

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN SCHOOL

Panthers • Columbus, Ohio • WELS K-8

2026–2027 Family Handbook

2026–27 School Theme: Audience of One

“Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe.” — Proverbs 29:25

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Mission & Objectives

At St. Paul's Lutheran School, our mission is to provide a high-quality academic education in a safe, faith-focused environment where Christ is at the center of everything we do. Through God's Word, we reveal the way of salvation and nurture the whole child — academically, spiritually, socially, and emotionally.

Objectives

- Teach God's Word diligently and joyfully.
- Integrate Scripture across all subjects and daily life.
- Build classrooms rooted in cooperation and restorative relationships.
- Partner with parents to support academic, spiritual, and social growth.
- Encourage students to serve both their local and global communities.
- Plan with intention and celebrate growth as gifts from God.

2026–27 School Theme: Audience of One

Our theme reminds every student and family that we are meant to live and work for God alone, not for the attention of the people around us.

“Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe.” — Proverbs 29:25

Enrollment Policy & Procedures

St. Paul's Lutheran School welcomes students of every race, color, national, and ethnic background. We partner with families who desire a Christ-centered education.

Priority Enrollment Order

1. Returning students in good standing (minimum 2.3 GPA).
2. New students meeting academic and behavioral readiness.
3. All other returning students.

The Bible Basics course is required for new families within their first year at St. Paul's.

Preferred enrollment method: <https://www.stpaulsk8.org/enroll>

In-person enrollment: Available by appointment — 614-444-4216 or dean@stpaulsk8.org

Curriculum & Extra-Curricular Activities

Academics at St. Paul's are taught from a biblical worldview across every subject.

Curriculum by Subject

- Language Arts: Amplify CKLA (K–5), Amplify ELA (6–8); UFLI for reading/writing intervention
- Math: Into Math (HMH)
- Science: FOSS Science
- Social Studies
- Physical Education: SPARK curriculum
- Art: Meet the Masters

Extra-Curricular Activities

- Athletics
- Student Leadership
- Spiritual Growth Opportunities
- Special Events

Eligibility & Faculty

Students must maintain a minimum 2.3 GPA and no failing grades in order to participate in extra-curricular activities.

All St. Paul's faculty are WELS-trained and certified through Martin Luther College (MLC) and the State of Ohio.

Entrance Requirements & Withdrawal

Age Requirements

- Kindergarten: 5 years old by September 30.
- Grade 1: 6 years old by September 30.

Placement tests, immunization records, and a records release are required for all new students. Probationary enrollment periods may apply.

Withdrawal Procedure

- Notify the principal of the intent to withdraw.
- Return all school-issued materials.
- Settle any outstanding fees.

Prorated tuition refunds are available upon withdrawal.

Tuition, Fees, & School Hours

Tuition & Fees

Tuition (K–8): \$7,000 per year, paid in 10 monthly installments

Late fee: 5% assessed after the 15th of the month

Financial aid: EdChoice Scholarship and Tuition Adjustment options available. 99.9% of our families qualify for 100% Scholarships

Daily School Hours

Staff Devotion	7:25 – 7:40 AM
Doors Open	7:40 AM
1st Bell	7:40 AM
2nd Bell	7:50 AM
3rd Bell / School Begins	8:00 AM — doors lock promptly
Dismissal	Begins at 3:30 PM; pickup lanes clear by 3:45 PM

Students arriving after doors are locked at 8:00 AM must be signed in by a guardian in the school office. Guardians are required to walk their student into the office and sign the attendance clipboard.

Daily Logistics: Drop Off, Pick Up & Dismissal

Drop Off & Building Access

- Doors are locked from 8:00 AM – 3:30 PM each school day for building security.
- Parents and visitors must check in at the office at all times — including late arrivals and early departures.
- Early departure ends at 3:00 PM. Staff begin preparing all students for dismissal between 3:00–3:30 PM, so please plan appointments accordingly and be respectful of this expectation.

Dismissal (3:30 PM)

Families are assigned one of two pickup methods:

1. Walk-Up Pickup — Either at the back parking lot or curbside on Bruck Street. Please leave room for the 2 vans at the corner and read and follow all posted signage.
2. Continuous Flow Pickup — Enter through the archway via street parking. Turn north on Blackberry Alley, east on Zimpher, and south by the St. Paul's garage. Stay in your car; students wait by the cones until a teacher sends them to you.

Inclement Weather

- Walk-Up Pickup: Students wait inside the gym. Pull up in front of the Bruck doors and a teacher will send your children out.
- Continuous Flow Pickup: Students wait inside under the archway. Pull up as far forward as possible to reduce backup.

In both cases, students should not approach your car until directed by a teacher.

Breakfast & Lunch

Breakfast: Provided by each family. Students may eat from 7:40 – 8:00 AM.

