after every fifth tardy per quarter.
- Excessive tardiness (more than 10 in one quarter) will require a meeting with the administration, which could result in dismissal from school.

### **Leaving Early**

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Students leaving early must check out through the office. The office will call the student out of class when the parent arrives. Whenever possible, the school requests that every effort be made to schedule appointments during non-school hours or on days when school is not in session. Parents should seriously consider all of the educational, social, and psychological pros and cons of habitually removing their children from school early. (Please see policies above for half-day and full-day absences.)

### **Truancy**

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Any student who is absent from school without parent permission or school knowledge for more than three days in one year is a truant.

### **Make-Up Work**

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Teachers will require students to make up and receive a grade for tests and assignments missed during absences. Students have two days to make up work for every day of an absence. Students are required to make up work for all absences, trancies, or suspensions.

In general, teachers do not provide work in advance for planned absences. Exceptions may be made in certain situations.

We appreciate the support of our parents and guardians in helping our students achieve this goal.

### **Release of Students**

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- 1) Students are permitted to leave school only in custody of an individual listed on the student's *Pick Up Permission Form*.
- 2) At the end of the school day students are released at a specified time and place and are expected to go directly home. Parents/guardians must notify the school office regarding any change in the student's normal transportation.
- 3) Parents are expected to inform the school of an early release by calling the school office (813-961-9195).
- 4) Unless there are unusual circumstances, it is expected that the child will remain in school until the end of the school day.
- 5) Car riders should be picked up immediately at 3:00 PM in the school's designated area.

### **Church Attendance**

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The Bible says that faith comes from hearing God's Word (Romans 10:17). God's Word also instructs us to "not give up meeting together" (Hebrews 10:25). Knowing God's attitude towards hearing his Word, attending Church and Sunday School on a regular basis is a very important part of a child's spiritual growth and training. Church attendance is taken every week and is marked on the report cards for the sole purpose of encouraging one another as the Lord also instructs in Hebrews 10:25. Children are encouraged to attend Church and Sunday School regularly with their families.

Students attending Christian churches other than Northdale Lutheran Church are encouraged to attend their home church each Sunday. Attendance at other Christian churches is acceptable for recording church attendance.

## DRESS CODE

The Dress Code at Northdale Lutheran School was implemented to contribute to the health and safety of the student, to help foster a positive educational environment, and promote good school spirit.

### **Dress and Grooming**

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School Days and Out-of-School Events:

- Boys/girls must wear collared shirts of a solid blue color and must be tucked in.
- All sweatshirts (including hooded) worn in the classroom need to be of a solid blue color with no writing or design.
- On Fridays students have the option to wear a Northdale Lutheran School activity shirt. The activity shirt is a light blue t-shirt with the school name and logo. The activity shirts can also be worn on field trips or other events in place of the school uniform. Students are still required to wear school uniform bottoms on Fridays. Activity shirts can be purchased from the school office.
- Pants, shorts, or skirts must be tan or navy blue in color.
- Mini-skirts, mini-dresses, and short shorts are not permitted. Hemlines will be no shorter than mid-thigh.
- All pants, shorts, and skirts will be secured at the waist.
- Sweatpant and yoga-style materials are not acceptable for bottoms.
- Clothing that is torn or frayed will not be allowed.
- Shoes will be worn and be securely fastened to the feet. Crocs, thongs, flip-flops, shower shoes, skate shoes, or similar type shoes are unacceptable.
- Hair will be clean and neatly groomed. Any hair dye used should reflect naturally occurring hair color. The general appearance of a student should reflect neatness and good personal hygiene.
- Hats and other head coverings will not be worn in the building.
- No excessive jewelry. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings.

### **Uniform-Free Days**

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Occasionally the students will be allowed a Uniform-Free Day during which students will be allowed to wear something of their choosing in accordance with what is appropriate for a young Christian person.

