

DISCIPLINE

Discipline Policy and Changes Adopted by St. Paul's Lutheran School Board 2023

The Fourth Commandment, Luther's Small Catechism

The authorities whom God has placed over us.

Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God that we may not despise our parents and masters, nor provoke them to anger, but give them honor, serve and obey them, and hold them in love and esteem.

Who are parents and masters? Parents are father and mother; masters are all those who by God's ordinance are placed over us in the home, in the state, at school, and at the place where we work.

DISCIPLINE STATEMENT and GUIDELINES

Discipline comes from the word "disciple," which means "follower." Since by nature one can follow good or bad examples, training is necessary to become a follower (disciple) of good behavior. Discipline at St. Paul's Lutheran School involves training in good, Christian behavior, providing good behavior models, and expecting all students to be "followers" of that behavior.

The faculty has the sincere desire to build and maintain a positive teaching and learning environment. Two such ingredients for this environment are respect for the well-being of each other and setting a positive example.

Giving witness to the Christian faith in daily living is an integral part of our educational program. The daily efforts of St. Paul's teachers are directed toward enabling each child to become a self-disciplined and learning-directed person.

Discipline at St. Paul's Lutheran School is an expression of the practice of building a community. *Discipline That Restores* provides strategies to create respect, cooperation and responsibility in the classroom. Primary attention is focused on becoming more respectful, responsible, and accountable. All members of the community strive to voluntarily and consciously experience and nurture right relationships with others as reflected in our St. Paul's Lutheran School mission statement. This approach requires discipline through accountability, which begins with self-examination and self-control, and includes personal and communal responsibility. It encourages truth-telling because there is no fear of punishment. Mistakes can be made right. This method of accountability, known as the Restorative Justice Discipline process, has been adapted for use at St. Paul's and is further outlined below.

St. Paul's Lutheran School has agreed on a set of standards that reflect its understanding of becoming a more respectful and responsible community. St. Paul's Lutheran School seeks to provide opportunities

for personal and social growth and development within the context of our school community. Discipline is viewed as a means of encouraging individuals and groups to be accountable to the stated objectives of the school community and to each other. *Discipline That Restores* has been adopted as our accountability system.

GENERAL SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

- Students will exemplify Christian living.
- Students will show respect and concern for themselves and their property.
- Students will show respect and concern for others and their property.
- Students will show respect and obedience to teachers and other adults.
- Students will use acceptable language.
- Students will dress modestly and respect the dress code.
- Students will be considerate of school property.
- Students will listen and have appropriate behavior in the classroom.
- Students will remain on school/church property unless accompanied by an adult.
- Students will obey all St. Paul's rules and procedures as well as state laws.
- Students will conduct themselves in a manner of behavior that reflects well upon the school and larger communities. Students will develop the role of being responsible and accountable citizens of the world.

St. Paul's Lutheran School strives to provide an atmosphere which will be conducive to academic, social, and emotional growth for all. This environment thrives when one considers not only one's own interests, but also the interests of others. The school community, students, teachers, administrators, staff and parents are not only to avoid endangering the academic, social, or emotional lives of each other, but are also to encourage one another and provide positive assistance when possible. The spirit of this vision is one of concern for and service to others.

During the first week of classes, each teacher will create a **respect agreement** with their class/es which is signed by the teacher and all students. All students are expected to abide by the **respect agreement** while in their classroom and in other school settings (library, cafeteria, etc.). In addition to their **respect agreements** and the stated school expectations, the following are some additional standards that all are expected to abide by:

- St. Paul's Lutheran School is a drug-free environment.
- Exercise wholesome thought and speech patterns. Use of profanity and coarse joking, particularly that which is degrading to gender, ethnicity and/ or people groups, is not acceptable and will result in the discipline process.)
- In an effort to minimize awkward situations, and to protect their personal relationships, students are expected to refrain from inappropriate public displays of affection.

ST. PAUL'S DISCIPLINE GOALS

While we aspire to be a community of mutually caring and uplifting Christian relationships, we also recognize that we, who are involved in community, are imperfect people. Our student discipline at St. Paul's Lutheran School is intended to be a process that:

1. is fair and just;
2. will enhance the academic purpose and atmosphere of the campus;
3. is educational and developmental for the students involved, encouraging student maturity by providing students with the opportunity to learn from their mistakes;
4. provides opportunity for reconciliation of those who have been harmed or disrespected, enabling the restoration of each involved individual to each other and to the community;
5. encourages student responsibility by holding them accountable for their own actions including making restitution for damages;
6. enhances the safety and wellbeing of all people on campus; and
7. improves individual and school academic success.

ST. PAUL'S DISCIPLINE PROCESS

Adapted from Discipline that Restores by Ron & Roxanne Claassen

When a student's behavior is disruptive to the teacher or other students, the following process is to be followed to help the student modify their behavior and to regain the student's cooperation with their teacher, students and other adults at the school.

