
**ST. JOHN
LUTHERAN SCHOOL**

*Where
Children
Soar!*

Through Nurture and Education

A Quick Glance

***ST. JOHN EV. LUTHERAN
CHURCH & SCHOOL***

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**HANDBOOK
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FORWARD

The faculty and staff at St. John Lutheran Church and School along with the Board of Christian Education are dedicated to providing academic and spiritual guidance for all students. Our goal in teaching the Christian faith is the development and nurturing of a child as a member of Christ's body, the Church. Through a curriculum based on integrating the Christian faith into the syllabi of the State of New York, the school and home work in concert to develop a child's own uniqueness and an appreciation for uniqueness of others. Teaching Christ-centered citizenship and social skills reflects our concern for character development. At St. John School each child is being prepared to meet the challenges of life in the word: a life of service to our Lord in His Church and life eternal.

The school facilities include . . .

- < Spacious classrooms*
- < Latest in technology*
- < Computers – networked, Internet*
- < Modern furnishings and equipment*
- < Science classroom and lab*
- < Full gym*
- < Lunchroom and kitchen*
- < Classroom accessories essential to meet all curriculum requirements*
- < Outdoor facilities include a playground, and soccer field*

St. John is a contiguous part of a system of over 2,000 national and international Lutheran schools. Our school is nationally accredited and meets criteria set forth in standards established by the education department of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. The school received its first accreditation in 1995 and was reaccredited in 2002, 2011 and 2016. The accreditation represents a collection of the highest standards of education. Integrated into these standards is the Christian faith. Every five years accreditation will be reviewed. Accreditation recognizes strengths and weaknesses with recognition through certification. Recommendation for improvements is a part of the certification process.

Academically, St. John is continually striving to give its students the highest quality education. Many of its students rank highly on state and national tests and have successfully completed high school, college, graduate school and other educational programs. Frequently our students and former students achieve scholastic, athletic and professional recognition. The curriculum at St. John reflects the requirements of the State of New York. Texts and educational materials are reviewed annually and updated regularly.

The faculty has all received bachelor's degrees in education with a number of them having earned a master's in education degree. Of highest priority in Lutheran Schools is teaching the Christian faith. Many of our teachers graduated from Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod colleges and exceeds the standards set for public education by adding religion courses necessary to teach the faith. Teachers are encouraged to continue their education through workshops, seminars and continuing education classes.

Kindergarten – 5th grade classrooms are primarily self-contained. Our reading program places the student at a level that meets his/her need and challenges each child.

Students in Grades 6, 7 and 8 take Spanish as their foreign language. A Spanish Proficiency exam is given to graduating 8th grade students to determine high school placement. Advanced 8th grade math students receive instruction in 9th grade Algebra and are given the 9th grade June regents. Departmentalization is included in the curriculum of Grades 6-8. These arrangements allow for the child to interact with several teachers.

Religion plays an important part in the effort to train up a child in the way he should go. (Prov. 22:6.) Without this important aspect in a child's education, St. John has no real purpose to exist. Daily instruction in the Word of God and weekly chapel services assists the child in his/her understanding of the Word and the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ. Through the power of this Gospel, the child develops a closer relationship to His Savior.

St. John welcomes the opportunity to serve you and your children and invites you to become a part of our family.



HISTORY

The Lutheran School system is an integral part of American education.

The elementary schools of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod date back to the decade between 1830 and 1840, when a number of Lutheran congregations were organized in Midwestern states and established Christian Day Schools for their children. The first of these schools is older than the public schools. Lutheran Schools are not in competition with public schools, but seek to work closely with the public schools in fulfilling educational responsibilities in the community. The Bible's philosophical approach is much different in that the inspired Word of God is the source of truth.

St. John Lutheran School preceded the establishment of our congregation as a branch school of Holy Ghost Lutheran Church in Bergholz, New York. The school was opened here in the Johnsburg area in 1846 because of distance and travel hardships. Then in 1853, German settlers transferred their membership from Holy Ghost along with the teacher, August Hoge, and dedicated St. John Ev. Lutheran Church and School. The school had 82 students.