- Spandex, stretch, yoga, or any excessively tight bottoms may not be worn as outer clothing.
- Mini-skirts, mini-dresses, and short shorts are not permitted. Hemlines will be no shorter than mid-thigh. Pants must be ankle length and not drag on the floor.
- Bottoms should not contain any large print wording on the backside.
- All pants, shorts, and skirts will be secured at the waist.
- Clothing that is torn or frayed will not be allowed.
- Skin tight clothing such as leggings are not acceptable without shorts worn over the top.
- Shoes will be worn and be securely fastened to the feet. Crocs, thongs, flip-flops, shower shoes, skate shoes, or similar type shoes are unacceptable.
- Hair will be clean and neatly groomed. Any hair dye used should reflect naturally occurring hair color. The general appearance of a student should reflect neatness and good personal hygiene.
- Hats and other head coverings will not be worn in the building.
- No excessive jewelry. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings.

The school reserves the right to use their discretion in judging the appropriateness of student dress, hairstyles, hair color, and jewelry.

### **Spirit Dress**

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Certain times throughout the year may be designated as school spirit days along with the annual school spirit week. During these times students may be allowed to dress out of the normal uniform dress code following the daily theme.

### **Uniform Code Violation Consequences**

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In all cases, students whose personal appearance is not in accordance with these guidelines will not be allowed to participate in school day activities until appropriate attire has been obtained. The student may receive a half or full-day absence due to uniform code violation depending on the amount of classroom time missed.

- 1) First offense:
  - a. Notify parent/guardian
  - b. Change of inappropriate attire
- 2) Second offense:
  - a. Notify parent/guardian
  - b. Change of inappropriate attire
  - c. Disciplinary action
- 3) Third offense
  - a. Conference with parent/guardian
  - b. Change of inappropriate attire
  - c. In-school detention

<h2><b>EXTENDED CARE</b></h2>
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### **Before School**

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Northdale Lutheran provides supervised care for students before school beginning at 7:00 AM. Students may use this time to read, review assignments, or eat a light breakfast (provided by the parents). Students are escorted to their respective classrooms at 7:30 AM. The cost of the program is \$3 per child. Families will complete appropriate registration materials and agree to the rules and policies of the program. Billing will be completed at the end of each month.

### **After School**

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The Northdale Lutheran School after school program operates from 3:15-6:00 PM. It is designed to provide children of working parents, or those who have a late afternoon commitment with a safe, caring, and enriching environment. The cost of the program is \$1.50 per fifteen minutes per child. A late pick-up charge of \$1 per minute will be assessed for every child not picked up by 6:05 PM. Failure to pick up a child by 6:30 PM without notification may result in Child and Family Services authorities being contacted. The program supervisor will make reasonable attempts to contact the child's parent or guardian prior to contacting the authorities. Families will complete appropriate registration materials and agree to the rules and policies of the program. Billing will be completed at the end of each month.

The schedule provides opportunities for homework completion and/or other class projects, outdoor play, puzzles and board games, group activities, videos, and quiet time.

Extended Care is only available on days when school is in session. After school care is not provided on days when school is dismissed at noon (first day of school, last day before Christmas break, and last day of the year).

## FIELD TRIPS & OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

- Field trips and other off-campus activities are scheduled for the educational, mental, and physical development of the students.
- Careful thought goes into planning each activity to ensure its educational value and the safety of the children. These trips are planned as a supplement to our curriculum; therefore, all students are expected to participate in field trips. Attendance is taken and recorded accordingly on report cards.
- Some experiences require additional fees to be paid by the parent. Parents are asked to contact their child's teacher if the payment becomes a financial hardship. Other arrangements will be made.
- In situations where students are unable to attend, teachers will provide replacement experiences or assignments that meet similar curricular objectives.
- Parents must sign a school activity/field trip permission slip for each field to which students will be driven.
- Parents/volunteers will serve as drivers for such trips when necessary. Drivers are asked to secure each rider with a safety belt and booster seat if necessary, and take every precaution to ensure the safety of the children. Drivers are not to place any students under the age of twelve in the front seat of the car if it is equipped with a passenger-side air bag.
- All drivers are required to provide evidence of his/her driver's license and proof of insurance.
- All drivers and chaperones are required to complete the *Protect My Ministry* course and sign the *Volunteer Covenant Code* before participating in any field trip or school activity.
- Information and cost for each trip will be sent home in advance.
- Each school activity will be supervised by the classroom teacher.
- All activities will be age-appropriate.
- All students are expected to abide by the student code of conduct.

