

Mission Lutheran School

Family Handbook



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MLS Foundational Documents

MLS Vision & Values

Mission Lutheran School strives to educate the whole child using God's Word, solid academic curriculum, and practical, relevant experiences. In order to accomplish this task, we partner with families and the church congregation to provide the best supportive, loving, nurturing environment possible. We seek to meet students at their present spiritual, academic, social, and physical level and help prepare and equip them for their next level of education and life.

As a school community, we are daily learning, living, and growing in Christ.

We Value -

- *Christ-centered focus rooted in LC-MS Lutheran culture*
- *Quality-driven academic instruction*
- *Student-focused lessons and interactions*
- *Family-friendly environment and atmosphere*

Philosophy Statement

Mission Lutheran School began with a vision to educate children and support families in the Las Cruces community by providing a uniquely Lutheran education experience. We remain rooted in God's Word, faithful to Lutheran doctrine in culture and practice. As such, we believe God lovingly created each person to be unique and treasured in His eyes. However, sin has separated us from God. Therefore, God sent his son, Jesus, to be our Savior, the final sacrifice for our sins.

While on earth, Jesus was uniquely God and man. As a man, Jesus' own childhood exemplified how children are to grow and develop. *"And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, in favor with God and men." Luke 2:52. Mission Lutheran School patterns its educational and development areas for children after those of our Savior Jesus Christ. Consequently, the classroom activities, materials and staff work together to provide opportunities for educational (wisdom), physical (stature), spiritual (favor with God), and social/emotional (favor with men) development throughout the day.*

Mission Lutheran School believes parents are to be the first and primary teachers of their children. We view ourselves as an educational institution which provides aid, support, and encouragement to families as they raise their children in a manner pleasing to God. We actively encourage partnership with families and the church congregation to best provide a productive, appropriate and nurturing learning environment and experiences for our students. We value a learning community that is Christ-centered, quality-driven, student-focused, and family-friendly.

Mission Lutheran School was created by and is supported by Mission Lutheran Church. We seek to serve the families in our congregation as well as others in the Las Cruces community. We invite families looking for a church home to attend our worship services and Sunday school. If you have questions regarding Mission Lutheran Church, we encourage you to visit with our pastor at any time.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

Since Mission Lutheran School is an extension of the ministry of Mission Lutheran Church, the Christian Faith statement for the church and the school are the same.

Lutherans believe:

- ✚ That there is only one God, eternally existent in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is the Creator of the universe with all of its grandeur and beauty, and He sustains it with His almighty power. He also created our first parents, Adam and Eve, in His own image that they might live in fellowship with Him and be His instruments. Matt 3:17; Gen 1:1; PS 33:6,9; Heb 11:3.
- ✚ That Adam and Eve, whom God created, doubted and rebelled against Him. They sinned and their natures became evil. Now every human being is born with sin, a self-centered nature and a tendency for evil that violates God's will and desire. Attempts to change human nature or to please God with our own good are doomed to failure. People need forgiveness and new life, and God provides it through grace. Psalm 14:3; Eccl 7:20; 1 John 1:8.
- ✚ That God, out of pure love, gives people forgiveness of sins and thus reconciles them to Himself. He does this even though He is a just God who punishes sin because His own Son, Jesus Christ, took punishment for all sin for all people upon Himself when He died on the cross of Calvary. God raised Him from the dead on Easter and thus demonstrated to the world that the sacrifice of Jesus has been accepted and human's sin paid for. Jesus has ascended to the right hand of the Father and will return again in power and glory. John 3:16; Rom 10:4; Col 1:13-14; John 1:9.
- ✚ That people receive forgiveness of sins and salvation through faith. Faith is the hand which accepts God's free gift. Faith is created by the Holy Spirit through the means of the Gospel message, which tells of God's love demonstrated in Jesus Christ. Infant baptism is the means by which a child is given a new life and received into God's kingdom. 1 Cor 2:14; 1 Cor 6:11; Eph 2:8-9; 1 Cor 12:3.
- ✚ That the Bible is the source of knowledge about God and His forgiveness and is also the way in which He speaks to us today. The Bible was written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and so is true and without error. 2 Peter 1:21; 2 Tim 3:16-17.
- ✚ That the church is the fellowship of all those who have come to faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord. The Lutheran Church receives its name from Martin Luther who "reformed" the church with the basic principles of faith alone, grace alone, and Scripture alone.
- ✚ The purpose of the church is to nurture faith through the Word and Sacraments and to share the love of God through Word and deed with the whole world in order to make other people disciples of Jesus Christ. We believe we are empowered to carry out God's will through the indwelling and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:42; 1 Cor 1:10; John 14:26.
- ✚ That God has given two Sacraments to build His church: Baptism, to create faith; and Holy Communion (also called the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist), to nurture faith. In Holy Communion, Jesus Christ gives the communicant His body "in, with, and under" the bread and wine. Matt 28:19-20; Acts 2:38-39; 1 Cor 11:23-

24.

