



# Our Shepherd

## LUTHERAN SCHOOL

---

*A Great Place To Grow.*

---

**Our Shepherd is a ministry dedicated to joyfully proclaiming Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of the world while providing a rich educational experience in a Christ-centered environment.**

# **2024-2025 PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Amended and Board Approved – June 18, 2024

# **OUR SHEPHERD LUTHERAN SCHOOL PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Our Shepherd Lutheran School is an integral part of the ministries of its six sponsoring congregations: Faith Lutheran, St. John Lutheran, St. Paul's Lutheran, Zion Lutheran, Grace Lutheran, and Holy Cross Lutheran and Immanuel Lutheran.

The purpose of this handbook is to present to the parents and students of Our Shepherd Lutheran School a concise overview of the pertinent policies which govern students in our school. **It is in no way intended to cover all policies.** Rather, it is hoped that enough information will be given to help each student recognize his or her responsibilities in our school. This will, then, hopefully, enable all students the opportunity to have both a pleasant and rewarding experience.

Families are encouraged to keep this handbook for reference. **We are not a public school. When families make the commitment to be part of Our Shepherd, they agree to follow our school guidelines – ranging from dress to attendance to discipline. These guidelines may be only slightly different from the public school or they may be significantly different. Our guidelines are based on the premise that God is to be honored in all that we strive to do. Non-compliance with school policies would imply the lack of desire/want to be part of this school. The simple solution would be to strive to develop a sense of belonging and work to become a solid part of our program. The alternative would be to enroll elsewhere.**

All of the staff of Our Shepherd Lutheran School are eager to work with our students and their parents and are hopeful that this booklet will serve its stated purposes.

### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of Our Shepherd Lutheran School is to provide a quality Christian education guided by the Lutheran doctrine and to serve as a mission outreach of the congregations to our local communities. Our Shepherd is much more than a private school; we desire to provide our children with the best education in the Word of God and secular subjects, so that they may be God's children growing into their life's calling.

### **II. Philosophy**

We believe, teach, and confess that the one cardinal objective of education, to which all others point, is to develop devotion to God as our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. God's love for us moves us to show our love for Him in our every thought, word, and deed.

At Our Shepherd Lutheran School, we believe that the revealed will of God shown through the Word of God, the Bible, is to permeate every aspect of learning; that we are commissioned to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:20); that Christian education, as carried on in the program of our school, gives proper direction in the child's relationship to God and his/her obligation to Him; that our school is a forceful factor in assisting parents in carrying out their God-given duties; that all subjects

in our curriculum serve to communicate Christianity in and through the classroom; and that our children learn to observe all things as children of God.

Our Shepherd Lutheran School's program is a program of Christian education based on the conviction that learning and living take on meaningful dimensions only when related to Christ. The school seeks to develop academic programs that will establish strong moral and spiritual values in the lives of today's youth. Opportunities are provided for each student to develop intellectually, spiritually, morally, physically, and aesthetically according to their individual potential.

Our Shepherd Lutheran School seeks to involve the student in a commitment to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

The school strives to develop a partnership between the home, school, and church as agents of Christian education. Parents are responsible for bringing up the child in discipline and instruction. In meeting their responsibilities, parents will see that their children receive the full value of Christian education by setting a Christ-like example for them in the following ways:

1. Attending church regularly.
2. Frequently communing at the Lord's Supper.
3. Supporting the work of the school and church, generously and cheerfully, according to their God-given abilities.
4. Participating regularly in family devotions.
5. Cooperating with Christian educators.
6. Participating in school and church activities.
7. Living, with the help of God, a life of Christian love, obedience and concern.

### **III. Objectives of Christian Education**

Our Shepherd Lutheran School will help each child grow into a person who:

1. Will develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior.
2. Shows respect to self and others.
3. Has an understanding and appreciation for learning.
4. Examines and uses information wisely.
5. Is a responsible citizen who strives to make the world a better place in which to live.
6. Uses God-given talents to His glory.

### **IV. Administration**

#### **A. The Association and School Board (Trustees)**

Our Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran School is operated by the Our Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran School Association, Inc., an association of six Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod congregations in the Lake and Geauga County areas. These churches are Faith Lutheran, St. John Lutheran, St. Paul's Lutheran, Zion Lutheran, Grace Lutheran, and Holy Cross Lutheran. A Delegate Assembly composed of members from each of the congregations elects trustees (School Board members) who oversee the general administration of the school. Major functions of the School Board include the development of school policies and the overseeing of the principal, faculty, and staff members.

#### **B. The Principal**

The principal, with the help of the faculty, suggests changes and policies for the improvement and welfare of the school. It is the principal's responsibility to see that the policies of the School Board are carried out within the school on a daily basis. The principal serves on the School Board as the permanent advisory member.

### **C. The Teaching Staff (Faculty)**

Qualified Lutheran teachers teach God's Word together with a prescribed course of study. All of Our Shepherd's teachers are required to be properly certified and licensed by the State of Ohio. Some hold multiple licenses.

### **v. Accreditation**

Our Shepherd Lutheran School is proud to have achieved both a Charter from the Ohio Department of Education and National Lutheran School Accreditation. Both of these accreditations are on-going which enables the school to continue to do self-examination, which leads to beneficial growth for staff and students.

## **VI. Legal Notices**

### **A. Non-Discrimination Policy**

Our Shepherd Lutheran School admits students of any race, color, gender (as Biblically addressed) national and/or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to all students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender (as Biblically addressed) national and/or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, athletics, and other school administrated programs.