## STUDENT PROGRESS & ASSESSMENT

Assessing student progress is perhaps the most critical element of the teaching process. Accurate evaluation of learning directs and guides teaching. Teachers engage in daily on-going assessments of students' understanding and proficiency as the basis for choosing and moving into the next instructional sequence.

### **Student Progress Reports**

Parents are encouraged to check in regularly with their child's teacher regarding academic and behavioral progress. On request, a written progress report document will be provided to the parent at the midterm of each quarter. Part of the value of the progress report is that they help prevent any "surprises" at report card time.

### **Report Cards**

Report cards will be sent home at the end of each quarter. Parents are asked to study the reports carefully, sign the envelope, and return only the envelope to school as soon as possible. Please consult with the teacher if you have any questions concerning the report. Report cards become part of a student's cumulative record.

### **Grading**

*The percentage/letter grading scale for grades 1-8 at Northdale Lutheran School is calculated as follows:*

100%... A+ (4.00)	84-85... C+ (2.33)	Below 70... F	Exceptional	E
96-99... A (4.00)	80-83... C (2.00)		Satisfactory	S
94-95... A- (3.67)	78-79... C- (1.67)		Needs Improvement	N
92-93... B+ (3.33)	76-77... D+ (1.33)		Unsatisfactory	U
88-91... B (3.00)	72-75... D (1.00)		Incomplete Work	I
86-87... B- (2.67)	70-71... D- (0.67)			

*Kindergarten grading scale:*            E – Exceptional/Always  
    S – Satisfactorily/Regularly  
    N – Needs Improvement/Sometimes  
    U – Unacceptable/Seldom

Advanced (4)	Student consistently shows evidence of above grade level understanding.
Proficient (3)	Student consistently meets grade level expectations.
Basic (2)	Student sometimes meets or needs some support to meet grade level expectations.
Minimal (1)	Student rarely meets or needs heavy support to meet grade level expectations.
Incomplete (I)	Student has not completed classwork for this standard due to absence from school.

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### **Honor Roll**

As a way of recognizing superior academic effort, achievement, and excellence, NLS maintains an Honor, High Honor, and Highest Honor Roll for students beginning in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Additionally, there are quarter, semester, and end of the year awards. Perfect Attendance and Honor Roll awards are given by quarter. Honor Roll is based on the grades obtained in the core academic subjects (English, math, reading, social studies, science, and religion) and is weighted accordingly. Honor Roll commendation also serves as an excellent means of motivating students to do their very best at all times. Merit awards are given to those students who show academic improvement from the first to second quarter and from the third to fourth quarter. Citizenship awards are given to those students who show consistent academic excellence throughout the year, demonstrate a positive Christian attitude, and are involved in extra-curricular activities. The following criteria are used for Honor Roll distinction:

<i>Highest Honors</i>	3.75-4.00 GPA
<i>High Honor Roll</i>	3.50-3.749 GPA
<i>Honor Roll</i>	3.25-3.499 GPA

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### **Promotion**

The promotion of each student from grade to grade is based upon the student’s satisfactory achievement of required class work. A child will not be retained without previous consultation with the parents. Promotion is based on achievement standards the school has established and the God-given abilities of the student.

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### **Graduation**

Northdale Lutheran Church celebrates Christian Education Sunday each year as a way to reflect on the blessings that God brought through Christian Education in the past school year. Christian Education Sunday also serves as Graduation for the 8<sup>th</sup> graders. The principal will present diplomas to the graduates during the Sunday service. In addition, we recognize kindergarteners for completing their first year of school. Parents and family members of the students are expected to attend.

