

Trinity Lutheran School

Handbook



2016-17

"As a family united in Christ, Trinity Lutheran School exists to assist parents in bringing children up in the training and instruction of the Lord."

school@trinitybelleplaine.org www.trinitybelleplaine.org

OUR MISSION

“As a family united in Christ, Trinity Lutheran School exists to assist parents in bringing children up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”

OUR VISION

1. Children will learn God’s Word in its truth and purity in all areas of the curriculum.
2. Parents, children, and Trinity staff will work in partnership to create a God-pleasing learning environment.
3. Children will thrive spiritually, academically, physically, emotionally, and socially year after year.
4. Our community will recognize Trinity School as a school of excellence.

OUR OBJECTIVES

Trinity Lutheran Congregation operates a school in order to accomplish the following:

1. To nurture believers for lives of Christian service
2. To win the lost for Christ
3. To assist families in the spiritual education of their children
4. To prepare children in Preschool through 8th grade for learning
5. To give children the tools needed to succeed in high school and beyond
6. To prepare children for a life of God-pleasing citizenship in the community.

WHAT WE BELIEVE AND TEACH

All the usual and required elementary subjects are taught in our school. However, here at Trinity those subjects are taught in the light of God's Word as given to us in the Bible.

1. We believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God.
2. We believe that the Bible is the only source of faith and Christian living.
3. We believe and teach that the Bible does not contain any errors, mistakes, or contradictions.
4. The Bible is the basis of all of our teaching because it alone can answer the three most important questions that all of us must finally answer:
 - Where did we come from?

- Why are we here?
- Where are we going?

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

“God our Savior ... wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.” (1 Timothy 2:4)
God’s love knows no bounds. Trinity does not discriminate on the basis of race, nationality, color, ethnic origin, gender, or handicap.

SCHOOL HOURS

Trinity School is in session from 8:20 AM to 3:05 PM. Preschool is in session from 8:30 until 11:00 AM. **Students should not come prior to 8:05 AM.** We do not provide supervision for children outside of the building before school. [Children who arrive early on the bus will be directed to their child’s classroom.]

SCHOOL PHONE

Generally, someone is available in the office to answer calls during the day. If you would like to speak with a teacher, please make every effort to call before school begins or after school dismisses. The Principal keeps office hours between 8:20 and 9:00 AM on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays and between 1:00 and 3:00 PM Tuesdays and Fridays. Feel free to call during those times as well.

Students should not expect to use the phone except for emergencies, such as calling home when sick. A student may use his or her cell phone with the teacher’s permission. Otherwise, it should be kept in the student’s backpack in the “off” position.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum of our school is designed to meet the educational needs of our students and prepare them for high school. The curriculum is based on the recommendations of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and the Minnesota Department of Education. The requirements established by the State of Minnesota in §120A.22 are met and exceeded. Our textbooks have been carefully evaluated before they were adopted for our use.

The teaching of the Word of God forms the core of our curriculum. We teach religion in specific classes,

such as Bible History, Catechism (Instruction Class), Church History, and Hymnology. In addition, God's Word forms the foundation of each subject.

Trinity School has a regular schedule of curriculum review.

MEMORY WORK

Memorization of Bible passages, hymn verses, and the six chief parts of Luther's Small Catechism is considered necessary. The material that we choose for memorization is considered to be the core of our faith. We want our children to be able to give an account of their faith to others and to find comfort for themselves when needed.

You can help by taking an interest in that memory work and in emphasizing its importance.

NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION

For religion classes and all assigned memory work, Trinity School uses the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible. Occasionally, we will use a different translation to clarify a passage or make it more accessible to the younger students. Copies of the NIV Bible, intended for class use, may be purchased on Registration Day or ordered through the school office at any time during the year.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued four times a year. The Report Card gives you some idea of how well your child is performing in school. The following scale is used for grading:

A	94-100	S	Satisfactory
B	86-93	N	Needs Improvement
C	78-85	U	Unsatisfactory
D	70-77	I	Incomplete
F	69-0		
L	Learning [Kindergarten only]		

Parents are able to access their child's grades at any time using the online program, JupiterGrades.