### **B. Asbestos Notification**

Our Shepherd Lutheran School is required to notify all parents, students, and staff members each year concerning any asbestos contained in the building. An Asbestos Management Plan is kept in the school office and updated every six months. This plan is available to anyone interested in reviewing the information.

A three-year re-inspection is done by an accredited inspector according to AHERA guidelines. There are several areas which contain asbestos. These areas are in good condition, are non-friable, and do not pose a threat to the health and safety of persons in the building.

### **C. Crisis Management Plan**

The Crisis Management Plan is reviewed yearly and is filed with the Ohio Department of Education. Copies of this plan are available for viewing in the school office. The plan addresses emergencies with general response options for canceling school, dismissal, sheltering in place, lockdown and evacuation (including evacuation due to a situation with the Perry Nuclear Power Plant).

## **VII. Admissions**

Children who enroll in Our Shepherd Lutheran School must meet age requirements set by the State of Ohio. Currently, a student must be five years of age before August 1<sup>st</sup> if entering Kindergarten. Enrollment in Our Shepherd Lutheran School is considered in the following order:

1. Members of the Association and Affiliate Congregations.
2. Current families enrolled in the school.
3. Community

Students with special educational needs who cannot be served in the school's regular program may be referred to other schools that are able to meet such needs.

Prior to accepting a student transferring from another school or home-schooling situation, all transcripts, health records, etc., must be received from the school previously attended. All applicants to the school will have a conference with the principal. Students may

also be given placement tests prior to acceptance. Final acceptance will be given by the principal. **All new students will be subject to a six-week probation period.**

As a new student at Our Shepherd, the transcripts of grades and test scores will be thoroughly examined. Any deficiencies will be noted and disclosed to the teacher. In keeping with the goal of helping each student toward an effective educational experience, faculty and parents must work to alleviate the situation if a student has experienced previous difficulties either academically or behaviorally. If a student continually exhibits unsatisfactory performance, enrollment may be terminated.

## VIII. Health/Immunizations

The State of Ohio requires students to have specific immunizations. Parents are asked to provide this information to the school office or nurse. Students who do not provide documentation of this immunization by the 14<sup>th</sup> day of school are subject to exclusion from school.

For any medication of any kind, please remember that Our Shepherd must have a medical form signed by both parent/guardian and the doctor. This includes over the counter medicine such as Tylenol, Motrin, Benadryl, or anything they might be carrying with them (such as emergency inhalers or Epi-pens).

Information concerning physical exams will be provided by either the school nurse or athletic director as needed.

If a student is found to have a communicable disease, the school should be contacted immediately. Also, if any communicable disease is discovered at school, that child's parents will be notified, and a note from a physician may be required before that student is allowed to return to school.

## IX. Attendance

Regular attendance is required and unnecessary absences are to be avoided. **Students cannot learn if they are not in school to receive instruction. It is sometimes difficult enough to keep up and, on top of that, to try to catch up at the same time.** When a student is absent, they will be given one day for each day of absence to complete assignments. Students who are unexcused absent may not be able to make up the missed work and may not receive credit for missed work.

A student is considered absent for the morning or the afternoon if he/she misses more than one and a half hours of school. Missing three hours of school will constitute an absence of an entire day. Missing one or more virtual meetings during e-learning will result in a minimum ½ day absence.

### A. Absences

A student may not have more than twenty absences during a single year. All excused absences must be documented as stipulated below. Documentation for excused absences must be maintained in the student file in the office. Any absence from school is unexcused unless it is for one of the following reasons:

1. **Illness or injury of the child.** The parent/guardian must provide documentation to Our Shepherd. Any absence for illness or injury which exceeds three days absent from school must be certified in writing by a physician or appropriate health official.

2. **Illness in the family necessitating the presence of the child.** The parent/guardian must provide documentation to Our Shepherd stating the nature of the illness and the circumstances which require the presence of the child. Any such absence which exceeds three days absent from school must be certified in writing by a physician or appropriate health professional.

3. **Quarantine of the home.** The absence of a child from school under this condition is limited to the length of quarantine as determined and certified in writing by the proper health professionals.

4. **Death of a relative.** The absence arising from this condition is limited to a period of three days and must be documented in writing by the parent/guardian of the student. Any absence for this reason in excess of three days must be approved by the principal.

5. **Medical or dental appointment.** The parent/guardian must provide a written statement from the physician or dentist upon return to school.

6. **High school visitation for 8<sup>th</sup> graders.** The parent/guardian must provide documentation from the high school verifying the date and time of the visitation; limited to one excused absence per year for visitation.

7. **Emergency or other set of circumstances.** The parent/guardian must provide documentation to Our Shepherd detailing the emergency circumstances. Any absence for this reason in excess of three days must be approved by the principal.

8. **Out-of-state enrichment activities or extracurricular activities.** A student who is absent from school for the sole purpose of traveling out of state to participate in an enrichment activity approved by the principal or in an extracurricular activity can have up to four days *per school year* excused. The parent/guardian must provide documentation detailing the dates and reasons for these absences.

9. **Observance of religious holidays.** A child shall be excused for absences for the purpose of observing a religious holiday consistent with his/her truly held religious beliefs. The parent/guardian must provide documentation to Our Shepherd detailing dates of all religious holidays.

The school office must be notified prior to 8:30am the day of any absence. If there is no email or call to the office or note prior to student's absence stating the reason for the absence, the absence may be considered unexcused. The parent/guardian must provide written documentation to Our Shepherd detailing the absence which will be maintained in the student's file.