✠ That the fellowship which God establishes with His believers on earth will continue after this life as believers live with Him in heaven for all eternity. 1 Cor 15:42-43; Phil 3:21; Heb 9:27-28.

Christian beliefs, as understood and taught in the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS) pervade everything that is done at Mission Lutheran School.

The LCMS is a scripture/creed-based church body with definite beliefs on many points of Christian faith. For instance, we affirm: the sanctity of human life from conception, the importance of a stable family life, faithfulness in marriage, and abstention from those things which would harm our physical bodies. We also recognize that cohabitation, homosexual relations, and sexual relations outside the marital relationship are contrary to the Word of God. We will not compromise these teachings. Nor will we deny admission of a child to the school ministry as a result of these sins. This is a place where all sinners can find the truth.

At Mission Lutheran School we expect that the families of our students will not act in a way that is contrary to, or disrupts the teachings of this school in matters of religious faith and personal conduct.

OUR GOALS

Based on Luke 2:52, our goal is to develop the education, growth, and development of children in the following areas: spiritual, intellectual, physical, social/emotional. The staff at Mission Lutheran School uses a carefully planned environment and schedule which allows for independent choices by the children, direct instruction and guidance by teachers, and a challenging academic curriculum to accomplish this goal. Specifically....

- The children may know, through God's Word and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, that Jesus loves and forgives them and that He is their Savior.
- The children will develop intellectually in all academic areas at age-appropriate levels.
- The children will develop socially/emotionally such that they can participate well in various social groups and feel secure about themselves and their abilities.
- The children will develop physically in both the large and small motor areas at age-appropriate levels.

OUR PLEDGE TO YOU

We pledge to provide, to the best of our ability:

- A staff which loves, values, and forgives your child just as God loves, values, and forgives us.
- A classroom environment which encourages learning, independence, and exploration.
- A program which strives for excellence: Preschool maintaining 2-star licensure with the state and the preschool & elementary grades maintaining accreditation with the National Lutheran Schools Association.

ADMINISTRATION

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The Mission Lutheran School academic calendar will be set by the MLS administrator and approved annually by the MLS Board. Class hours will meet or exceed current NM Public Education Department requirements as found in New Mexico Administrative Code.

The calendar for the current school year is kept online through Google. Appropriate links are shared with families. In addition, the calendar may be viewed through the school and classroom websites. The online calendar is always the best choice for the most current and complete information. A 'year-at-a-glance' calendar is available in print and online.

SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY

MLS will enroll students into class sessions/grade levels using established procedures and following established eligibility guidelines.

Non-discrimination clause: Mission Lutheran School admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, and national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, and other school-administered programs.

1. Preschool admission:

- 3 years old on or before September 1 of enrolling school year.
- Completely independent on the toilet.
- If a child turns 3 years old prior to January 1 of enrolling school year and uses the toilet independently, he may enroll in a partial week session 2nd semester.

3. Kindergarten admission:

- 5 years old on or before September 1 of enrolling school year.
- Earlier than 5-year old enrollment for Kindergarten will be considered if the student has: previous school experience, been assessed by the MLS Kindergarten teacher, and is generally deemed as 'more than ready' for Kindergarten.

4. 1st-5th Grade admission:

- A student is eligible for these grades upon successful completion of prior grade from a recognized institution.
- Students transferring from another school will provide previous school transcripts/records and will have a 30-day probationary period.

REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT

1. General Terms

- Reserved Space - A student's place will be reserved for the upcoming school year when \$100 of the annual registration fee is paid and registration paperwork is completed and on file in the school office.
- Completed Registration includes:
 - Payment of full registration fee
 - Registration paperwork complete, updated, and on file in the school office
 - Current vaccination record on file in the school office including COVID vaccine card, if applicable
 - Permissions form signed for current school year and on file in the school office
 - Signed annual enrollment contract (Preschool only)

2. Annually (by the first day student attends school):

- Registration fees paid
- Registration paperwork complete and current
- Vaccination records up-to-date
- Permissions form signed
- Annual enrollment contract signed (Preschool only)
- First month's tuition paid (Administrator may set tuition due date on or near first day of school)

3. General Procedures

- Registration for the upcoming school year opens on a date set by the Administrator (usually February).
- A courtesy registration period (usually 2 weeks) is established for current MLS & Mission Lutheran Church families.
- Registrations are accepted and classes filled on a 'first-come, first-served' basis.
- Only Reserved Space counts as a class registration.
- Students must have a Complete Registration prior to the first day of school attendance.