Parents are given access information at the beginning of the year.

HOMEWORK

Homework is the best means you have of keeping a day-to-day connection with your child's education. Since homework is assigned regularly, it can provide almost continuous contact between you, your child, and your child's teacher.

Your motivation and support are the most important factors in determining whether a child will do well in school. With encouragement, children are almost certain to develop a positive attitude toward school. You can let your child know that education is a priority in your family, and homework is a part of that attitude.

Generally, younger children will have memory work, some reading, and math. **Kindergartners** have an ongoing project of collecting pictures that relate to the letters they are studying in school. As students move through the grade levels, you can expect that your child will have increasing homework responsibilities. The general rule is ten minutes of homework a night per grade level. (For example, a 5th Grade student may be expected to do fifty minutes of homework at night.) When questions about homework do come up, please contact your child's teacher.

BOOK CARE

Please encourage your child to take care of the books that he or she uses during the year. They are expensive and must last for a number of years. School-owned textbooks must be kept covered. Books that are damaged may result in a fee to cover the cost of the damage.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

We regularly schedule two Parent-Teacher Conferences each year. The first is scheduled shortly after the end of the first grading quarter. We ask that all parents schedule a conference time with each of their children's teachers at the first conference. The second conference is scheduled toward the end of the third grading quarter. This conference is scheduled by the parent or teacher should the need arise.

We encourage parents and teachers alike to stay in frequent close contact with either special conferences or by informal contact during the school year.

individual responsibility to *ōteach the Word to all nations.ō*

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Trinity is not a private preparatory school. It is a parochial (church) school organized and sponsored by Trinity Lutheran Church for the purpose of assisting parents in nurturing children and also providing spiritual outreach into the community. The preaching of that Gospel is the central reason for the school's existence. We believe that the most effective application of that lesson takes place when the family hears and participates in that service.

Attendance at worship services in their home church is expected of all of our students. Teachers are directed to record students' weekly church attendance and report it to parents each quarter.

Students are eligible to participate in extracurricular activities if they attend worship services at least 50% of the time they are offered.

SINGING

Children at Trinity School are given classroom training in singing, not only for the personal satisfaction which comes from music, but to also equip them to praise God in our services.

Each classroom functions as a choir for the worship service. When a child is not able to take part in this privilege, parents are asked to inform the classroom teacher. (A schedule of singing dates is distributed at the beginning of the year.)

Jr. Choir

In addition to classroom singing, children in Grades 4 - 8 are invited to join Jr. Choir. Jr. Choir practices twice per week and participates in worship services during the year.

MISSION OFFERINGS

A chapel service is held at the beginning of the day on Thursdays at Trinity School. On this day the children bring their individual contributions toward the work of God's kingdom. The opportunity that is given and the special mission envelopes that are used are designed to encourage our students to become aware of their

FIELD TRIPS

Whenever a class leaves the school grounds, a permission slip must be signed by the parent/guardian giving permission for a child to attend any type of field trip. Field trips are a part of the school day and children are expected to participate in them. In the event a parent volunteers to drive for a field trip, that parent must have proof of insurance and ensure that each child is buckled separately and secured in the vehicle according to current state law.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Faithful attendance is required of all students enrolled at Trinity Lutheran School. Students are excused from school when the absence is with the knowledge and approval of the child's parents or guardians for the following reasons:

- Child's personal illness
- Severe illness or death in the family (A doctor's note is required if a child is ill more than two successive days.)
- Health appointments (However, we ask that health appointments be scheduled outside of regular school hours if at all possible.)
- Special emergencies.