Regardless of the type of absence, the student must complete all necessary work to be considered for promotion. **Work not made up shall be considered incomplete which could be considered grounds for retention.**

**Excessive Absence**, in regard to House Bill 410: any student who is absent with or without legitimate excuse 38 or more hours in one month or 65 or more hours in one school year: (Roughly 10 days)

- The school must notify the child's parent (s) in writing that their child has reached the Excessive Absence threshold within 7 days of triggering absence.
- OSLS administration MAY implement other intervention strategies, if applicable, to improve student attendance.

**Chronic Absenteeism**, as defined by the Every Student Succeeds Act (federal law), is missing 10 percent (17.5 days) or more of the school year for any reason. It includes excused and unexcused absences.

**(Absence continued): We have determined that we will abide by the following standards:**

- a. At the 7<sup>th</sup> absence, we will be sending a formal letter home.
- b. At the 14<sup>th</sup> absence, the student will be assigned an In-School suspension and the parents will be receiving a second letter informing them of the potential consequences should absences continue. A parent meeting will be scheduled.

- c. At the 20<sup>th</sup> day of absence, the parent(s) will be notified that they must appear before the Our Shepherd Board of Education for a hearing to potentially remove the student from our school.
- d. The results of the Our Shepherd Board hearing will determine the next steps which could lead to removal.

### **Tardiness/Truancy**

**Tardiness** is neither desirable nor prudent. Tardiness disrupts the flow of the school day and is somewhat disruptive and unfair to those students who are already in the classrooms. Those who are tardy are to report to the school office before entering the classroom. Excessive tardiness will result in a conference with a parent(s), and the student may need to serve a mandatory study hall and/or a detention.

### **Our Shepherd will implement the following policies:**

- a. At the fifth tardy, a detention will be issued
- b. At the 10<sup>th</sup> tardy, a formal letter will be sent home and a parent meeting required.
- c. At the 14<sup>th</sup> tardy, a second formal letter will be sent home and an in-school suspension will be assigned.
- d. At the 20<sup>th</sup> tardy, the parent will be notified that they must appear before the Our Shepherd Board of Education for a hearing to potentially remove the student from our school.
- e. The results of the Our Shepherd Board hearing will determine the next steps which could lead to removal.

**Truancy** is defined as not reporting to school when school is in session (in person or during scheduled e-learning) without a legitimate excuse.

**Habitually Truant**, (per House Bill 410): Any student whose is absent without legitimate excuse for: 30 or more consecutive hours, 42 hours in a month, or 72 hours in a school year. The school **must assign** the child/parent to the Absence Intervention Team within 10 days of the triggering event; the team must develop and implement a TIP (Truancy Intervention Plan). If the child/parent is not making adequate progress after the TIP is implemented, the school will file truancy charges against the child/parent with the Lake County Courts.

We recognize there may be documented illness issues directly affecting attendance. However, the State of Ohio does not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences – only the time missed. Accumulated tardy time is added to absence time for attendance purposes. (i.e. 20 tardies times 3 minutes per tardy = 60 minutes= one hour). Based on documented illness, these numbers may be affected.

### **C. School Hours/Leaving School Early**

School hours are from 8:10AM - 2:45PM. Walking into the building at 8:15 is tardy. Classes begin at 8:15. Students who arrive early on the bus are to go to the early room session in the gym (or other designated area). For non-bus riders, an After-Care program is available. There is a per hour cost and students must be pre-registered and have a deposit on file before using this service. Students who leave school early for an appointment or other activity will need to be signed out by a parent or guardian. The student will be responsible for missed assignments.

### **D. Wellness Policy**

In order to be in school, all students must be fever-free (without fever-reducing medication), vomit-free, and diarrhea-free *for at least 24 hours* before returning to school. All students must have current emergency contact information on file with the office, including



contact information for someone who would be available to pick up the student within 30 minutes in case of an unexpected illness.

### **E. School Closings**

School closings are reported on the local television stations, and on the school's web site: [www.oslpainesville.org](http://www.oslpainesville.org); emails will also be sent out to those parents who have provided email addresses for this purpose. The decision to close will be the responsibility of the principal and/or the School Board.

### **F. Vacations**

Regular school attendance is important. Please schedule vacations during school holidays and summer break. Parents are requested to provide the dates in advance for any scheduled absences; **these scheduled days count as school absences**. Students going on vacation during the school year may be given assignments by the teacher in advance. These assignments are to be turned in the day upon returning to school.

## **X. School Communication**

Communication should follow the following procedure:

1. Any general issues such as calling in for student illness, pick-up arrangements or change of transportation should be addressed with the school office.
2. Bring any behavioral or academic concerns or issues to your child's homeroom teacher.
3. If your concerns or issues are not addressed by the teacher, please bring those concerns to the principal.
4. If the principal does not address your concerns or issues, please bring your concerns to Chairperson of the School Board and request that the matter be placed on the next Board meeting agenda. The Chairperson can be reached by submitting a written request in a sealed envelope to the school office. The school secretary will also be able to provide the current Chairperson's email.

## **XI. Student Progress**

### **A. Student Records**

The permanent records of students are open to their parents and/or guardians. Students may view these records with written permission of their parent and/or guardian.

### **B. Reporting of Pupil Progress**

Reports of student progress will be given to students through an intermediate report and a report card during each quarter of the school year. Parents may also use the online grading system, Jupiter Ed, to inquire on their student's progress. Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held after the first nine weeks of school. Parents may request a conference with a teacher at other times in the year.

