

## **PURPOSE**

St. Matthew Lutheran School serves as the full-time educational arm of St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Spokane, Washington. The purpose of the school is to teach children that their relationship with God takes top priority in their education and in their life. God's infallible Word shows children how desperately they need a Savior. It also leads children to know Jesus Christ as their only personal Savior, the perfect sacrifice who died for all, and who allows his children to stand before the throne of the Father, forgiven and accepted.

## **TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE**

The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) has a rich tradition of academic excellence in its Pre-School through Grade 12 school system. The WELS has operated elementary, middle, and high schools across the United States, the Caribbean, and elsewhere in the world for over 150 years. In the past half century, the WELS has expanded its school system to include pre-schools as well.

St. Matthew Lutheran School is a part of the fourth largest private school system in America. Currently, WELS churches and associations operate 403 early childhood centers, 313 elementary schools, and 25 high schools across the nation, enrolling over 41,000 students in its institutions of learning.

The Wisconsin Synod has provided excellent instructors to these schools by training its own teachers since 1884. It is gratifying to report that, on average, students attending WELS schools annually tend to outperform their peers by a considerable margin on national achievement tests. We humbly thank God for His blessing upon our schools.

**St. Matthew Lutheran School is proud to continue this rich tradition of academic excellence in the Spokane community.**

## **PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION**

We believe:

- That the teachings of Jesus Christ so permeate the atmosphere of the classroom that children know the way of salvation, are endowed with an evangelical spirit, and are able to apply Christian principles in their attitude and behavior in all situations. The whole scope of the curriculum is based on the unfailing truths of God's Word which are honored above all human wisdom, theories, and directives. Every subject is taught according to a well-planned course of study, giving harmony and continuity from one grade to the next.
- That the Christian principles learned from God's Word are reinforced by the home, the school, and the church. Parents support this belief in part by bringing their children regularly to church on Sundays, to special services, and by setting an example through service to the church. Also parents are totally involved in their children's education, supporting their academic growth.
- That each child is entitled to receive fair treatment and opportunities regardless of sex or race. Children are encouraged to perform at the level of their God-given abilities.
- That each child, as a redeemed child of God, contributes to family, to community, and to government through loyal citizenship and by showing Christian love and respect to fellow humans.

## **CERTIFICATION**

St. Matthew is approved for operation on a yearly basis by the State Board of Education based on an annual certificate of compliance with state standards. The teachers of St. Matthew are certified by the Superintendent of Public Instruction and by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

## **NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY**

St. Matthew Lutheran School admits students of any race, color, or national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded to or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

## **ENROLLMENT POLICY**

St. Matthew Lutheran School has been established for and is operated by the members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church. Students will be accepted into St. Matthew Lutheran School on an annual basis. Students will be accepted according to the following:

1. Members of St. Matthew Lutheran Church
2. Families interested in becoming members of St. Matthew
3. Families active in their own Christian churches
4. Families who accept the rules and regulations of St. Matthew Lutheran School

The following indicators will be evaluated regularly to determine a student's continuing eligibility for enrollment:

1. Payment of tuition and fees on a regular basis
2. Cooperation of parents with the teachers, principal, pastor, and Board of Education
3. Attendance and tardiness
4. The progress of the child:
  - a. spiritually
  - b. in self-discipline
  - c. scholastically
5. The reason for current enrollment
6. The type of education desired

## **ACCEPTANCE OF CHILDREN INTO ST. MATTHEW LUTHERAN SCHOOL**

All children in St. Matthew are held to submit to its religious training (see Purpose, Philosophy and Curriculum). Children who hold membership in organizations which teach a philosophy of life in conflict with our principles will be encouraged to give up such membership (Romans 16:17...) Please speak with your child's teacher or the pastor at St. Matthew if you are interested in learning exactly what we teach.

Satisfactory scholastic, health, and immunization records are required of all children entering school. Upon enrollment, parents agree that these records will be requested from previous schools. These records will be placed in the child's cumulative file.

The age requirement for entering kindergarten is five years old by August 31 and for first grade is six years old by August 31. Children transferred to St. Matthew will usually be placed into the grade into which they have been promoted. Prospective students will be tested to determine proper grade placement before final acceptance.

## **FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Each year the Board of Education determines the overall cost of educating a child. Fees and tuition vary based on financial assistance, church membership at St. Matthew, or the number of children you have at our school.