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### **Standardized Testing Program**

Students in kindergarten through eighth grade participate in the standardized testing program. The school uses the results of these standardized tests to determine curricular strengths and weaknesses as well as modify instruction to meet the needs of students. The tests are one of many ways that we assess student progress. Parents receive a report of the test results and a parent-teacher consultation may be scheduled to discuss the results. Northdale Lutheran School uses the Measures of Academic Progress test produced by the Northwest Education Association. Testing is conducted three times during the school year - three weeks after the start of the year, three weeks after Christmas break, and three weeks before the end of the school year. The tests compare our students with national averages using percentiles and other measures.

## STUDENT RECORDS & PRIVACY

Northdale Lutheran School adheres to the regulations in the 1974 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). All scholastic records of a student maintained by the school are confidential. Scholastic reports, which contain only objective student data, will be kept permanently. Upon request to the principal, with a 24-hour notice, parents (or legal guardians) of students have the right to inspect their children's records. Transcript release requires the signature of the parent/guardian. Records will be held until all outstanding payments are completed.

### School Photographs

A professional company will take school pictures each year. The family may purchase pictures if desired. A parent consent form is provided during summer registration before the school year that gives the school permission to use digital photographs of students for promotional use. Keeping the students' safety in mind, the staff will use extreme caution before posting or using pictures or videos of school events. Please speak to your individual teacher if you have any concerns.

## GUIDANCE & COUNSELING

In today's changing society, children benefit from extra guidance during their formative years. To help them cope with the issues associated with growing up, NLS takes a guidance and counseling approach in addressing many of the concerns that come up with students. This approach focuses on the needs of students from a Christian perspective, addressing the typical concerns, questions, and choices they face today. They will learn interpersonal skills, relationships, and problem solving. Our goal is to enhance spiritual, personal, social, and academic growth. While the primary goal is to help students learn more effectively and efficiently, an added benefit is that it will ultimately make school life more satisfying and rewarding.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

### First Aid and CPR Certification

CPR is a skill that can be the difference between life and death. All NLS faculty and staff are CPR and First Aid certified and meet American Red Cross and American Heart Association recommendations. Knowledge obtained through these courses permits NLS faculty and staff to be ready to handle emergencies due to sudden illness or injury to students.

### Health Examination Forms

Students in kindergarten and seventh grades and all new students to Northdale Lutheran School from out of the state of Florida as well as from out of the country are required to have a physical examination. Standard Florida Department of Health forms are available at your pediatrician's office and need to be appropriately completed, signed, and submitted to the school before the first day of classes.

### Immunization Records

Every new student must present proof of immunization, including dates of immunization and date of most recent tetanus shot. All students are expected to keep current and inform the school of subsequent immunizations in accord with state law. Standard Florida Department of Health forms are available at your pediatrician's office and need to be appropriately completed, signed, and submitted to the school before the first day of classes. This requirement is in keeping with the Florida Compulsory School Immunization Law, 232.032. Students are not permitted to attend school without a copy of this record; therefore, this form must be returned to school before the first day of classes.

## **Emergency Medical Forms**

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Northdale Lutheran School uses TADS, a third-party service for management of Admissions and Enrollment. Part of the annual enrollment process is the review of contact information in case of a medical emergency. An emergency medical form is kept on file for each student.

## **Minor Accidents**

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All minor accidents – cuts, scratches, bumps, and insect bites are given First Aid treatment and are recorded with the office. Administration is informed and parents and/or emergency contact person is notified of injury.

## **Serious Injury**

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If your child suffers a serious injury, procedures as outlined in the Safety Response Plan will be initiated. The school will call 911 followed by the parents, provide First Aid until help arrives, and determine who will accompany the injured student to the hospital. An accident report form will be completed describing the nature and extent of the injury.

All head injuries will be reported to parents.

## **Insurance**

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The school carries student accident insurance that covers the student during school hours and during any school-sponsored extracurricular activities. Claim forms may be obtained from the school office and must be filed within ninety days of the accident.

## **Medications**

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All medications must be dispensed and kept in the school office.

### *Daily Medications:*

Daily medications administered at school require the completion of the Northdale Lutheran School Authorization for Administration of Medication form. This form needs to be completed annually. At the end of the school year or when the medication has been discontinued, the extra medication should be picked up by the parent. Any medication left at the end of the school year will be properly discarded.