Students are truant if they are absent, without excuse, for all or part of a school day. If notification is not received by the day after an absence, the absence is considered unexcused. An unexcused absence (truancy) requires the parents to meet with the principal. Students cannot be excused for the following reasons:

- Staying home to babysit
- Staying home to work
- Not feeling like attending school
- Oversleeping
- Shopping.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Student and class pictures are taken every year. The pictures are scheduled usually in September so that the completed pictures are in your hands before Christmas.

BIKES

Students may ride their bikes back and forth to school. Students on bikes should enter and exit the school grounds via Elk Street. They are to walk their bikes to the bike rack where they are to be kept during the school day. Students may not use them at recess or at other times during the day. We encourage good bike safety practices among our students. You are responsible for deciding whether or not to provide a lock for your child's bicycle. Trinity School is not liable for bikes left unlocked during the day.

HEALTH

Since good health is a gift of God, your school works to help you with your child's health care. The State of Minnesota provides a health nurse for Trinity School. The nurse is on call during the school day and keeps all medical and immunization records for Trinity. The health nurse also prepares a health plan each year for all students with special health considerations and trains staff members as needed in carrying out the plans for students in their classrooms.

All students entering our school for the first time must have a complete physical exam from your doctor. Trinity School is required by the State of Minnesota to have on file and maintain a complete listing of your child's immunizations. Children who are behind or have no record of immunizations on file will be **excluded** from classes until all requirements are met.

The following health screenings are held each year at Trinity School by the health nurse:

- Vision for Kindergarten and 2nd Grade
- Vision and hearing for 1st, 3rd, and 5th Grade
- Scoliosis for 5th Grade girls.

MEDICATIONS

All prescription and over-the-counter medicines in school must come in their original containers with a signed form from a legal guardian. (A copy of the form can be obtained from the school office or from the school's website.) A doctor's authorization is also required for all prescription and over-the-counter medications. The school nurse can be consulted for assistance.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Our school does not wish to take a legalistic approach concerning pupil appearance and clothing. However, we also feel that student appearance and behavior are a reflection and an influence on behavior and attitude. As Christians, we have a special responsibility not to give offense to others—either in our congregation or in the community.

This may strike some as a violation of personal choice and privilege, but God also tells us that *"You are not your own; you were bought at a price."* (1 Corinthians 6:20) This means that our responsibility is to serve God first.

We ask you as parents to help your child practice discretion and good sense in this matter. Inappropriate clothing and styles are to be avoided. In all questions concerning dress code issues, the administration reserves the right to determine what is appropriate.

DRESS CODE

Our Board of School Elders adopted the following specific dress code:

1. Avoid ripped, frayed, or torn clothing.
2. The length of clothing is to be appropriately modest. Shorts and skirts should be no shorter than the fingertips when the arms are hanging naturally at the side.
3. For safety, footwear should fit the foot. For sandals, there should be a strap that fits around the heel. No high heels or flip flops are permitted.
4. Seventh and eighth grade girls are permitted to wear makeup that is *natural* in appearance.
5. Hair should be natural in color.
6. Excess and elaborate jewelry are not permitted.
7. Sleeveless shirts must be fitted. Halter tops and spaghetti straps are not permitted. Clothing should cover the abdomen.
8. Neat, well-fitting "jogging" outfits are permitted.

9. Clothing or shirts that advertise drugs, alcohol, bands and musicians, professional wrestling, and the like are not to be worn.
10. Excessively tight clothing is not permitted.
11. Students are permitted to wear shorts during September, May, and June. Students are also allowed to wear shorts whenever WCCO4 or KARE11 reports that the high for the day will be 70 degrees or above.
12. During the winter students should wear outer clothing and have the necessary boots, gloves, etc. which permit them to play outside during recess times.

We expect our students to display modesty and neatness in their dress as a reflection of a God-pleasing respect for their bodies. *“Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in your midst?”* (I Corinthians 3:16) Both parents and teachers will encourage our students to show Christian judgment in this matter. The school reserves the right to censure a student’s clothing or appearance. In the case of dress code issues not specified in this policy, the Principal will make a final determination.