In addition to tuition, there are certain fees that parents pay for education at St. Matthew. Parents will be asked to pay a registration fee of \$150 per child. Religious textbooks, such as Christ light, Bibles, hymnals, and Catechisms are the permanent possession of each child. These books are available for purchase upon registration. (Actual costs will be published yearly in the religious textbook order form.)

Our School and Preschool at St. Matthew uses an online billing program for tuition known as TADS. This program allows families to easily make tuition payments online. There are a variety of payment options made available as well as possibilities for tuition assistance. If you have questions about TADS, payments, or tuition assistance, you can contact the Preschool Director or the Principal.

We want your child in our school. Regular on time tuition payments are required for your child's continued enrollment. If you are struggling to keep up with payments, please speak with the Principal for help with this issue.

If withdrawal becomes necessary, St. Matthew requests a 30-day notice in order to contact a child on the waiting list.

Below are the 2023-2024 tuition/registration fees:

GRADES K – 8 REGISTRATION: \$200 per child

GRADES K – 8 TUITION:

1 CHILD \$5,100 per year  
2 CHILDREN \$8,300 per year  
3 CHILDREN \$10,900 per year  
4 CHILDREN \$13,000 per year

All families are required to sign a tuition agreement once their child is enrolled. Families may decide to make their payment in one, two, ten, or twelve installments.

## **REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES**

The school shall be under the supervision of the Board of Education, which shall act by the authority of the congregation and in accordance with the regulations it lays down.

While much can be accredited to a Christian School in the area of child guidance and development, it still remains a fact that the child normally spends the largest portion of the day in the home. To achieve its highest purpose, the school is ideally the arm of the home and the church. When all three agencies are saying the same thing to the child by word and example, there will be more effective Christian training.

Every effort should be made between the teacher and parents to cooperate in the interest of guiding the child. Parents are expected to support the teacher and vice versa. If a problem seems to be developing, the parents and teacher should consult together privately according to Matthew 18:1-20. The families of St. Matthew are urged to speak in love and view the obligation laid upon them by our God in the Eighth Commandment which makes it an offense to speak in a derogatory way about the school or its teachers. Complaints from parents shall be dealt with only outside the regular school hours and as a rule must be directed to the teacher involved. Appointments with a teacher and visits to the classroom are gladly arranged.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Teachers make every effort to treat all children fairly in accordance with God's Word. On the other hand, all must understand that students owe implicit obedience to their teachers under the Fourth Commandment. Students are expected to show this respect not only to their classroom teacher but also to all members of the staff.

All discipline in the school must be in keeping with the principles of the Word of God.

**Parents having children in school automatically extend their authority to the teacher while the children are at school.**

## **SUSPENSION**

Students will be suspended (in school or out of school) or possibly even expelled from the school who\*:

1. Refuse to be corrected in spite of earnest admonition and reasonable punishment.
2. Are habitually truant.
3. In a rude manner either by word or deed rebel against the teacher.
4. Bully other students either verbally, socially, or physically.
5. Fail to abide by standards of dress and personal appearance.
6. Participate in sexual misconduct.
7. Are in possession of drugs - tobacco - alcohol - weapons - knives (including pocket knives) - matches - drug paraphernalia - or any other items deemed by school authorities to be potentially dangerous; unless requested by the teacher and delivered to the teacher, are grounds for immediate suspension or dismissal.
8. Talk or joke about harming another student through the use of any variety of real weapons. Students are never encouraged to or allowed to even use pretend weapons to point at people or talk about harming people in even a joking nature.\*\*

\*Several factors will determine length of suspension and suspension vs. expulsion such as: the severity of the offense, number of occurrences, and repentant attitude.

\*\*The St. Matthew faculty recognizes that many careers that students look up to contain guns or other items that could be used as weapons. We will always attempt to use our best judgment when considering a student's intent in the use of weapons. (Ex. Pretending to be a police officer). Factors like age and number of occurrences may also be considered. We understand that there is a fine line between creativity in playing, talking, and drawing, and crossing the line into playing, talking, and drawing in an inappropriate nature. We unfortunately live at a time where violence is a norm and even pretending needs to be addressed. Should we feel that a student has not crossed a line, we will still encourage a student to play a different game, talk in a different manner, or choose different topics of interest. These things can be allowed at home using a parent's discretion.

Expulsion of a pupil shall be initiated by the principal upon approval by the Board of Education.