### *Discretionary Medications:*

Tylenol, Advil, or Tums (or generic substitutes) may be administered at school with written permission from a parent/guardian. This permission is written on the Authorization for Administration of Medication form which is kept on file in the school office and is filled out by the parent/guardian at the beginning of each school year.

### *Self-medication:*

Special arrangements will be made if a student is self-medicating.

Other important medication guidelines:

- Only prescription medication will be administered at school. Only medication approved by the Food and Drug Administration will be accepted for administering at school. All medications must be brought to school by the parent or guardian.
- Approved medication must be delivered to the school in the container in which it was purchased or dispensed.
- The medication label must indicate the student's name, name of medication, directions, physician's name, dosage (amount) and time (frequency).
- If the medication requires equipment for administration (cup, spoon, or dropper), the parent is responsible for supplying the articles labeled with the student's name.

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**Student Illnesses and Contagious Conditions**

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Students who have been diagnosed with illnesses such as the flu, a fever, or any other contagious condition must be symptom-free for 24 hours prior to returning to school. In the event a student misses three or more days with a contagious condition, the student must present a doctor's note of clearance upon returning to school. With exceptions as provided by law, any student or staff member who suffers an infectious disease (other than an illness) must be removed from the premises until certified by a physician or health care professional to be non-infectious and able to return to school.

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**Lice**

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In the event that lice and/or lice nits (eggs) are suspected or discovered on any student(s), the student will be immediately removed from the classroom and sent home. While we understand how difficult it is to rid the hair and scalp of all the eggs related to lice, we must also recognize how easily it can be spread. For this reason, an email will be sent home to parents while keeping the names of those involved confidential.

If your child is sent home with lice and/or nits, they will be allowed to return to school when a verbal or written confirmation is given to the school that a treatment plan is in place.

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**Exemption from Participation in Physical Education Classes**

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A student may be exempted from the regular physical education program with a written request from a licensed physician.

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**Safety Response Action Plan**

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A Northdale Lutheran School Safety Response Action Plan has been formulated in the event of an external threat to its students, teachers, staff, and/or physical plant. This multi-hazard evacuation plan shall encompass, but not be limited to, evacuations for fires, hurricanes, tornadoes, and other hazardous storms or disasters in which serious bodily injury might occur, hostage siege, terrorist activities, bomb threats, etc. The plan is reviewed annually and updated as needed.

The Safety Response Action Plan will assist teachers, school administrators, and others in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergency incidents on school grounds.

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**Emergency Evacuation Drills and Reporting**

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In compliance with state regulations, evacuation fire drills are performed once a month and twice in the first two weeks of the school year. Tornado and code red (lockdown) drills are practiced once per year or at administrative discretion. For the safety of all, detailed drill procedures are shared and periodically reviewed in each classroom.

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**Emergency School Closing**

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In most cases, Northdale Lutheran School will follow the decision of the Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS) in terms of school closings or late starts. In situations where the safety of our students is not at risk and the continuation of the normal school day routine is deemed beneficial, Northdale Lutheran School reserves the right to continue regularly scheduled school days. In such a case, the decision to deviate from the plan of the HCPS will be made by the SMB. If Northdale Lutheran School is to be closed due to an emergency such as inclement weather, notification will be made via Remind text message, email, and the school Facebook page. If students must be evacuated during the school day, NLS will follow Hillsborough County evacuation procedures.

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**Mandatory Reporting of Suspected Abuse**

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The principal, pastor, and teachers of Northdale Lutheran School are required by law to report incidents of suspected sexual, emotional, physical, or other abuse and neglect to the proper authorities. Under this law, parents are not notified of the report.

## HOMework

Homework is a valuable part of the educational experience – an extension and enrichment of the material taught in the classroom. It is a link between one lesson and the next. Generally, students in grades K-2 have limited homework. Students in grades 3-4 can expect an average of 15-30 minutes per day. Students in grades 5-6 can expect an average of 30-45 minutes per day. Students in grades 7-8 can expect an average of 45-60 minutes per day. Homework is healthy when it:

- Reinforces skills taught previously in the classroom
- Prepares students for new information
- Promotes creative thinking and independent research
- Communicates with parents the ongoing classroom learning
- Instills a sense of responsibility and personal accountability
- Helps to develop productive study habits and self-discipline

Parents should help their child set aside a quiet place and regular time for study each evening. Additionally, parents are encouraged to monitor their child's homework using the school assignment notebook (grades 3-8). Scheduling a quiet reading time and limiting screen time will also help to improve overall school performance.