### **C. Homework**

Students should expect to receive daily homework assignments commensurate to the grade they are in and according to any applicable 504 or Service Plans. Please see individual teacher policy regarding late work. Assignments not turned in at all will not be considered for credit.



## D. Grading

All grading procedures will utilize the following scale:

93-100%	A	Excellent	O=Outstanding
83-92	B	Above Average	S=Satisfactory
82-73	C	Average	N=Not Satisfactory
65-72	D	Unsatisfactory	
0-64	F	Failing	

## E. Promotion and Retention

Promotion in all grades will be determined by student achievement. Students not meeting basic expectations may be retained. Student abilities will be given consideration according to school standards, 504, and/or individualized Service Plans when applicable. When retention is a possibility, parents will be contacted. A meeting will be held with the parents, teacher(s), and principal participating. A final decision will be made by the principal. The parents will then be informed of this decision in writing.

## XII. CODE OF CONDUCT- (Please read all appendices)

### A. As God's children, our students are asked to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. To respect authority by doing what is asked the first time.
2. To respect others by using God-pleasing and non-argumentative speech.
3. To respect the right of classmates to learn by raising hands to speak during class.
4. To respect others by keeping hands and feet to oneself.
5. To respect others by remaining in the seat during lessons.
6. To be responsible for own actions.
7. To follow all rules determined by the classroom teacher(s).

Students of Our Shepherd are expected to live by a standard of behavior consistent with the principles of conduct encouraged in the Christian home and church and taught by the living example of Jesus Christ. The Word of God is our source of Truth and our final authority regarding conduct. This standard requires behavior attributes of

Honesty	Self-discipline	Morality
Modesty	Responsibility	Respect for Authority
Courtesy	Dependability	Consideration of Others
Integrity	Desire to learn	Cooperative Spirit

Those who follow these guidelines will receive verbal praise, written praise or class-wide reinforcements/rewards.

### B. Fighting, Harassment or Bullying

Fighting, harassment or bullying of any sort will not be tolerated at Our Shepherd Lutheran School. As children of God, we should treat everyone with respect and as we would want to be treated. Time to time, however, students may not get along and, as such, should employ other avenues of conflict resolution **rather** than resort to fighting, harassment, or bullying. (Prov. 11:27)

Fighting can be defined as instances where two or more students exchange blows (hitting/kicking) in a state of anger with intent to injure another. This does not take away a student's right to defend themselves to ward off unwanted **physical assaults** of another student. However, when advised to stop by the principal, a teacher or another adult, the student must stop or continued action could be deemed as fighting.

Harassment and bullying can be defined as instances where students are **repeatedly** engaging in behaviors such as using threats, put-downs, teasing, obscenities, gestures, and/or physical contact such as kicking, tripping, pushing, pinching, hitting, chasing or play-fighting. Cyber bullying is also unacceptable. (See Social Media Policy in appendix.) Infractions will be evaluated and appropriate discipline will be administered.

### C. Detentions, Suspensions, & Expulsions

**Discipline is not a means of punishment, but rather a tool for self-control.** Students need to show love and have respect for one another's rights and privileges.

1. **Demerits** are issued to students in grades 4-8 for breaking of school rules, which may include, but are not limited to showing disrespect, not behaving appropriately with other students, chewing gum, running in the halls, or breaking of classroom specific rules. Students are notified when s/he receives a demerit and are recorded in Jupiter Ed for parent and student review, as well as documented on paper in the office. When a student receives his or her third demerit, the parent/guardian will be notified in writing.
2. **Detentions** are issued to students who receive three demerits. Detentions may be issued for other specific offenses as deemed necessary by the principal or classroom teacher. Detentions are most generally served on Thursdays from 2:45-3:45PM. Students may be assigned appropriate tasks during this hour. Those on varsity sports teams will forfeit one game for each detention received. National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) members will be suspended from organization meetings and activities for a specified period of time as listed in the NJHS bylaws.
3. **Suspensions** are issued to students who have received three detentions or for other special offenses. Only the principal can issue suspensions. Suspension periods, which will be determined by the principal, will be from one to five days. Most are served out of school, but exceptions may be made, and an in-school suspension may be considered. Students who receive a suspension will forfeit their participation in varsity sports, class field trips for the remainder of the school year (**no refunds of monies already paid toward trip**), and NJHS membership. Criteria for suspension include, but are not limited to the following:
  - A. Truancy
  - B. Deliberate disruption of class or other school function
  - C. Fighting, harassment, bullying
  - D. Intimidation or interference with other students or staff
  - E. Insubordination
  - F. Vandalism
  - G. Profanity, vulgarity, or desecration of God's House or Word
  - H. Smoking or any tobacco related activities
  - I. Unexcused tardiness to class or school
  - J. Three detentions (see above)
  - K. Also, the following serious offenses shall result in either expulsion or other legal remedies:

- i. Premeditated false fire alarm or bomb threat
  - ii. Possession, use, sale, or distribution of drugs, alcohol, fireworks, firearms, other dangerous weapons or substances.
- 4. **Emergency Removal** (Term Suspension) is the removal of the student by the principal from school for a period of time not to exceed ten days. (See “Right to Appeal” and “Expulsion Process.”)
- 5. A student will automatically be placed under expulsion review after two suspensions or an emergency removal from the school premises.
  - A. Within 48 hours of the second suspension or an emergency removal, the principal shall issue written notification to the student and student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) declaring the student’s susceptibility to permanent expulsion after additional infractions. A copy will also be issued to the School Board Chairperson.
  - B. Either the School Board or a representative committee of such shall grant the student an impartial hearing, if requested by the student or the parent/guardian. The principal will also be in attendance. Legal counsel may attend if desired by the parent/guardian or by the school representative. A hearing will be called within ten (10) days of the request by the parent/guardian, and the student will remain in suspension until the matter is resolved.
  - C. After the hearing the Board Chairperson shall convene a special School Board meeting to act on the evidence set forth in the expulsion-review hearing. A quorum shall decide by majority vote whether to expel or reinstate the student. Board action shall be effective immediately. The Board Chairperson will communicate the decision to the student and family.
- 6. **Right to Appeal**  
 A student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) have a right to appeal any action taken by the principal or School Board taken against the student. All appeals are to be presented to the School Board.