4. Re-Enrollment

- Returning MLS students must complete the Reserved Space requirements in order to have a session/classroom spot for the upcoming year.

5. New Enrollment

- Students new to MLS must complete the Reserved Space requirements in order to have a session/classroom spot.
- Registration paperwork and Permissions form may be completed on-line through the school website or by using paper forms available in the office.

- Students transferring to MLS from another elementary school will request (within 30-day probation period) previous school records/transcripts be sent to MLS.

The administrator will work closely with families and staff when making any exceptions to the above policy, always being mindful of the well-being of every student.

A limited amount of funds is set aside annually for the purpose of Tuition Assistance to families who are in need. Applications must be filled out annually. Completed forms are due by set date for current MLS families (usually end of May/early June) .

The Angel Scholarship Program, not based on income, also awards scholarships on an annual basis. Applications must be filled out each year. Completed forms are due by a set date.

TUITION

1. Tuition Rates/Registration Fees

- Tuition rates/Registration fees are set annually by the MLS Board.
- Tuition rates/Registration fees are posted in common MLS publications (website, registration folders, MLS newsletters).
- Current tuition discounts available (**only 1 discount may be applied per student**)
 - * Multi-sibling discount: 10% discount for each sibling after the first child.
 - * Kindergarten Transition discount: A reduced registration fee and monthly tuition is available for students who attended MLS preschool session and then transition into MLS Kindergarten.

2. Collection of Tuition/Registration fees

- Tuition/registration fees are collected in the school office during office hours.
- Check payments made when the office is closed may be left in the black box outside the office.
- Receipts are given for all cash payments.

3. Tuition records

- The school office will keep current records of all tuition/registration payments.

4. Tuition statements

- Tuition statements are printed and distributed from the school office at the beginning of each month. Statements follow established pattern, but should reflect any discounts and/or tuition reductions.

5. Payment forms

- Check - made payable to: ***Mission Lutheran Church.***
- Cash - paid during office hours, receipt provided.

- Credit card - using established provider (currently: SQUARE). An electronic charge of \$2/per rounded \$100 is added (minimum \$2).

6. Late tuition/Returned checks:

- After the 10th of the month, a \$10 late fee is added.
- At the end of the month, the late fee becomes \$25.
- Any bank fees from returned checks will be added to the tuition payment.
- After the end of each month, a late fee letter will be drafted and delivered (by hand if possible).
- If two months of unpaid tuition is accumulated, the administrator will meet with the family in order to create a payment plan.

If for any reason, you need to withdraw your child from Mission Lutheran School, notify the Administrator as soon as possible. You will need to pay the entire monthly tuition for that month, but will not be held responsible for the remainder of the year's tuition.

STUDENT RECORDS

In accordance with New Mexico administrative code, and as best practice, Mission Lutheran School will maintain appropriate and accurate student records. These records will include, but are not limited to, registration records, report cards, and standardized test results. MLS will file and retain other pertinent records such as: custodial agreements, medical reports, academic evaluations, and records from a previous school for transfer students.

Student Records

- Student registration and vaccination records will be maintained and retained in the school office.
- While a child is enrolled at MLS, academic records will be maintained by the student's current classroom teacher.
- Once a student has left MLS, academic records will be returned to the MLS office for retention.
- The Administrator shall be the custodian of the Mission Lutheran School records. It is his or her responsibility to respond in a timely manner to requests for viewing school records, deemed to be public information.
- Should a student enter MLS with a pertinent medical or academic evaluation, a copy will be kept on file in the school office. A copy may also be kept in the student's academic file for use/reference by the classroom teacher.
- Should a student transfer to MLS from another elementary school, previous school records will be obtained and kept on file in the office. Classroom teachers may access such records.
- Should a student receive a medical/academic evaluation while at MLS, the same procedure as above will be followed.
- In accordance with FERPA Law, a student's records may not be altered by the parents. If, upon review, the parents have concerns with the content or the record, they may provide a written statement to that effect. This statement must be included in the record, but documents will not be changed,

altered or removed except for factual information such as dates, etc. Interpretation of the Law and its application in a particular circumstance will be the responsibility of the Administrator and may require legal counsel.

Student Records Access

- Student records may be viewed by parents, other government authorities, and the student himself (upon turning 18) upon request during office hours.
- The viewing of records will be denied if parental rights have been revoked and appropriate documentation is on file.
- Student records may be copied for approved parties as listed.
- Other than the above parties, records may only be viewed/copied with written parental permission.
- Once a student has reached the age of 18, records may be accessed by the student's parents or others only with the student's permission.
- The Administrator must approve all requests for access to student records.