Parents who find that their child consistently has no homework, spends an inordinate amount of time on homework assignments, or is experiencing difficulty should feel free to contact his/her child's teacher.

## LUNCH & SNACKS

It is important that the school be kept clean and picked up throughout the lunch period. Faculty and staff members generally provide lunch supervision, unless special arrangements have been made with a parent volunteer. Students are expected to help keep the area clean.

- Students in grades K-8 may either bring their own lunches or purchase a commercially prepared hot lunch. Students who bring food from home are encouraged to pack healthy lunches and snacks.
- A commercially prepared hot lunch is available three days per week. Hot lunch on Tuesdays and Thursdays is available through Evos restaurant. Lunches are ordered by the parents on a weekly basis directly from Evos. Hot lunch on Fridays is available from other local restaurants. The menu is sent home at the beginning of each quarter.
- Ordering hot lunches is optional, and the costs of the lunches are not included in the tuition and registration fees. Billing for Friday hot lunches will occur quarterly using the order form sent home. Payment must be made by cash or check. No refunds will be issued. Billing for Evos hot lunches is done directly with Evos according to their guidelines.
- Due to logistical and safety issues, neither microwave ovens nor refrigerators will be available for student use.
- Snacks are allowed during morning breaks and recess.

### Parties

Many parents like to bring refreshments on their child's birthday. This may be done with prior approval from the classroom teacher. Because of time and space constraints, birthday celebrations at school should be kept short and simple and cannot be spontaneous. Arrangements must be made with the classroom teacher at least one day in advance. Additionally, if invitations for parties are handed out at school, everyone in the class must be invited. Invitations will be handed out at the end of the school day or at the teacher's discretion.

## **FACILITIES & PROPERTY**

### **Curriculum and Instructional Materials**

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- Students are expected to take good care of all school-owned materials (both print and electronic). Curriculum and instructional materials are furnished by the School Ministry Board, and all students must assume full responsibility for the care of materials issued to them.
- Materials are issued by the teacher and must be returned to the same teacher upon completion of the school year or upon withdrawal from the school.
- Responsibility for curriculum materials rests with the student to whom the materials are issued.
- Lost or misplaced materials are no excuse for not doing class assignments.
- The full replacement cost will be collected for lost, destroyed, or unnecessarily-damaged materials (both print and electronic).
- Loss of curriculum materials due to theft or other circumstances will not be accepted as an excuse for non-payment. If the materials are found and returned, the school will issue a refund to the family.

### **Class Size Guideline**

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The School Ministry Board and principal will make every effort to maintain a low student to teacher ratio in each of the classrooms. In multi-grade classrooms, the SMB has set student to teacher ratio maximum of 22:1 (16:1 in the smaller classrooms).

### **Lost and Found**

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All lost and found articles will be taken to the lobby and put in the lost and found drawer. Items that are identified will be returned to their owners. At the end of the school year, all items that have not been retrieved will be donated to a local charity.

### **Visitors**

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- 1) Visitors must receive approval from the principal in advance to observe in the classroom.
- 2) Teachers cannot stop classroom activities to hold parent conferences.
- 3) Students cannot arrange for their friends or relatives from other schools to visit the school at any time without the approval of the principal in advance.

### **Telephone Use**

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- 1) Students, except with permission from principal/teacher, will not use the school telephones.
- 2) Only emergency messages will be taken for students.
- 3) Students will not be called from class to the telephone except in emergency cases. Parents will be requested to provide the emergency information to the student's teacher or principal.

### **Cell Phones**

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A telephone is available for student use in the office for emergency purposes. NLS requires all cell phones be powered off and stored in the teacher-designated area for each classroom. Students will not have access to cell phone during the school day, and any parental contact with a student should be through the main school phone. The cell phone will be returned to the student at the end of each school day.