A second school was built in 1897 and remodeled in 1951. In September, 1966 we moved into the present facilities which were remodeled in 1984 and 1986. In November of 2009 an expansion to the facility added a science room & lab, library, technology room, and 8th grade language arts room equipped with the most recent educational technology.

Until 1940 one teacher taught all eight grades. Today St. John employs a full-time administrator with a teaching staff of 16 full and part-time teachers and 4 teachers' aides. We have a full-day kindergarten and both three and four year old preschool programs. Other curriculum additions are noted in this handbook.

St. John has been privileged and blessed by God to have had numerous faithful and dedicated teachers since its beginnings in 1846. God has also blessed our history with growth and a willingness to make changes as necessary to provide the best Christian education in meeting the academic, spiritual, social and emotional needs of the children in our care.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. John Lutheran School is to nurture children academically and spiritually toward a life of witness and service in Christ.

ENROLLMENT

Eligibility

St. John School is operated for the Christian training of the children of St. John Lutheran Church and encourages enrollment of children in the surrounding communities.

Enrollment Procedures

Parents of children seeking admission for the first time are asked to do the following:

- 1) Call or visit the school to arrange an interview with the Principal.*
- 2) Fill out all registration forms given in the information folder.*
- 4) A Kindergarten Readiness test is given to all new enrollees in kindergarten.*

**Enrollment procedures for the Early Childhood Education Programs are outlined in a separate handbook.*

Entrance Requirements

- 1) Three and four year old enrollees must be 3 and 4 years old by December 1. Kindergarten must be 5 by December 1.*
- 2) Immunizations & Physicals: **All students must have proof of physical and immunizations prior to entrance** in school.*

Immunization Requirements by Grade

Preschool

- DTP OR DTAP – 4 doses*
- Polio – 3 doses*
- MMR – 1 dose*
- Hepatitis B – 3 doses*
- Varicella – 1 dose*
- HIB – 1 to 4 doses*
- PCV- 1 to 4 doses*
- Proof of lead screening from physician for preschool only*

Kindergarten

- DTP or DTAP – 4 to 5 doses
- Polio – 3 to 5 doses
- MMR – 2 doses
- Hepatitis B – 3 doses
- Varicella - 2 doses

Grades 1 through 5

- DTP or DTAP – 4 to 5 doses
- Polio – 3 doses
- MMR – 2 doses
- Hepatitis B – 3 doses
- Varicella -1 dose

Grade 6

- DTP or DTAP – 3 doses
- Tdap³-1 dose
- Polio – 3 to 5 doses
- MMR – 2 doses
- Hepatitis B – 3 doses
- Varicella - 2 doses

Grades 7 & 8

- DTP or DTAP – 3 doses
- Tdap³-1 dose
- Polio – 3 doses
- MMR – 2 doses
- Hepatitis B – 3 doses
- Varicella -1 doses
- Menactra or Menovo (Meningococcal vaccine) - 1 dose (gr. 7)

Shadowing Program

Arrangements can be made for a prospective student to spend a day at St. John. He/she will be paired with a student from their class and "shadow" them.

Registration

There is a non-refundable registration fee that is paid by all students enrolled. This fee covers school insurance, some consumable workbooks and textbooks, art supplies, weekly news publications, and other consumables. The fee is published prior to the school year and is subject to yearly review. The current rate is available at the school office. Registration fee is to be paid by June 1. After this date, there is an additional fee added to the registration.

Tuition

St. John is supported through the voluntary offerings of the members of St. John Ev. Lutheran Church. These offerings help in covering school operation and pupil costs. This tuition, along with the subsidy of congregational members, minimal funding from NYS mandated services and federal grant, PTL & school fundraisers, memorials, special gifts, and financial aid cover the full cost of the educational program for each student. If for medical reasons or transfer from the area a child is not able to continue enrollment, tuition will be paid through the month. Tuition will be refunded in the same way if paid beyond the month enrolled.

The following tuition payment options are offered for Kindergarten- Grade 8:

- **Full payment** due July 6, 2018 with 5% discount on tuition. (Discount for K-8 only)
- **Two semester payment plan** with half tuition paid July 6, 2018 and the other half paid Jan. 30, 2019.
- **A 10-Month Payment Plan:** Deducts tuition payment automatically from a checking, savings, or credit card account each month, September-June. An Authorization form must be filled out and turned in, no later than August 3. Please note this change from previous years: **A \$40 non-refundable enrollment fee is added to the first of the 10 monthly payments for enrollment in this option.**

Tuition fees are subject to yearly review by the Board of Education and are published prior to the school year. Current rates are available on Fast Direct.

