

**Private School Choice Program  
Disclosure of Information  
2023-2024**



**FIRST  
LUTHERAN  
SCHOOL**

First Evangelical Lutheran  
School 415 Devendorf St.

Elkhorn, WI

53121

Phone:

262-1091

# First Lutheran School Information

## **SCHOOL'S MISSION STATEMENT:**

First Lutheran Church and School is committed to providing an outstanding education in God's Word and an excellent Christ-centered academic program which prepares students for a life of service to God and others.

## **CURRENT ADMINISTRATION STAFF:**

### **Principal / Administrator:**

Michael Falk                      [mrfalk@firstatthecross.com](mailto:mrfalk@firstatthecross.com)

### **Board of Christian Education:**

Mathew Bongard - Chairman              [bongard9504@gmail.com](mailto:bongard9504@gmail.com)

David Duwe

Daniel Lauderdale

Aaron Mertes

Steve Adamson

Kevin Syverson

Michael Falk - Principal

Mike Kuschel - Pastor

# Private School Choice Program Handbook

## **Not for Profit Status**

First Evangelical Lutheran School is a member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). As a member of the WELS, First Lutheran qualifies as a 501(c) (3) tax-exempt organization under the WELS umbrella in Group 1173. Formal verification of First Lutheran's not-for-profit status is kept on file in the school office and is available for viewing.

## **Application Appeal Process**

Under First Evangelical Lutheran School's appeals process, a rejected applicant has five working days from the date of receipt of their notice of rejection, or by May 1, (whichever date is earlier) to provide written evidence to the school's choice administrator that the applicant was improperly rejected. If the applicant thinks their entry was denied wrongfully by the school's choice administrator, they may appeal in writing to the school's board chairman. The school's board chairman shall respond to the applicant's appeal within five working days of receipt of the appeal notifying him or her of the acceptance or rejection of the appeal. The board chairman's decision regarding the appeal will be final.

## **Suspension and Expulsion Policy**

In Proverbs 23.-13, God's Word tells us, "Do not withhold discipline from a child." The Christian teachers in our school are assisting the parents in the training and disciplining of the children. As God's representatives, teachers and parents work together in performing this important duty. We seek to correct the child when needed, as Christians caring for fellow Christians in the name of God.

Should it become necessary for a teacher to discipline a child for their misbehavior, it will be done out of love for them as children of God's family and citizens of this school.

Whenever a student's conduct is such that it demonstrates repeated refusal to obey school rules, endangers the property, health, or safety of others, or consistently disrupts the learning environment, action may be taken to restrict his/her privileges and rights of school attendance including suspension and expulsion. Withholding privileges or access to the school is done only for the purpose of maintaining a wholesome learning environment.

## **Suspension**

The Principal reserves the right to suspend a student for a disciplinary infraction and/or consistent or serious disregard of school policy. First Evangelical Lutheran School personnel will contact the student's parent/guardian immediately via phone and arrange a parental conference as soon as possible.

Suspension lengths are determined by the Principal and communicated to the parent/guardian in writing. These range from one day to a week — depending on the severity of an act.

Any student who is suspended is prohibited from participating in any school activity on or off campus. The student is prohibited from being on school property until a conference has been held with the parent/guardian. Suspensions are either in-school or out-of-school depending on the offense.

See First Lutheran School 2021-2022 for further details on suspensions.

## **Expulsion**

*In extreme cases of disciplinary problems with the soul of the child and the souls of the other children in consideration, Board of Christian Education of First Evangelical Lutheran School has the right to expel a student. At such time, the parents/guardians would be expected to appear before the Board of Christian Education so that all would be done decently and in order. Any student may be expelled when the relationship of the student and the school is no longer mutually beneficial.*

Actions that could lead to expulsion include, but are not limited to:

- Acts which are illegal under local and state statutes
- Verbal, physical or sexual harassment, or retaliation against an individual who has made a complaint of harassment
- Student is considered to be a threat to self or others
- Student has had multiple school suspensions yet continues to have a serious disregard for school policies
- Student cannot successfully complete the terms of disciplinary probation and the Board of Christian Education recommends expulsion as a last resort.

If a student is to face disciplinary action that could result in expulsion (permanent removal from school), the following will occur:

1. Parents/Guardians will be notified via telephone on the day of the expulsion and the student will be immediately removed from school.
2. A meeting with the Principal, *Board of Christian Education*, parents/guardians and student will take place within five days after student's removal from school.
3. After the meeting, parents/guardians and student will be notified of the Board of Christian Education's decision and the terms for reentry or permanent expulsion.
4. If the student is permitted to return to school, prior to his/her return, a conference with the Principal, *Board of Christian Education*, parents/guardians and student must occur to review and sign a statement agreeing to the terms of reentry.

## **Due Process**

Prior to any suspension and expulsion, the student must be advised of the reason for the discipline by the school. The parent or guardian of a suspended or expelled student is given prompt notice of the discipline and the reasons for the action. Students who are expelled may appeal their disciplinary action.