CLOTHING IDENTIFICATION

Each year at the close of the school term, we are left with a large collection of lost and unclaimed clothing, boots, mittens, and hats. Please put identification on your child's clothing. This is especially important in the winter when we have to sort out and match up pairs of similar mittens and boots.

GYM SHOES

Our children are expected to change into gym shoes whenever they are in the gym. We ask our parents to provide gym shoes with light-colored soles. Black or dark-colored soles often leave marks on the gym, classroom, and hallway floors.

HARASSMENT

In keeping with the Scriptural principle that one’s love for God is shown through love to his fellow man (I John 3-4), Trinity will not tolerate students harassing other students. Harassment is defined as unwanted behavior, including verbal abuse, physical abuse,

sexual innuendo, willful defacing or destroying the property of others, and inciting or encouraging others to harass a student. Consequences may include conduct referrals, suspension, or a recommendation to the Board of School Elders for expulsion. All incidences of harassment should be reported to the Principal.

WEAPONS

The administration reserves the right to expel a student who brings any type of authentic or replica-style handgun, knife, or other weapon onto the school premises.

DISCIPLINE

Without proper discipline and order, no school can function. We believe that an undisciplined child can grow up to be a poor citizen of his community or, worse, an unprofitable servant in God's kingdom.

The Bible clearly teaches that all of us are sinners. Many times, in our weakness, we will follow our flesh and sin against God and man. It is at times like this that the Law is used to point out sin. After that has been done, the Gospel can then be used to give assurance that Christ has died as payment for all of our sins.

Christian students can contribute in creating an atmosphere of good Christian order and to make their school a place where learning can take place. Students can learn to *“Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”* (Matthew 5:16)

Parents and teachers can expect the following from the students at our school:

1. They will obey and respect the pastors and members of the faculty as persons who have been placed over them by God.
2. They will uphold all rules of the school for the sake of decency and good order.
3. They will accept correction and discipline as being necessary.
4. They will not let problems with their classmates or teachers grow into sinful grudges, but instead, will honestly discuss those problems with the persons involved.

When you as a parent have a concern, you are expected to **first discuss that problem with the teacher directly involved.** Following that, if you feel it is necessary, you may bring the matter to the attention of the Principal. If you feel that your concern has not been answered you may bring up the matter to the Pastor or the Board of School Elders of Trinity School.

Since all of us are sinful human beings, let us approach our shared problems with prayer, courtesy, and Christian love.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical education activities are held regularly in our classes. Whether inside or outside, students should be properly dressed for these activities. Students in Grades 5 ó 8 must have physical education clothes for class. Students are not excused from either recess or physical education unless a parent contacts the teacher by note or phone.

PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students have opportunities to participate in various extracurricular activities at Trinity. Because of the high value that we place on the spiritual and academic development of our children, students must maintain a 80 average or better with no failing or incomplete grades and attend regular worship services at least 50% of the time they are offered.

SPORTS

Students in Grades 5 - 8 may take part in volleyball, soccer, basketball, softball, and track. Students in Grades 3 and 4 are sometimes invited to participate in basketball if extra players are needed.

Students who decide to take part in sports are making a commitment to their coach, team, and themselves. They are expected to follow through by regularly attending practices and games and with behavior reflecting a spirit of Christian love.

REGISTRATION

Registration for Trinity School is handled through TADS, an online tuition management company. Registration can be conducted online at www.tads.com. If a family would like to register through the mail, they should contact the Principal for more information. **Children are not allowed to attend classes until they are fully registered.**

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition: Trinity charges tuition to help with the expenses of operating a Christian Day School. The majority of the cost is generously covered by the members of Trinity Lutheran Church. Parents may set up tuition payments through TADS in one, two, or nine monthly installments. [A list of current tuition rates can be obtained from the school office.] Parents are able to reduce tuition payments through the PTO Scrip program. A percentage of each gift card purchase is applied to the child's tuition bill.