### **XIII. STUDENT LIFE**

#### **A. Activity Schedule**

Students should consult the school year calendar and Our Shepherd’s Staff for information about all school activities (All available electronically at [www.oslpainesville.org](http://www.oslpainesville.org)). Students are encouraged to participate in the varied school activities in accordance with their skills, talents and desires.

#### **B. Awards**

Awards are given for academic achievements (honor rolls), sports, band, etc.

- 1. “All A” Honor Roll – This award is given to students in grades 4-8 who have received all “A’s” in a quarter.
- 2. “A-B” Honor Roll – This award is given to students in grades 4-8 who have earned all “A’s” and/or “B’s” in a Quarter.
- 3. “Merit Roll” Honor Roll – This award is given to students in grades 4-8 who have earned all “A’s” and/or “B’s” in a quarter and no more than one “C”.
- 4. \*Valedictorian – is the eighth-grade student(s) with the highest-grade point average from grade six through the first three quarters of grade eight. In order for a student to qualify for this award, they need to have been a student at Our Shepherd for a minimum of three years.
- 5. \*Salutatorian – is the eighth-grade student(s) with the second highest grade point average from grade six through the first three quarters of grade eight.

See other criteria above “Valedictorian.” When there is a tie for Valedictorian, the Salutatorian award will not be given.

6. \*President’s Award for Educational Excellence– is given to those students who meet the following qualifications: A rating of advanced or accelerated on standardized tests in 7<sup>th</sup> grade exams, have a minimum of a B+ average from grades six through the first semester of grade eight, and other criteria as established by the award itself. This award is given by the Office of the President of the United States.

\*Awards are given at graduation. All other awards are given in chapel.

### **C. Birthdays**

Students may bring bookmarks, pencils, stickers, or like items to share to celebrate a birthday or a book may be donated to the school library in the child’s name as an alternative. Please do not distribute party invitations through school unless the entire class is invited or they are distributed to all boys or all girls.

### **C. Books and Book Care**

Text books are loaned to students from the Painesville City School District. They are to be cared for by the students. Damaged or lost text books or library books will result in the student making restitution as needed. Grade cards and records will be held until restitution has been made.

### **E. Chapel**

Chapel is conducted on Wednesdays at 8:30AM. Attendance is required of all students. Offerings are taken for mission projects. Please review appropriate Chapel dress applications. Students will be given an opportunity during the school year to assist with the worship. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to join their student at chapel.

**F. Dress Code:** Christians should do everything in such a way as to bring glory to God.

“Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble.”

1 Corinthians 10:31, 32

**With this in mind, it is our purpose through the Dress Code to:**

- Establish principles of neat, modest, and appropriate dress to help promote a positive learning environment;
- Teach students what it means to dress in a manner that is
  - Neat, orderly, and not offensive;
  - Modest
  - Appropriate or suitable for particular purpose, person, or occasion;
- Help students to learn the importance of proper attitudes in making wise choices.

**Please see APPENDIX “A”, page 16 below for the complete dress code.**

### **G. Before School**

1. Students who ride the bus to school are to go to the school gym where they will be under the supervision of a teacher. Parents dropping off their students before school should arrive no

sooner than 8:00, nor later than 8:10. In order to foster student independence, after the first week of school, parents are not permitted to accompany their students to their beginning class. The school staff will get students where they need to be.

#### **H. After School**

Students are to report to either their bus line or the designated spot in building if being picked up by their parent(s). Students are NOT permitted to ride other bus lines. A note from a parent is required if a student is not going home by their normal means or if they need to ride a different bus (within the same system). The principal issues bus passes. Students who are reported to not be acting properly by the bus driver may lose their bus privileges for a designated period of time - generally five days. Students that are not picked up by 3:00pm will be sent to after school care provided in the cafeteria. Students who use the after-school care program must preregister and will be charged to use this service.

#### **I. Field Trips**

Students will have a permission form on file for all field trips. It is the parent's responsibility to provide car seats as determined by Ohio law. All drivers are required to present a current driver's license and proof of insurance. Students who have been suspended will not be permitted to attend field trips. Adults attending overnight field trips/camps will be required to have a background check/screening.

#### **J. Holiday Parties**

Most generally, parties are given for Christmas, Valentine's Day, and as an end of the year event. Teachers will request assistance from parents as needed.

#### **K. Lunches and Milk Program**

During the 2023-24 school year, the students no longer had access to the hot lunch program. That will, unfortunately, continue with the 2024-25 school year. All students will pack.

#### **L. National Junior Honor Society**

This is both an academic and service society for which fifth (fourth quarter) through eighth grade students are eligible. Student applicants are reviewed by a faculty committee whose identity is known only to the society's faculty advisor.

#### **M. Newsletter**

Parents and students are encouraged to read the weekly school newsletter, The Shepherd's Staff, which will keep them informed about what is happening at our school. The Shepherd's Staff is available electronically by providing the school office with your email. A paper copy may be picked up in the office upon request.