Financial Aid

The Board of Education is aware that for some families the payment of tuition may cause a financial hardship. Therefore, a tuition assistance program has been developed under the direction of the Financial Aid Committee. Information for this program and application forms are available on the website.

Bison Fund

The Bison Fund offers tuition assistance to families enrolling their children in a private school. The fund can cover up to 75% of the students' tuition. For more information and to apply, visit www.bisonfund.com.

STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK NOTES

A Student/Parent Handbook is provided for each family upon enrollment in Kindergarten to Grade 8 and available on Fast Direct. The following highlights some of the information included in this Handbook.

Transportation

Bus transportation is made available to residents of the Niagara Wheatfield School District as well as other non-city school districts. Bus service is limited to students who are five years of age or over by December 1. Transportation requests must be submitted to the Transportation Department of your home district by April 1 for the following year. City school districts in our area do not provide transportation, e.g., Niagara Falls and North Tonawanda.

School Hours

School hours are from 8:20 – 3:00. A school calendar is given to families at the beginning of each school year and is also available on Fast Direct.

Curriculum

St. John School has adopted curriculum established by:

- 1) The Education Department of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod*
- 2) The State of New York*
- 3) The Niagara Wheatfield Central School District*

St. John School complies with the school evaluations of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and its Eastern District. It has on file the latest New York State subject syllabi and works cooperatively with the Niagara Wheatfield School District and its curricula. In addition, St. John teachers attend Lutheran School workshops, conferences and seminars and also appropriate workshops prepared by the New York State Education Department and administered by Erie I BOCES.

In addition to State curriculum requirements, St. John offers instrumental lessons and a band program for students in Grades 4-8. Students are offered lessons once a week on various instruments of the band by a qualified instructor. The school is a member of the New York State Music Association (NYSMA), and Niagara County Music Education Association (NCMEA), and students compete in various county and regional competitions. A lesson fee is charged for each instrumental lesson.

Ninth grade Integrated Algebra is offered as an advanced math course to qualified students. The Regents Exam is given on campus in June.

Emphasis is placed on studying God's Word and living a life of faith in Jesus. The living Word affects every subject that is taught and is an integral part of the everyday lives of each of our students. The Christian faith is integrated into every area of the curriculum.

Conduct and Discipline

Every student is to exhibit a positive spirit of Christianity in his/her daily living, both in and out of school. This will be evidenced in the way the student interacts with other children and responds in a respectful, obedient manner to the entire staff.

The school reserves the right to discipline, and if necessary, to suspend or expel a child if the behavior is not in harmony with the policies of the school as a Christian institution. Upon suspension, a student forfeits all rights and privileges as a student for the suspended period.

Parents are informed of behavior problems that occur repeatedly and are contacted when these situations arise. This subject is specifically covered in the Student/Parent Handbook.

Attendance

Regular attendance is required of all students. Students who must be absent for a portion of the school day should attend the remainder of the day if possible. Any child returning to school after an absence is required to present a note to the teacher explaining the reason for the absence and day(s) of absence. Form notes for this purpose are supplied to each family at the beginning of the school year and are available thereafter from the school office. Students arriving at school late, leaving early, or who leave and return during the school day must be signed in or out at the office by the person responsible for the student.

Student Dress

St. John School administration asks that parents take the responsibility for the neat, clean, and appropriate dress of their child for school and school activities. Students are reminded that their dress should set a Christian example. The dress code is more specifically covered in the Student/Parent Handbook.

School Lunch Program

Our school participates in the federally funded lunch program for Preschool to Grade 8 and operates every day except on half days. We are proud to offer these nutritionally balanced lunches to our students each day. Information is available at the office and on the website regarding the eligibility, criteria and application procedures for the federally funded free and reduced price meals. Applications for those families who qualify for free or reduced lunches are accepted at any time during the school year.

Children may bring sack lunches. For those not participating in the school lunch program, the 2% white milk and 1% chocolate milk are available daily at extra cost.