Student Cumulative Records

- In addition to keeping copies of student's most current report card, classroom teachers will keep all previous final report cards and any standardized test results.
- In addition, teacher may choose to keep non-standardized test results, work samples, teacher observations or any other copy of student work which demonstrates students growth, shows evidence of academic ability, or otherwise may provide useful information during the present year or in the future.

ACADEMICS & CURRICULUM

EVALUATION/GRADING SCALES/REPORT CARDS

For Grades K-5

1. Evaluations will be both formal and informal.
2. Graded work is sent home in a timely fashion for parent/guardian review.
3. Standardized tests will be administered annually.
4. Teachers and parents/guardians are encouraged to stay in frequent communication should an academic/behavioral concern exist.
5. Students will receive a formal report card at the end of each 9-week grading period.
6. Questions regarding report cards should be directed to the teacher responsible for the grade(s).
7. Final report cards are distributed on the final day of school. (Note: should any payments due MLS be outstanding on the final day of school, a copy of the report card is provided. Upon completion of payments, the official report card is distributed.)

8. Copies of all report cards are maintained in the student's permanent (cumulative) file.

Incomplete:

1. An "incomplete" grade will be given only to students who have not completed the required work due to an unavoidable absence for illness, accident or other situations beyond their control.
2. At the time the grade is given, a clear written statement of what must be done in order to make up the "incomplete" must be attached.
3. All "incompletes" must be made up no later than the end of the following quarter, when it reverts to a grade of "F" if the work is not completed.
4. When an "incomplete" has been successfully removed, the teacher should be certain to inform the office.

Grade Level Retention:

1. During the course of the school year, should it become evident that grade retention is in the best interest of the child, the classroom teacher will communicate with the parents/guardians as soon as possible to begin the dialogue and set plans in place for the academic success of the student.
2. The final decision to retain a child in a grade level rests with the MLS administrator.

Preschool:

1. Preschool staff will establish and maintain their own system for evaluating and recording individual academic and behavioral growth, strengths, and weaknesses.
2. Such collected information will be formally shared with parents during parent conferences twice a year and other times as appropriate.

Next Grade Level Advancement:

- Students demonstrating satisfactory academic progress (as described in the above policy) will advance to the next grade level for the next academic year.
- Satisfactory completion of the current grade level and advancement to the next grade level will be indicated on the final report card for the academic year.

Current Grade Level Retention:

- Students not demonstrating satisfactory academic progress or demonstrating a lack of readiness for the next grade level (as described in the above policy) may be recommended for grade level retention for the next academic year.
- Reasonable attempt will be made by the classroom teacher to consult and inform parents/guardians when a student is not showing satisfactory progress. (report card grades/comments, parent conferences, phone call, other communication).
- Reasonable attempt will be made by the classroom teacher to begin such communication with parent/guardian as early in the current academic year as possible.
- Should a grade level retention be recommended by the classroom teacher, a meeting will be held with the classroom teacher, MLS administrator, and the student's parents/guardians to discuss/determine a

recommended course of action.

- Grade level retention decisions will be made prayerfully and carefully considering a student's current academic and social/emotional levels.
- *The final decision for grade level retention is made by the MLS administrator.*

Grade-Skipping

- A student who exhibits academic progress (based upon classroom lessons/assignments/assessments, teacher annotation, and standardized tests) exceeding the next grade level expectations and who exhibits appropriate social/emotional skills matching a grade level skip, may be considered for grade-skipping.
- The consideration for grade-skipping may be raised by either the classroom teacher or the parents/guardians of the student any time prior to the beginning of a new academic year.
- When considering grade-skipping, a student's academic record and social/emotional maturity will be considered.
- Once a grade-skip consideration is proposed, a meeting will be held with the MLS administrator, parents/guardians, and involved MLS classroom teachers as available.
- Parents/guardians must agree to a grade-skip placement.
- MLS staff may request a trial period (4-6 weeks) be put in place.
- Frequent communication between the classroom teacher and the parents/guardians will be encouraged, especially in the early weeks of the transition, for the purpose of confirming a smooth transition.
- *The final decision for grade-skipping is made by the MLS administrator.*

ACADEMIC, BEHAVIORAL, SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATIONS

Students exhibiting academic, behavioral, emotional/social, psychological, or any other concern which may benefit from professional evaluation for the purpose of increased understanding and effective classroom intervention may be recommended for such evaluation by MLS staff. Working with parents/guardians, evaluations may be sought through the Las Cruces Public Schools (following current LCPS procedure) or pursued by parents/guardians through a private diagnostician.