#### **N. Parent Teacher League (PTL)**

The PTL is an auxiliary organization of the school which supports many of the school's programs. All parents have membership and are urged to participate in the meetings and activities of the group. Information about meetings and activities is published in The Shepherd's Staff.

#### **O. Personal Property**

All personal property items should be left at home. Items such as toys, games, phone, and other electronic devices, etc. will be confiscated and returned only to a parent. Adequate equipment is supplied for recess and physical education so students are asked not to bring additional equipment to school.

#### **P. Phone Usage**

Students may use the hall phone for local calls if they have obtained the “phone pass” from their teacher. Before using the hall phone, students are to tell the secretary that they will be doing so. **No student cell phone use is permitted during school hours.**

#### **Q. Physical Education**

All students are required to participate in Physical Education. Students who are unable to participate in physical education are required to have a physician’s note to that effect. Students in grades 6-8 will have PE twice per week and are required to change for PE: gym shorts (no spandex), t-shirt (no tank tops; no inappropriate words or graphics), and athletic shoes.

#### **R. Physical Privacy Policy**

Notwithstanding any other Board Policy, student restrooms that are designated for one sex/gender shall only be used by members of that sex. “Sex” means the biological condition of being male or female as determined at birth based on physical differences, or, when necessary, at the chromosomal level.

In any other school facilities or settings where a student may be in a state of undress in the presence of other students (i.e., changing clothing for gym class or costumes during school theatrical productions, etc.), school personnel shall provide separate, private areas designated for use by students based on their sex.

#### **S. Playground and Recess**

Students will attend recess unless they have a signed note or the teacher has removed them from participation. A physician’s note is needed if a student must stay in for more than week. **Recess is a privilege that can and may be restricted.**

#### **T. Publications/Distribution of Materials**

The general public, students, parents and staff members may not use school facilities for the promotion of any group or vested interest without the principal’s approval. Materials not directly related to the school may not be distributed on school premises without the approval of the principal. Exceptions may be made to this rule in order to cooperate with local community, civil, or church organizations or services.

#### **U. Sports**

**We will make every attempt to provide seasonal sports programs for our students. Much of our success in that endeavor depends on having an appropriate number of athletic participants.**

The Athletic Director and/or coaches will give specific regulations to the students. Students should be mindful that grades must be kept up for participation; detention and suspensions will limit or suspend participation; and unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated. This type of behavior will result in immediate removal from a game and possible suspension from the team. See the Athletic Director for the Athletic Contract for further information about the Athletic program.

## **V. Technology**

All students will have access to Chromebooks or other computer devices. Middle school students will have the ability to use the devices at home. Other home use of school devices is determined by the individual classroom teacher. All home usage falls under the school rules related to our conduct code for internet access. Please see Appendix B.

## **W. Testing**

The curriculum meets or exceeds the requirements for the State of Ohio. The Ohio State Standards are used as a basis for our course of study. Standardized tests are given annually to students in grades second through eighth. Students in grades two, four, and seven will also be given an IQ exam. Test results for individual students will be distributed to parents.

## **X. Volunteers**

Volunteers provide important services to our students and establish a vital link between school and community. Volunteers may work one day a year or several days a week as school schedules permit.

2. Sign in - After admission to the building, volunteers are required to come to the office to sign in. For safety and security, all volunteers must wear a visitor nametag at all times. Please respect that classes may be in session and should not be interrupted without prior notice from the office. Volunteers must sign out when they are leaving the building.
3. Confidentiality - Volunteers must protect teachers' and students' right to privacy. They may not disclose school information or personal matters, whether shared with them directly or overheard. They should discuss student problems or concerns with only the staff member with whom they are working or the principal.
4. Security – Regular volunteers may be required to provide information to OSLs for a basic background check through Protect My Ministry or a similar organization.

Volunteers in school building should:

- Be punctual and reliable
- Wear the visitor nametag at all times
- Practice the professional ethics of confidentiality
- Become familiar with school and classroom policies and practices
- Be willing to adjust to each teacher's individual style and follow his/her directions
- Set a good example in appearance and behavior for students
- Have a positive attitude, be enthusiastic and cheerful

## **Y. What the school hopes and expects from parents**

- To be involved in the child's education process.
- Daily communication with children regarding assignments.
- To provide a study environment in the home that is free from distractions.
- Regular checking of student's progress through Jupiter Ed.
- Regular attendance at school meetings and events.
- Support of the school and its teachers.
- Support and acceptance of the objectives of Christian Education.
- To keep contact information current with the office.



- To promptly return any information needed.

## SUMMARY

The success of our school's programs is contingent upon:

1. The earnest prayers of all concerned.
2. Cooperation of the student, home, school, and congregations as we look to Matthew 18:15 for guidance.
3. Everyone who is a part of Our Shepherd Lutheran School continuing to be motivated by the love of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, in thoughts, words, and actions.

### From Page 12: F. Dress Code Appendix A

The School Board and faculty support the notion that all students are to be dressed in a manner that will not hinder the educational process, that will promote a positive image among our students, and that will provide a positive Christian witness to the community and beyond. The dress code is not intended to inhibit self-expression, but to limit distractions in the classroom in an effort to promote a strong educational atmosphere. Our dress code is intended to promote modesty and should reflect our lives as children of God. **Current clothing styles/trends do not determine our decisions related to the dress code.** The school administration reserves the right to make the final decision whether students are within the dress code requirements due to interpretation, change in fashion, or the safety of the student.