### **Personal Property and Electronic Devices**

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- 1) Personal electronic devices (i.e. computers, tablets, smartphones, music players, radios, or electronic games) or any unnecessary devices deemed potentially disruptive will not be allowed at school.
- 2) Students bringing any electronic devices for a class project must make arrangements with the teacher or principal for safekeeping.
- 3) Students waiting to be picked up after school will not be permitted to use personal electronic devices as listed earlier. Students entering the After School Care program which begins at 3:15pm may use devices at the discretion of the After School Care program supervisor.

- 4) Devices that are e-reader specific (function only for reading various forms of literature) will be used at the discretion of the teacher during the school day and during the After School Care program.
- 5) The school does not accept responsibility for personal electronic devices or personal property of any kind.

Failure to comply with these guidelines may result in confiscation of electronic devices or personal property, and students may be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Technology Acceptable Use Policy (TAUP)**

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Technological resources, including computers and other electronic devices, with or without internet access, provide a unique opportunity to enhance instructional methods, appeal to different learning styles, and encourage exploration and individual creativity. It is the goal of Northdale Lutheran School to provide those resource opportunities to the students and staff.

With the use of technological tools comes attached a list of expectations and requirements. The TAUP covers various areas of student expectations and requirements, ranging from aspects of Christian conduct and etiquette to compliance with governmental laws.

The TAUP covers the following information:

- 1) Rules and Requirements for hardware and software
- 2) Appropriate internet usage
- 3) Student safety
- 4) Privacy and intellectual property
- 5) Disclaimer
- 6) Consequences

The TAUP is available on the school website and in the school office.

### **Chewing Gum**

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To keep our church and school neat and damage-free, gum chewing is not allowed on the school grounds before, during, or after school.

## **PARENT-TEACHER TEAM**

The parents and teachers have a unique partnership in the team concept of educating children. Northdale Lutheran School has created a Parent-Teacher Team (PTT) as another aspect of the partnership we share. The PTT holds quarterly meetings to discuss upcoming events, fundraising opportunities, and educational opportunities/enhancements. All NLS parents are invited to participate in the PTT.

### **Student Fundraising**

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Student fundraising shall include student solicitation and collection of money for any purpose including collection of money in exchange for tickets, papers, or any other goods or services.

Student fundraising is permitted only when all funds obtained through fundraising (less any necessary expenses incurred for the purchase of products or good sold) is used for school purposes or for an activity connected with the school.

Any such fundraising efforts must be approved by the principal.

## **TUTORING**

Paid tutoring for students desiring additional help is available after 3:30pm. Teacher availability is subject to a number of variables including extra-curricular obligations, school responsibilities, etc. For this reason, all tutoring requests should be made by contacting the principal (813-961-9195 or [school@northdalelutheran.org](mailto:school@northdalelutheran.org)) and he will assist you in finding an available instructor who will best meet your child's academic needs.

The cost for tutoring is \$40 for each one-hour lesson, and the payment will be made directly to the tutor.

## **STUDENT SINGING PERFORMANCES**

Music is an important part of the curriculum at Northdale Lutheran School. On days when students do not attend regular music class, singing takes place in the classroom during Devotion, Religion class, Chapel, and various other times throughout the day. On a monthly basis throughout the school year students are scheduled to sing a song (or songs) for a Northdale Lutheran service, program, or community function. Often these songs are religious songs that give the students a chance to share God's Word with friends and family.

Students and their teachers spend many weeks and months learning these songs, memorizing the words, and practicing the music to perform. It is important, therefore, that every member of the class be present for every scheduled performance. When all members of the class or group are present, the students are able to perform to the best of their abilities and give praise to God for the talents he has given them.

If a student has to miss a program or performance for a valid reason (prior family commitment, illness, etc.) the parents must inform the teacher of the absence ahead of time. Students will receive a music participation grade for each performance scheduled during the school year. Students that present a valid excuse ahead of time will not be penalized.

**Revised July 2018**