Lunch: Provided by each family. Served in classrooms and the common room from 12:15 – 12:45 PM.

Food deliveries: Not permitted, except for birthday treats for your child's class (see General Policies).

Attendance

Absences must be reported to the teacher or office by 8:00 AM. A written excuse is required upon the student's return.

Excused Absences

- Illness
- Medical appointments
- Family emergencies
- Approved travel

Unexcused Absences

Absences without explanation, or for reasons the school does not consider appropriate, are recorded as unexcused.

Tardiness

- Bells ring at 7:40 AM (1st), 7:50 AM (2nd), and 8:00 AM (3rd).
- Doors lock promptly at 8:00 AM. Students arriving after that time must be signed in by a guardian in the office.
- 3 tardies = 1 unexcused absence.
- 20 unexcused absences = loss of EdChoice scholarship and removal from St. Paul's
- [Click here](#) to see a summary of Ohio's new school attendance laws as of 26-27.

Early Pick Up

- Students must be signed out by 3:00 PM.
- Families are encouraged to schedule appointments before or after the school day whenever possible.

Multi-Grade Classrooms & Health

Multi-grade classrooms at St. Paul's promote cooperation, mentorship, and flexible small-group learning.

Health Guidelines

- Please keep students home when they are sick.
- Notify the school promptly of any contagious illness.
- Medication must be submitted to the office with both the medication and written parental permission.
- Basic first aid is administered at school; parents are contacted as needed.

Emergency Closings & Student Evaluation

Emergency Closings

Weather and emergency closings are announced through the school blog, Facebook, text alert, and email.

Grading Scale

Percentage	Grade	Description
90–100%	A	Excellent Progress
80–89%	B	Above Average Progress
70–79%	C	Average Progress
60–69%	D	Below Average Progress
Below 60%	F	Failure / Below Average Progress

Incomplete grades ("I") must be resolved with the classroom teacher within the timeframe the teacher specifies.

PowerSchool

PowerSchool is our family portal for grades, attendance, and alerts. Login information is sent home during the first two weeks of school — we recommend downloading the PowerSchool app as soon as you receive it.

Partnership Meetings & Testing

- Family Partnership Meetings are held at the end of Quarter 1 and Quarter 2.
- State Testing occurs for grades K–8, including a Grade 3 reading diagnostic.

Honor Roll

- Principal's List: 3.7 GPA or higher
- Honor Roll: 3.0 GPA or higher

Dress Code & Appearance

Tops

- Solid color polo shirt — any color.
- School theme shirts from any year.
- Specialized St. Paul's fit shirts from any year (e.g., Sports Day or Panther of the Month shirts).

Bottoms

- Dress pants or slacks in navy blue, khaki, or black (no holes). No skirts & no jumpers.
- A belt should be worn if the garment has belt loops; any pocket style is fine.
- Shorts are allowed when the forecast reaches 70°F or higher. Shorts must be navy, khaki, or black, and knee-length or longer. Athletic shorts and bike shorts are not permitted.

Footwear

- Closed-toed tennis shoes or dress shoes — students should be ready for P.E. and recess at any time.
- Standard Ugg-style boots are allowed (the fluffy style is not).
- Crocs are not permitted at any time, including on Dress Down Celebration Days.

Ongoing or repeated dress code concerns will be addressed through an Accountability Session, consistent with our restorative approach to student expectations (see Restorative Practices).

Dress Down Celebration Days

St. Paul's no longer holds a standing weekly dress-down day. Instead, we celebrate with Dress Down Celebration Days scattered throughout the year — typically tied to holidays (Halloween, Christmas, New Year, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, and more) and other notable school events. Watch for themed celebration days as well!

Families will be notified of upcoming Dress Down Celebration Days through teacher newsletters, Facebook, and Instagram.

What to Wear

- Jeans, casual pants, or shorts (weather permitting).
- T-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies, or casual tops with sleeves.
- The same footwear as every other school day — Crocs are still not permitted, even on Dress Down Celebration Days.

Restorative Practices & Expectations

St. Paul's Lutheran School follows a Restorative Practices approach to student behavior and discipline. We guide students through reflection and repair rather than punishment alone, believing this approach reflects the Christian values of forgiveness, reconciliation, and grace that are central to our mission.

Our Restorative Approach

- Repair, not just rules — we focus on repairing harm and restoring relationships, not simply assigning consequences.
- A consistent playbook — our Restorative Practices Playbook guides consistent language and process across every grade, K–8.
- Structured conversation — when conflict or misbehavior occurs, students engage in a structured, guided conversation rather than receiving an automatic punishment.

How It Works

- Affective questions — adults ask what happened and who was affected, rather than simply stating a consequence.
- Student voice — students reflect on their choices and identify how to make things right.
- Repair over punishment — the focus is on rebuilding trust and relationships, not just “serving time.”
- Community accountability — peers and staff join restorative circles or mediated conversations when appropriate.
- Consistency — the same restorative framework and language is used school-wide, from Kindergarten through 8th grade.