Enforcement of the Dress Code begins at home. Parents of younger students must be involved in teaching their children what it means to be neat, modest, and appropriate in their dress. Older students need to be involved in their personal enforcement of the Dress Code with the understanding that they are accountable to their parents, the school, their teachers and classmates, and above all, the Lord. The faculty and staff will hold students accountable to the principles of the Dress Code. The faculty will support the parents in teaching these principles regarding neat, modest, and appropriate dress.

**Hand rule:** No scoop tops on shirts or dresses that begin lower than the hand when placed at the base of the neck (applies to both front and back of top). No buttons unbuttoned below the bottom of the hand when placed at the base of the throat.

**Skirt rule:** Skirts, dresses, and shorts must be no shorter than 3 inches above the floor when kneeling.

Dresses do not have to have working buttons at the neck and/or a collar, but dresses must follow both the hand rule and skirt rule (see above).

## In general:

- OSL Hoodies may only be worn on Spirit Days and Fun Fridays
- Clothing must be clean and in good repair.
- Torn or ragged type clothing is not allowed, even if designed in that manner.
- No chains are allowed on clothing.
- Shoes can be open-toed but must have a back on them (safety).
- **Crocs are not permitted.**
- No winter boots are to be worn **in the classrooms**.
- Shorts may be worn beginning May 1· No shorts permitted after September 30. Shorts styles: similar to acceptable slacks above. Capri/gauchos style pants are allowed only during shorts season.
- **Cutoff shorts or biking shorts are not allowed.** Dress shorts must be appropriate length.
- **Outer coats are not to be worn in class.** Solid-colored sweaters or solid colored fleece jackets without hoods may be worn with teacher permission during colder months.
- Embroidered designs/emblems on clothing are allowed that are no larger than a quarter. Silk-screened emblems, sequins, logos, writing of any kind, etc. is not permitted on any clothing.
- No writing except Our Shepherd Lutheran School is permitted on clothing.
- No glitter on any clothing.
- School spirit wear will be allowed on specified Spirit Days (**OSL Polo shirts may be worn any day**)
- Student's hair must be neat and worn so that vision is not impaired. **Unnatural hair styles (including Mohawks, faux-hawks, and designs cut into hair) or unnatural hair coloring/dying is not permitted for boys or girls.**
- **No headbands with decorative attachments are permitted.**
- 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade girls only will be permitted to wear make-up **in moderation**.
- Only traditional ear lobe piercings are allowed. Hoop earrings must be dime size or smaller (for safety). Cartilage piercings are not appropriate.
- Jewelry may be worn in moderation and must be school appropriate.

**Classrooms have different temperatures; dress accordingly  
(bring an appropriate sweater or a solid colored fleece).**

## **Actions for all grades to be taken if dress code is not followed:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> occurrence of dress code violation—written warning to parent with student and parent signature required and returned to the teacher the following day.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> occurrence of dress code violation—call to parent to bring appropriate clothing to school.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> occurrence of dress code violation—conference with parent and student.
- 4<sup>th</sup> occurrence of dress code violation—detention to be served on the following Thursday from 2:45-3:45 pm.
- 5<sup>th</sup> occurrence of dress code violation—student will receive an in-school suspension. **It is a matter of following basic rules rather than adherence to the dress code.**
- 6<sup>th</sup> occurrence of dress code violation—student will receive a three day out-of-school suspension.
- 7<sup>th</sup> occurrence of dress code violation—student will be removed from Our Shepherd.

## OUR SHEPHERD LUTHERAN SCHOOL, STUDENT DRESS CODE (Grades K-8) 2024-2025

### ACCEPTABLE DRESS

**Boys Tops:**

Solid Colored: collared Dress shirts, Oxfords, Polo style, turtlenecks, sweaters, Henley style, and band-collared shirts.

**Boys Bottoms:**

Solid-colored slacks, jeans

**Girls Tops:**

Solid colored: Dress shirts, Oxfords, Polo style, turtlenecks, sweaters, Henley style shirts, and band-collared shirts, dresses (*Appropriate length*)

**Girls Bottoms:**

Solid-colored slacks and jeans; skirts and jumpers (*appropriate length*).  
Solid color leggings only may be worn under skirt that meets the *Appropriate length*.

### UNACCEPTABLE DRESS

**Boys Tops:**

NO: T-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies, camouflage patterns

**Boys Bottoms:**

NO: Skinny jeans, warm-ups, athletic pants, sweatpants, ski-type, camouflage pants, or saggy pants

**Girls Tops:**

NO: T-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies, sleeveless shirts or dresses; camouflage patterns; any shirt that shows the midriff, cleavage, shoulder, or back area (no keyhole design shirts)

**Girls Bottoms:**

NO: Warm-ups, sweatpants, yoga pants, athletic pants, stretch pants, stirrup pants, joggling-style pants, low-cut pants, camouflage pants, tight fitting pants/skirts, short skirts

### Appendix "B":

#### CONDUCT CODE FOR INTERNET ACCESS OUR SHEPHERD LUTHERAN SCHOOL PAINESVILLE, OHIO

Through the technology program at Our Shepherd Lutheran School, we strive to provide an educationally rich experience while equipping our students with necessary technology skills for both today and the future.

Persons who use Our Shepherd's equipment to access the Internet are expected to conform to the policies in this document. Users are expected to read, understand, and obey these rules. Users are also expected to maintain high ethical standards.

Access to the Internet enables students to explore many avenues of information and possibly exchange messages with Internet users throughout the world. Families are warned that some material accessible via the Internet may contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to Christian people.