Our discipline process is rooted in Christ-centered relationships and the goal of restoration. We use the "Discipline That Restores" framework to guide learners toward taking responsibility, making things right, and growing through their choices.

STEP 1: Respect Reminder

- The teacher gives a calm, respectful reminder about the inappropriate behavior.
- If behavior improves: Celebrate and encourage!
- If behavior continues: Move to Step 2.

STEP 2: Respect Agreement Reminder

- The learner is reminded of the classroom respect agreement.
- If the learner responds positively: Celebrate and encourage
- If not: Move to Step 3.

STEP 3: Conversation Using Love and Logic or Active Listening

- The teacher has a one-on-one conversation using Love and Logic or active listening strategies.

- If behavior improves: Celebrate and encourage!
- If not: Move to Step 4.
- The teacher will contact the parent to make them aware that their child reached this stage.

STEP 4: Reflection & Referral

- Learner is referred to a Reflection Corner or space to think and complete a referral form.
After reflection, the learner chooses:
 - Option 1: Meet with the teacher to create a behavior agreement.
 - Option 2: Meet with the teacher and a mediator to create a behavior agreement.
- Agreements are reviewed at a later follow-up.
- If kept: Celebrate!
- If not: Reassess and proceed to Step 5.

STEP 5: Family Conference

- A conference is held with the teacher, principal, learner, and parent(s), with mediation as needed.
- A new agreement is created and monitored.
- If followed: Celebrate!
- If not: Proceed to Step 6.

STEP 6: Administrative Review

- The principal consults with the School Board.
- A formal behavior contract may be created.
- If upheld: The learner continues enrollment.
- If broken: Leadership will determine next steps, which may include removal from school.
 - For the family who does not reach an agreement at the Family Conference, the Principal will bring the matter to the attention of the Board of Education. Upon review, the Board of Education members will make a decision for the student and family, at all times following the St. Paul's discipline principles, and develop a behavior contract that the student and family must abide by in order to remain as a student at St. Paul's Lutheran School. This behavior contract may include revisiting any Step of the discipline process outlined above.
 - If the family is not agreeable to signing the behavior contract, or the student behavior does not improve, the matter will be referred back to the Board of Education for a decision to be imposed.

DISCIPLINE for SEVERE OFFENSES

For serious violations (e.g., physical harm, threats, weapons, etc.), the school may move directly to Steps 4, 5, or 6, depending on the severity and context.

Examples of Major Infractions

- Cheating and/or Forgery
- Bodily Harm, Physical Abuse, and/or Moral Misconduct
- Intentional Destruction or Stealing (Personal or School Property)
- Tobacco/Alcohol/Drugs/Weapons (Possession, Use of, or Under the Influence)

Consequences for Cheating and/or Forgery:

1. Upon the first offense, the student will be given an alternate assignment or test with a 10% reduction in grade received. The teacher will initiate Step 1 of the discipline process with the student. The teacher will contact parent(s) and the incident will be recorded in the student's cumulative file.
2. Upon the second offense, the student will be given an alternate assignment or test with a 20% reduction in the grade received. The teacher will contact parent(s) and administrator and the incident will be recorded in the student's cumulative file.
3. Upon the third offense, the matter will be referred to the School Authority.

Cheating/forgery will be defined as the following behaviors:

- Copying or allowing homework to be copied.
- Cheating on quizzes or exams (i.e. stealing test materials, using cheat notes, signaling answers, copying answers or allowing answers to be copied.)
- Plagiarism is using the work or words of another and NOT giving credit to the author.

Consequences for Bodily Harm, Physical Abuse, and/or Moral Misconduct:

The student/teacher and administrator will work through Step 4 of the discipline process and appropriate consequences will be assigned.

Consequences for Intentional Destruction or Stealing (Personal or School Property):

Depending upon the severity of the offense, the administration may notify the appropriate authorities. In addition, any of the following actions may be taken by the administration.

1. A specific dollar amount will be assessed for the damage or loss on the first offense. Parents will be contacted by the principal. Payment and/or replacement must be made within three (3) school days unless other arrangements have been made. All such action will be noted in the student's file.
2. The Student/teacher will work through Step 4 of the discipline process. Referral to an outside agency may be discussed. All such action will be noted in the student's file.

Consequences for Tobacco/Alcohol/Drugs/Weapons (Possession, Use of, or Under the Influence):

The student/teacher and administrator will work through Step 4 of the discipline process.

1. The severity of the infraction may result in expulsion.
2. An automatic recommendation of expulsion will be made to the Board of Education upon the second offense.