Tiered Response

1. In-the-moment repair, led by the classroom teacher.
2. Accountability Session — a guided reflection activity completed during lunch, away from peers.
3. Restorative Circle with family — a structured, facilitated conversation that includes the student's family.

Temporary removal from the classroom is used only if a student's safety, or the safety of others, is at risk. Any temporary removal requires a re-entry plan created together with the student before returning to class.

Why It Fits Our Mission

- Reflects Christian values of forgiveness, reconciliation, and grace.
- Teaches responsibility and empathy, not just compliance.
- Builds a stronger, more connected school community over time.

Panther Pride: Panther of the Month

Each month, staff recognize students who exemplify the character traits at the heart of our school culture. These traits work hand-in-hand with our restorative approach to build a community of respect and service.

- Listeners — following directions and giving full attention to others.
- Kindness — building others up rather than tearing them down.
- Servant Leadership — using time, talents, and treasures to help others.
- Procedures — following school procedures, even when no one is watching.

- Inclusive — welcoming others in and making them feel like part of the St. Paul's family.
- Focused — staying present and engaged in lessons, activities, and projects.
- Growing — showing academic, spiritual, behavioral, and emotional growth.
- Prepared — coming ready, with work done and materials in hand.
- Invested — taking pride in and buying into the culture of their school and classroom.

Technology & Social Media

Technology is treated as a learning tool at St. Paul's, not a toy.

- School-issued devices are for educational use only.
- Personal devices must remain off and put away during school hours.
- Concerns involving social media are addressed using the same restorative tiers described in Restorative Practices & Expectations.

We encourage families to model and discuss healthy digital habits with their children at home.

Communication & Family Involvement

St. Paul's communicates with families through several regular channels:

- Email newsletters
- Classroom updates
- School blog
- Facebook: facebook.com/stpaulsk8
- Website: stpaulsk8.org

Family Partnership Meetings are held each year, at the end of Quarter 1 and Quarter 2.

Volunteers are always welcome and must complete a background check from [Fast Fingerprints on Bethel Road](#).

We encourage every family to actively support their student's spiritual, academic, and behavioral growth.

Questions, Comments, or Concerns?

Principal Tacey: principal@stpaulsk8.org

Dean Perkins: dean@stpaulsk8.org

Secretary Miller: schoolsecretary@stpaulsk8.org

School Governance: Board of Education

St. Paul's Lutheran School is guided by a 6-member Board of Education that sets policy and direction for the school.

Board Members

Joe Baumann	Kevin Strous
Mark Greiner	Bill Raatz
Rob Anderson	Anil Seeli

The Board holds monthly meetings that include an open session where families are welcome to share ideas and thoughts on the school's policy and direction.

Staff Directory

Pastors

- Pastor Sims — Pastor, Bible Basics & Pastoral Care
- Pastor Gottschalk — Pastor, Bible Basics & Pastoral Care

Teachers

Grade	Teacher	Email
Kindergarten	Ms. McFarland	cmcfarland@stpaulsk8.org
1st & 2nd Grade	Mrs. Quan	hquan@stpaulsk8.org
3rd & 4th Grade	Ms. Rassat	krassat@stpaulsk8.org
5th & 6th Grade	Ms. Metzger	ametzger@stpaulsk8.org
7th & 8th Grade	Ms. Winkel	awinkel@stpaulsk8.org

Administration

- Keith Tacey — Principal — principal@stpaulsk8.org
- Shayne Perkins — Dean of Students — dean@stpaulsk8.org
- Katherine Miller — Secretary — schoolsecretary@stpaulsk8.org

Adult Discipleship: Bible Basics

Bible Basics is a Bible study offered to any and all interested in learning more about their Savior — a study of “the basics,” the main truths found in God's Word. New families are required to complete Bible Basics within their first year at St. Paul's.

Who Is It For?

- Visitors of St. Paul's who want to know more.

- Parents who want to know what we teach their child.
- Members who simply want a review.

In short, everyone is welcome to join this study of the basic truths of the Christian faith.

Schedule & Details

Start date: September 3, 2026

Meeting day & time: Thursdays, 7:00 – 8:30 PM

Meeting place: Upper room over the church offices

Length: 8 weeks for non-members and school families (1 year to complete), or 15 weeks for those interested in membership

Teachers: Pastor Sims and Pastor Gottschalk

General Policies & Final Notes

- Supply lists are provided at the Back to School Open House.
- Lost & Found is cleared out quarterly.
- Students may use the classroom phone only with permission; urgent matters should go through the school office.
- Birthday treats must be store-bought. If bringing invitations to school, they must be for the whole class.

Thank you for partnering with us in quality, faith-focused education!