Every effort will be made to safeguard our students' safety. It is our intent to apply technology to the educational betterment of our students as well as for the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, exceed the disadvantages. But ultimately, parents and others responsible for the minor students are responsible for establishing and communicating the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. To that end each family has the right to decide whether or not to apply for access.

Please note that no student will have access to the Internet unless supervised by a staff member.

## **INTERNET POLICY**

Our Shepherd Lutheran School has taken precautions to restrict access to controversial materials. We follow all guidelines as established by the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/cipa.html>. In addition, we use software programs which block inappropriate content and sites.

Students are responsible for good behavior on school computers just as they are in the classroom or hallways. General school rules as well as computer and internet guidelines apply.

Computers are provided for students to conduct research and communicate with others. Access to Internet services is given to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible Christian manner. Both the student and guardian(s) must sign the permission form. Access is a privilege granted by the principal; it is not an automatic right.

## **GENERAL COMPUTER AND INTERNET GUIDELINES**

1. Students will follow the general rules, which have already been established for computer lab use.
2. Computer lab/Internet guidelines prohibit the following:
  - A. Violating copyright laws.
  - B. Committing plagiarism.
  - C. Accessing inappropriate sites**
  - D. Destroying data of another user.
  - E. Sending or displaying defamatory or offensive messages or pictures.
  - F. Employing or using the Internet for commercial purposes.
  - G. Circumventing, or attempting to circumvent, filters, software, and other devices which are in place for student safety.
  - H. Students establishing or accessing unapproved and/or unauthorized email accounts or blogs.
  - I. Give out personal information such as last name, addresses, phone numbers, etc.
  - J. Enter chat areas.
  - K. Make purchases.
  - L. Fill out questionnaires (unless specified by teacher for educational purposes).

*Finally, if a student arrives at a site which is offensive to Christians, the student will immediately turn off the monitor and notify the supervising staff member.*

Violations may result in a loss of access as well as disciplinary actions.

## **OUR SHEPHERD LUTHERAN SCHOOL STUDENT USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA / CELL PHONES / TEXTING/ DIGITAL DEVICES**

We are a society that is reliant on our cell phones, the Internet, and the perceived need to be in constant contact with our family and friends. Our students are no different. Many of our upper grade students have a cell phone and belong to one or more social media websites. It is our hope that the Our Shepherd Family is using these avenues of communication in positive ways. **Please note that cell phones are not permitted in the classrooms, hallways, gym or at lunch. Students with verified medical needs who need their devices for monitoring purposes will be permitted access to their devices. Teachers will be collecting cell phones when students arrive at school. They will be kept in the students' homeroom or designated classroom in the morning and returned at the end of the school day. Refusal to turn the phone over to the teacher is an act of insubordination (failure to follow a reasonable request) and may result in suspension from school. Smart watches are not permitted during the school day because they act as cell phones. Smart watches are to left at home or put in the students' backpack during the school day.**

Because of these communication tools, a major issue across our country that our schools are dealing with is Cyber Bullying. It is defined as a student using the Internet, cell phone, or other technology to harass, embarrass, or threaten another student. We pray that this and other inappropriate texts/posts don't happen here at Our Shepherd. However, we want to let families and students know that we will address these incidents if they occur.

***“Let the words of my mouth (my text messages and online posts) and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.” Psalm 19:14***

Portions of that verse are not in the original translation! However, it is a reminder that what we say or do should always make the Good Lord smile. We are responsible for our words and actions no matter where we are, even if we type those words instead of saying them aloud for people to hear.

The following guidelines apply to Our Shepherd Lutheran School Family and explain how we will handle situations that are not acceptable in His sight.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA**

- Facebook and other social media sites are not to be accessed by students at any time using computers or tablets owned by Our Shepherd Lutheran School.
- Always keep in mind that you are representing yourself, your family, your school, and most importantly, your Lord, when you are posting messages online.
- No inappropriate comments should be made about teachers, parents, or other students of Our Shepherd Lutheran School. You will be held accountable for your texts/posts.

### **SHARING PICTURES AND VIDEOS**

- Our Shepherd Lutheran School requires all parents to indicate their wishes on how to use their child's photo for media. Some families do not wish to have their child's photo/video shared online. Please respect their right to privacy and do not post without permission.

### **INAPPROPRIATE TEXTS / POSTS**

- Inappropriate texts/posts are determined the same way we treat the words that come out of our mouths. Our Shepherd uses three simple questions – Is it true? Is it constructive? Is it kind? If you cannot say yes to all three, you’ve done something wrong.
- Texts/Posts referring to a teacher, parent, or student in the Our Shepherd Lutheran School Family that are deemed inappropriate need to be shared with the principal.
- The principal will only address instances where there is **documented proof** of the text/post. *It is simple: Save it and show the principal.* The principal will not handle situations where there is no evidence of such a text/post.
- No matter when or where an inappropriate text/post is written about someone in the Our Shepherd Lutheran School family, the school has the right to get involved and give consequences when necessary.

## **A NOTE FOR PARENTS**

Know what is going on in your child’s life. You should know their social media passwords so you can monitor their accounts. Review their cell phone once in a while and check to see if you approve of their text messages. It is incredibly easy to text or post something you know you would never say to someone face to face. For a child, this is a temptation that is extremely difficult to overcome. They are going to make poor decisions sometimes, but it is our job as parents to use those incidents as teachable moments to talk about what it means to live for Christ and most importantly to be forgiven by Christ.