Christ-Centered Curriculum:

All students need and deserve a safe and comfortable learning environment. Staff members shall report any incident of harassment, intimidation, or non-inclusion to the principal. New empathy/inclusion curriculum entitled "Second Steps" will be part of each K-8 academic year. Social learning helps students navigate situations to develop deeper connections to peers, teachers, and the school community. Second Steps provides social/emotional learning which assists students and schools to thrive.

Qualities of a Christ-Centered school culture include:

- Empathy and connection
- Cooperation among students
- Consideration of others
- Peer conflicts are incidental
- Peer conflicts move toward resolution
- Everyone takes personal responsibility for their actions
- There is a shared attitude of repairing hurt and misunderstanding
- Coercion and intimidation are discouraged; mutuality and justice are encouraged
- When an impasse is encountered in peer relationships, adults help to foster resolution
- Shy individuals are invited into play and engage in activities
- Very active and excitable children are taught skills to calm and regulate their emotions and behavior
- Parents support and foster effective repair and conflict resolution among siblings and between parents and children
- Parents and teachers share a mutual understanding and process to address peer conflicts collaboratively

Non-Christ like behavior may include:

- intentional attempts by one or more individuals to inflict physical hurt and/or psychological distress on one or more victims over which the individuals hold an imbalance of physical or psychological power, with the individual being, or perceived to be, dominant over the victim
- intentional behavior which causes harm to a student or the student's property
- intentional behavior which causes a reasonable student to fear for his/her physical or emotional safety or for the safety of his/her property
- intentional behavior that substantially interferes with a student's education
- any acts of intimidation or harassment that are sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive in that they create an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student

- any intentional act or conduct toward a student which is based on an actual or perceived trait or characteristic of the student and which creates an objectively hostile school environment
- any threat of retaliation for the reporting of any of the foregoing acts.

Non-Christ like behavior may be direct, with face-to-face physical or verbal confrontation, or indirect, with less visible actions, such as spreading rumors or social exclusion. These activities may be physical, verbal, written, or electronic, and can take the form of slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendoes, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, gestures, attacks or threats. Although a single attack on a victim, if severe enough, can be accurately described as non-inclusive and non-empathetic behavior, it more often refers to a series of negative actions that occur frequently over time.

Depending upon the severity of the offense, the administrator may skip the initial steps in the discipline process. The school board becomes involved if or when needed.

1. The student will be sent to the principal's office, infraction noted in student's file, parent(s) contacted.
2. A conference will be held with the parent(s), teacher, and principal. A note of disciplinary action will be added to the student's cumulative file.
3. Referral to an outside agency may be discussed. A note of disciplinary action will be filed in the student's cumulative file.
4. A behavior contract will be developed if necessary.
5. The student may be expelled from school under the direction of the School Board.

DEFINITIONS AND ADMINISTRATION OF DISCIPLINE

In-School Suspension:

The student is suspended from attending regular classes. The student will be expected to work on class assignments in a designated area. The student will be counted as absent for classes missed while serving an in-school suspension. Homework for the next day will be completed in an acceptable manner. The parent(s) will be notified. The student is suspended from all extra-curricular privileges during in-school suspension.

Suspension:

A student is suspended from regular classes and will not be allowed to attend school. The student will be expected to work on missed assignments while suspended. Acceptable standards will be expected for missed assignments. The parent(s) will be notified. Students will be suspended from all extra-curricular privileges during suspension.

Expulsion:

Expulsion is the termination of the student's enrollment in the school. St. Paul's Lutheran School reserves the right to expel any student for persistent or severe misconduct or failure of parent(s) or student(s) to comply with school rules and standards.

St. Paul's Lutheran School Board has the sole authority to expel students without further approval of any other officer, board, or assembly of St. Paul's Lutheran Church. No tuition or other fees paid to the school shall be refunded upon expulsion.

Corporal Punishment:

St. Paul's Lutheran School will not administer corporal punishment.

FINAL DISCIPLINE STATEMENT

These progressive steps are guidelines. The extent to which they are implemented in any specific case is to be determined by the sole discretion of the faculty, staff, and administration of St. Paul's Lutheran School. Certain behaviors of a severe nature, but not identified in this policy, may result in immediate action not herein identified.

Teachers and administrators will not always be aware of misbehavior that is taking place, but they will be as consistent as possible in correcting behavior that is disruptive to the learning environment. Parents can be a great help and influence by supporting the teachers. Parents with concerns about classroom discipline should first contact the teacher to discuss the problem before bringing the issue to the administration personnel. (See Grievance Policy)

1 John 3, verses 23 – 24: And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

PROPERTY

All student and school property is to be treated with care and respect. Students will be held responsible for damage to school property (i.e. textbooks, lockers, desks, equipment, technology, etc.). Fees for destroyed property will be assessed to the family prior to the last day of school.