## **ATTENDANCE AND EXCUSES**

Since most subjects are cumulative in nature, punctual, regular attendance is extremely important. Therefore, each absence or tardiness must be excused to the principal or your child's teacher. Please excuse any absences as soon as you are made aware of them by speaking with your child's teacher in person, calling the school, or sending a written note/doctor's note with your child to school. All absences, whether excused or unexcused, will be recorded on the child's report card. The State Health Code may require a doctor's written approval in some instances before re-admittance into school after sickness.

Excusable absences are those that result from illness, medical appointments, bereavement, severe weather, or emergency family matters.

Examples of non-excusable absences are:

1. Absences from school to help care for children.
2. Absences from school to run errands for parents.
3. Absences from school because of family vacation plans (unless such plans have been approved by the teacher and principal with provision made for making up school work.)

Attendance at church when the child's choir sings is also expected unless you have made your child's teacher aware that they will not be attending.

## **TARDINESS**

It is imperative for each student to be in the classroom early enough to put away belongings, organize materials, and be ready for success by 8:30 a.m. Parents are strongly encouraged to consider 8:15 a.m. as the start of school so that their children understand the importance of being on time and are never tardy. Punctuality is a valuable life skill for your children.

Students who arrive after 8:30 AM will be considered tardy. All tardies will be recorded on the student's permanent record. Frequent tardiness will result in consultation with school administration to discuss further actions.

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

The school day begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m. Since the playground is not supervised before school, we ask that students not be playing on the equipment should they arrive early. School doors open at 8:10 a.m. If students arrive early, they can wait quietly outside their classroom door. Children are to go directly to their classrooms upon arrival. During the course of the day no child will be permitted to leave the school grounds unless the child was given permission by his or her parent.

## **AFTER SCHOOL PICK UP**

The school doors open at 3:30 p.m. after school is done. All children will be picked up from his or her classroom so that the teacher is 100% certain that each child is going home with an approved adult. After school pick up time is between 3:30 p.m. and 3:45 p.m. Any child not picked up at 3:45 p.m. will be billed a \$2 after school care fee for every 15 minutes the child needs to remain at school. Students will be asked to work quietly in his or her teacher's classroom after school. Please stay in contact with your child's teacher as to when your child will be picked up.

The after school care does not include children who are receiving extra school related help. Please speak with your child's teacher if your child needs extra help outside of the regular school hours.

## **SCHOOL CLOSING**

In the event of severe weather, school closings will be reported on television channels 2 (KREM), 4 (KXLY), and 6 (KHQ). School closing will also be reported on the school website ([www.school.stmatthewspokane.org](http://www.school.stmatthewspokane.org)). In general, school closing will follow the example of the local school districts.

## **CURRICULUM**

St. Matthew Lutheran School offers those subjects commonly taught at the elementary level in compliance with the Washington State Department of Education. The textbooks that are used will be

those that best meet those curriculum requirements. In keeping with the philosophy of the school, all subjects are taught in the light of God's Word. The chief subject in the school is the study of the Bible. As the children progress through the grades, they also progress in the knowledge of Biblical truths. Systematic study of the chief parts of Christian doctrine, prayers, hymns, and bible verses help to make God's Word a part of each child. Every child takes part in regular chapel services, daily devotions, and other religious projects. Memory treasures are required in all of the grades because we believe that this places God's Word into the very heart of each child and helps to give the child the comfort and strength needed in times of trial and tribulation. Knowing God's Word from memory will give the child a firm foundation throughout their life and will also aid the child in being a faithful witness for Christ as Jesus commands us in Matthew 28:19,20.

## **CHOIR**

Each child enrolled in St. Matthew Lutheran School is a member of the school choir. Singing in the choir is an opportunity for special growth in the child as he/she worships and sings praise to the Lord. It also offers the child the opportunity to witness and show love for our Savior.

Parents will be given a schedule in advance so that they can plan to have their children in church for choir singing. Each child is important to the beauty and success of the school choir. If your child is unable to attend when scheduled to sing, please excuse him/her in advance with your child's teacher.

## **SCHOLARSHIP AND GRADING**

St. Matthew Lutheran School expects each child to perform to the best of his/her God-given abilities. Records will be kept to track the child's academic, physical, emotional, and social growth. This information will be used to help in understanding the child and improving his/her instruction. Report cards will be issued quarterly to inform parents of their child's progress academically, physically, emotionally, socially, and in regard to Christian attitudes. Regular parent-teacher consultations will be held.