Book Fee: A \$50.00 book fee is charged for each child in Grades 1 ó 8 to help cover the costs of textbooks.

Technology Fee: A \$50.00 technology fee is charged for each child in Grades 1 ó 8 to help cover the costs of technology.

TUITION ASSISTANCE

Parents may apply for tuition assistance through their TADS accounts. All applications must be made by April 15 preceding the school year. BOSE will disperse tuition assistance funds at its July meeting. All information is confidential.

EXTENDED TUITION PAYMENT POLICY

Trinity School reserves the right to remove from classroom instruction any student whose tuition is more than one quarter past due until payment is made. Diplomas of graduation will not be issued until full payment is made. The Board of School Elders will consider extensions on tuition payment upon application to the School Board Chairman.

PAST DUE TUITION

Families with any past due balances from a previous school year will be required to pay those past due amounts **prior to** registration for a new school year. Accounts that are in arrears will be charged a late fee of \$29.00.

“NON-SUFFICIENT FUNDS” FEE

If the school, for any reason, receives a check that the bank deems to be an NSF check, a fee of **\$29.00** will be assessed and payable in the next billing cycle. This fee is used to cover the bank's charges and administration costs which will be incurred as a result of the NSF check.

POST OR PRE-DATED CHECKS

Post or pre-dated checks will **NOT** be accepted for any purpose at any time.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

When severe weather or other emergencies make it necessary to cancel classes, announcements can be heard on WCCO (830 AM) radio. Trinity will be closed whenever the Belle Plaine Public School system closes for inclement weather. Trinity will make every effort to contact parents any time Trinity closes and Belle Plaine Public Schools remain open.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

Trinity School PTO is a support organization of the school. All parents of Trinity School children are members of the PTO. Trinity PTO meets four times a year. This group provides an opportunity for parents to make important decisions, receive updates on the school, and volunteer to help the school in a variety of areas.

TRINITY BOOSTER CLUB

The Trinity Booster Club takes care of the concession stand at home volleyball and basketball games. Parents with children participating in sports will be asked to take their turn assisting with the Booster Club. Any funds generated by the Booster Club go to the Athletic Fund.

VOLUNTEERS

Trinity School enjoys the benefit of many volunteers. We encourage family and friends of the school to share their skills and time to help children learn. Please note, however, that all volunteers of the school must have someone vouch for them. They must also submit to a background verification check. This is done to help ensure the safety of our children.

BACKGROUND VERIFICATION CHECKS

To help ensure the safety of our children, all staff members and volunteers who work directly with children must agree to submit to a background verification check. Parent volunteers who participate in overnight trips must also submit to a background verification check. Background verification checks are conducted by the Principal and are valid for a term determined by BOSE. [Currently, a new check is conducted every five years.]

BOARD OF SCHOOL ELDERS

The Trinity Board of School Elders (BOSE) is the governing body of the school. It is responsible for all policies of the school. Thus, the Principal, faculty, and PTO operate under their supervision. BOSE members are elected and accountable to the Coordinating Council of Trinity Congregation.

Questions about direct classroom concerns should, of course, be addressed first to the classroom teacher. Questions and concerns about policy or procedures may also be made to the Principal or to members of BOSE.

Individuals or families with issues requiring action, approval, or direction from the School Board must present their request in person to BOSE prior to any consideration, decision, or action being taken by BOSE at a regularly scheduled meeting.

FINALLY

“These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.” (Deuteronomy 6:6-7)

The responsibility that the Lord gives to parents is an awesome one. Trinity School has been founded to help you meet that responsibility. In order for us to assist you, we have to communicate frequently, frankly, and effectively. Always feel free to call on us as the need arises.

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