Chapel Services

Chapel services are generally held each Wednesday during the school year. They are led by the pastor, principal, teachers, special guest speakers or visiting groups. Parents and friends are encouraged to attend these meaningful services. Offerings received at the services are designated for missions at home and abroad. Baptism birthdays are celebrated in chapel to stress the importance of this Sacrament.

Latchkey Program

Morning and afternoon Latchkey is organized to provide St. John students enrolled in Grades PK-8 before and after school supervision. Morning sessions begin at 7 a.m. and afternoon sessions are offered from 2:45-5:30 p.m. A Latchkey Handbook is available on Fast Direct or from the office. Please refer to that for regulations and fees.

Volunteers

St. John School depends on volunteer help from parents and friends. Some opportunities to help assist in the education of the students are listed below. A volunteer form is included in the Parent Portfolio which is given to parents at the beginning of each school year; however, you may offer your help at any time during the school year. Some examples are room mom, lunch help, lunch room monitor, driving for fieldtrips, teacher assistance, cheerleading, and office help.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Field Trips

Field trips are considered part of the curriculum of the school because they contribute directly to the student's education. Field trips conducted on school days are mandatory attendance days according to New York State law. If absent, an excuse is required. In all cases, children are prepared for field trips in advance and parents are informed. At times a nominal fee may be charged to defray actual costs. The 7th and 8th grade classes attend a Washington, DC field trip or Camp Pioneer field trip each year.

School Choirs

St. John is interested in developing the musical talents of children who demonstrate an aptitude in that area. Choirs are formed from the various grade levels and sing at worship services occasionally. "Little Lambs" is a choir for pre-K through grade 1, "Gospel Lights" is the choir for grades 2 through 4, and the "Soaring Singers" are a select choir that is comprised of students in grades 5-8. The choir sings occasionally at worship throughout the year and the Christmas and Spring Concerts. A schedule is provided at the beginning of the school year.

School Programs

All students participate in the Christmas Concert and our choirs and instrumental students in the Spring Concert. Every other year the school performs a musical. In the event a student cannot participate, a note must be submitted to the teacher prior to the event. We also participate in science fairs, science family night, musicals, etc. and other events that are a part of the academic schedule at various times of the year.

Athletics

St. John is a member of the Western New York Conference of Lutheran Schools and participates in the following:

<i>A Track & Field Meet</i>	<i>Grades K-8</i>
<i>Boys' & Girls' JV & Varsity Basketball</i>	<i>Grades 4-8</i>
<i>Co-ed Soccer (JV & Varsity)</i>	<i>Grades 4-8</i>
<i>Co-ed Volleyball</i>	<i>Grades 7-8</i>
<i>Girls' Cheerleading</i>	<i>Grades 4-8</i>

A satisfactory academic average must be maintained in order to participate in any of the above.

TESTING

To better know each child in terms of strengths and weaknesses, ability and achievement, there is a regular program of standardized testing. St. John complies with the New York State testing mandates for public schools. The following tests are administered yearly:

- 1) The NYS Assessments are given in grades 3-8 in ELA and Math.*
- 2) NYS Science Assessments are given in grades 4 & 8.*
- 3) Advanced math students are given the 9th grade Algebra Regents Exam.*
- 4) A readiness test is given to all students entering Kindergarten.*
- 5) Scholastic Testing is given in grades K-2.*

WHY ST. JOHN?

SOME GOOD REASONS --

- *Because Christian teachers teach your children the Word of God,*
- *Because children excel in a more structured environment,*
- *Because our Christian teachers have received degrees in Education and also Christian Education,*
- *Because of our approach to discipline,*
- *Because of our academic reputation,*
- *Because of the individual attention given to each child,*
- *Because we teach values,*
- *Because we offer a Christian approach to education,*
- *Because we are not satisfied with the public school's approach to education,*
- *Because of the many academic and extra-curricular opportunities offered in a small setting.*

BUT THE BEST REASON --

There is a much higher calling for which the ministry of this school has been established. It is simply to teach the faith. It is to daily provide instruction in the Holy Scripture and share the Gospel message with each child so that they may be witnesses to each other, the community, and the world of the love and forgiveness won for all on the cross of Calvary.