Grading in Grades 1-8 follows the percent and letter system. Percentile averages are assigned letter grades according to the table below:

100-94.....	A
93-86.....	B
85-78.....	C
77-70.....	D
69-below .....	F

Regular testing will be administered three times a year to each grade.

All subject material for the school year must be completed before promotion will be considered. Excessive absences will also be considered in determining promotion.

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework is an important part of the school program. In general, homework consists of daily assignments not completed during the course of the school day. This is not busy work! It is vital and necessary and is to be completed before the child returns to class the next day. Parents should arrange for a quiet place at home for their child to complete his/her homework. Any work not completed by the day it is due would become late work.

All children will be given “Free Passes” that will renew at the beginning of each quarter. These passes allow for the understanding that sometimes mistakes happen or things come up that result in homework not getting completed. Students will get a free A for the work that the “Free Pass” is used on. If a child uses all his or her free passes they will be asked to make a phone call home explaining that they have late work. The child will then be required to stay after school until the child has had a chance to catch up on his or her late work and the teacher has had time to help the child feel ready for success the next day.

Once the “Free Passes” have been used up any late work may be dropped one-third of a letter grade (A+ to A, A to A– and so on) for each day that it is missing. All late work must be turned in even if the grade has dropped to an F.

Children who are sick or excused from school will be given the number of days they are sick plus two to get their work done. For example: Jimmy was gone two days with the flu. He would be given a total of four days to make up his work before it would become late.

### **CARE OF BOOKS**

All church and school property is to be respected and is to be treated with the greatest care. Books and workbooks issued to students during the year are not to be misused or abused. Textbooks should be covered for protection and should not be written in. If a student should lose or damage a book, the parents will be required to pay for the loss or damage.

### **STANDARDS OF DRESS AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

We want our students to show the world their belief that their bodies are “the temple of the Holy Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 6:19) In addition, we expect the dress of our students to reflect the principle: “Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” (1 Corinthians 10:31). It is the parent’s responsibility to see that their children are:

1. Modestly dressed, having clean and appropriately sized clothing. (No extreme or immodest fashions)
2. Well-groomed and neat in appearance.
3. Properly dressed for existing weather conditions.
4. Wearing closed toed shoes that promote active play at recess.

Students not meeting this dress code may be sent home or required to phone home for proper attire before being readmitted to class.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Students will be taken on field trips from time to time. Parents are encouraged to assist on these trips as drivers and chaperones. Parents assisting in transportation must have been background checked and may be asked to provide proof of insurance. For students who require booster seats, it is the parent’s/guardian’s responsibility to make sure that their child’s booster seat is at school.

A parental/guardian permission form must be signed and on file before a student is allowed to participate in a field trip.

### **CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Students of St. Matthew Lutheran may participate in the co-curricular activities offered by the school. Participation in these events is a privilege, and may be withheld due to poor academic performance or behavioral issues.

A parental/guardian permission form must be signed and on file before a student is allowed to participate in a co-curricular activity.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation to and from school is NOT provided by the school. Parents are urged to make arrangements among themselves for car pools.

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Students are not permitted to have cell phones, iPods, or other electronic devices at school without the approval of a teacher or the principal.

### **MEDICATION**

Teachers will not give any medication, including prescription or over-the-counter products, to a child without written and dated permission from parent/guardian. For prescription medications, a copy of the physician's instructions for the medication must be included with the permission form. Students are not permitted to store medication in backpacks or desks without their teacher's permission.

### **USE OF THE TELEPHONE**

Calls to the school while class is in session should be kept at a minimum since such calls usually disrupt classes. Teachers and students will be called to the telephone only in cases of emergency. Please make all necessary arrangements with your child before he/she leaves for school in the morning. Children who need to use the telephone may use the phone only after they have received permission from their teacher.



## **BICYCLES**

Bicycles may be ridden to school but must be locked up at the bike rack during school hours. Students are not permitted to ride bicycles on the premises during school hours. Students must provide their own bike locks.

St. Matthew will not be responsible for stolen or damaged bicycles.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

All articles of clothing such as coats and gloves, personal books, etc., should be labeled with the child's name. The school is not responsible for money or valuables brought to school. Unclaimed articles will be given to charity. Smoking will not be permitted on the school grounds.

## **VISITORS**

Parents are encouraged to visit the classrooms. Any visit that is not related to dropping off or picking up a child at school, must be made by first checking in at the school office. All visitors must first be cleared with the principal before visiting school.