1. The student, or his/her parent or guardian, may within five school days following notification of the suspension or expulsion appeal to the Board Chair in writing with rationale for appeal
2. Before the appeals hearing is held, the parents and student are informed that the student may be voluntarily withdrawn up until the time that the final disciplinary action that is approved takes effect.
3. Parents/legal guardians shall be notified in writing at least five days before the hearing is to take place. This notification period can be waived by mutual consent of the parents and the school if an expedited hearing date is advisable. The appeals hearing shall be heard by the Board Chair.
4. If the decision to suspend/expel the student is made by the Board Chair, parents are notified, in writing, within five days of the action.

### **Transfer Credits Policy**

First Evangelical Lutheran will consider accepting school credit from other institutions to the extent coursework at the previous institution is documented in accordance with First Evangelical Lutheran School's academic standards as adopted under 118.30(1g)(a)3. All final determinations for the acceptance or rejection of transfer credits shall be made at the discretion of the school's principal and Board of Christian Education. Grade placement will be determined by post application testing and/or evaluation of student records.

### **High School Diploma Policy**

*This does not apply to our school since we are a K4-8 school.*

### **Non-Harassment Policy**

First Evangelical Lutheran School is committed to making our school a safe and caring place for all students. We will treat others with respect and will refuse to tolerate bullying in any form. Bullying is anti-social behavior and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

### **First Evangelical Lutheran School defines bullying as the following:**

Bullying is unwanted, intentional, and aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated over time. In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- An imbalance of power: Kids 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.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once.

Bullying can happen in person or through various types of social media or other technology.

Examples of bullying may include, but are not limited to:

- Making threats
- Spreading rumors
- Attacking someone physically or verbally

- Excluding someone from a group on purpose

First Evangelical Lutheran School takes any bullying behavior seriously. Any student who feels as if they have been bullied should follow these steps.'

1. Let the offender know that you want the behavior to stop. Be clear and direct. Don't assume that the other person knows your feelings. If you are not comfortable talking to the offender alone, ask a teacher to accompany you.
2. If the offensive behavior does not stop, inform the teacher and your parents immediately. Timing is very important. The more time that passes, the harder it is to address the issue.
3. At this point the students, teacher, principal and parents will work out a plan to resolve the issue in the light of God's Word.

### **Bullying Prevention**

First Evangelical Lutheran School exists to assist parents in training and instruction of their children in the light of God's Word. God's Word is integrated into every class and is the basis for our school culture and environment. Students are expected to act in a Christ-like manner in all aspects of their life. First Evangelical Lutheran School takes the following proactive steps to prevent bullying in our school:

- Student expectations are clearly stated in the handbook and regularly reviewed by teachers, students, and parents.
- Teachers and students review the bullying policy at the beginning of the year.
- Teachers regularly review and facilitate conflict management as directed by God in Matthew Ch. 18
- Teachers use the following Bible stories and other books throughout the year, making specific applications to student life and proper student behavior:
  - o The Good Samaritan
  - o David and Jonathan
  - o Joseph and his brothers
  - o Catechism/Bible Lessons and applications of the 5' Commandment
  - o Catechism/Bible Lessons and applications o/the 8<sup>th</sup> Commandment
  - o Ephesians Ch. 4:29-32
  - o *Book of James* (power of your tongue)
  - o *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio (7-8<sup>th</sup> grade)
  - o *Restart* by Gordon Korman (7-8<sup>th</sup> grade)
  - o *Magic Tree House Twister on Tuesday* (3<sup>d</sup> grade)
- Whole school discussions on school climate and treatment of others intentionally addressed during and after chapel - specifically at the beginning, middle, and end of the year, and then as needed.
- Teachers serve as excellent role models, and are observant of student behavior while in the school building

Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with teachers and parents including but not limited to:

- Official Warning

- Detention out of classroom
- Exclusion from certain activities, e.g. recess
- Short-term in-school suspension
- Expulsion

All adults in the school, including administrators, custodians, teachers, office personnel, aides, and other staff, need to help in the prevention of harassment and bullying.

## **Visitor Policy**

### **Parental Access to Classroom**

Parents are welcome and encouraged to participate in daily activities at the school. Parents may also observe their children's classes provided that the observation is scheduled in advance or the parent has received permission from an administrator to observe the class. The school administration is committed to providing teachers with advanced notice of guests in the classroom. This is done not only as a courtesy to teachers but also to ensure that the educational process is not disrupted and as an added security measure. Parents must also enter through the church door (D6), sign in at the front office, receive and wear a guest pass, and wait to be escorted.

Parents may be denied the opportunity to observe a class if the school administration has determined that the parents' presence has had, is having, or may have a negative impact on the educational process. This has only happened on a very occasional basis and is very rarely enforced. When parents are denied the opportunity to observe a class they may appeal to the Chairman of the Board of Christian Education.

### **Visitors**

If the student has a guest, his/her guest is required to register with the school office and notify the principal at least one day before the guest's visit to the school. All adult visitors must sign in at the front office, receive and wear a guest pass.

## **Academic Standards**

First Evangelical Lutheran School has adopted the pupil academic standards issued by the governor as Executive Order No. 326, dated January 13, 1998.