Every attempt will be made to work with parents/guardians and diagnosticians to provide students with appropriate educational experiences at Mission Lutheran School. Should MLS staff feel they are unable to appropriately serve a student with unique needs, school enrollment may be terminated.

Evaluations by LCPS:

- Working with the Las Cruces Public School district and parents/guardians, current procedure as directed by LCPS will be followed in order to obtain the requested diagnostic evaluations.

Private Evaluations:

- Working with parents/guardians, a private diagnostician will be sought and retained.
- All fees for a private evaluation will be the responsibility of the parents/guardians.
- All scheduling for a private evaluation will be the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Mission Lutheran School tracks and records daily attendance/tardies for elementary students. Mission Lutheran School tracks and records weekly Church/Sunday School attendance for elementary students.

Mission Lutheran School tracks and records daily attendance for preschool students according to current CYFD regulations.

Student Attendance

1. Elementary classroom teachers take attendance every day. It is their responsibility to track absences and /or tardies. Records will be maintained using the system agreed upon by the school administrator.
2. Preschool classroom teachers take attendance every day. It is their responsibility to track absences. Records will be maintained using the system agreed upon by the school administrator.
3. Every three elementary tardies will be counted on the report card as an absence.
4. Should an elementary student accumulate an excessive number of absences, the school administrator will contact the family and follow the state truancy guidelines.
5. Classroom teachers will determine the classroom work which will be required to be made up depending on the nature and length of absence. Classroom teachers will determine the timeline for completing and turning in missed work.
6. Classroom absences for vacation are discouraged.
7. Parents are asked to notify classroom teachers in advance of planned absences for appointments, etc.
8. Parents are asked to notify the school office/classroom teacher when a child is absent due to illness or any other unavoidable situation.
9. It is understood on the part of the parents and classroom teacher, that it is in the best interest of every student to faithfully and regularly attend school in order to have the best opportunity for success.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Standardized Test Administration:

- Once the particular standardized test to be administered has been determined, the MLS administrator, working with the classroom teachers, will set up a testing schedule for the current academic year.
- The MLS administrator, classroom teachers, and others who may be serving as testing monitors/proctors will meet for any training needed in order to successfully administer/supervise the testing process with students.
- The MLS administrator will work with classroom teachers to acquire/set-up/prepare any necessary testing materials/supplies.
- Classroom teachers will be the primary responsible parties in preparing students to take the tests and for administering the tests to their students.

Standardized Test Results:

- The MLS administrator will work with classroom teachers to review/evaluate test results.
- Test results will be provided to parents/guardians at convenient times as determined by classroom teachers and in coordination with MLS administrator (at least once a year).
- Parents/guardians may request a meeting with classroom teachers to review their child's test results at any time.
- Test results may be shared verbally or in print. Printed test results will be provided to parents/guardians at least once a year.
- A print copy of year-end test results will be kept in the student's cumulative record.
- The current classroom teacher is responsible for placing a print copy of standardized test results in cumulative folders.
- Test results used/shared beyond MLS and/or parent/guardians will be used in a summative form or non-named form.
- Test results will be provided to any governing agency with appropriate jurisdiction to request such information.

TUTORING

Mission Lutheran School does not allow on-site academic tutoring (for pay) outside of regular school hours between staff members and currently enrolled MLS students. Under special circumstances, and with the approval of the MLS administrator, MLS teachers may enter into volunteer tutoring arrangements with MLS students and their families.

Once a need is identified where a student(s) would benefit from academic tutoring:

- The MLS administrator should be notified and approve an academic tutoring arrangement.
- A mutually agreeable time and schedule should be arranged between teacher/family.
- Every attempt will be made to have two staff members on site while tutoring sessions are in progress.
- The health, safety, and supervision of the student is the responsibility of the teacher conducting the tutoring until the student is released to the parent/guardian.

STUDENTS & SERVICES

RELIGIOUS PRIVILEGES

MLS staff and students will regularly learn, recognize, and practice religious privileges as gifted and commanded to us by God using the Bible and Lutheran doctrine as the foundational guidelines.

MLS staff will incorporate the practice of religious privileges into classroom routines. Such practices may include, but are not limited to:

- Christian Flag pledge

- Prayer
- Bible verse memorization
- Worship
- Hymns/songs
- Offering collection

MLS staff will incorporate the discussion/education of religious privileges into the classroom curriculum. Such topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Bible
- 10 Commandments/meanings
- Apostle's Creed
- Lord's Prayer
- Luther's Small catechism

MLS staff will incorporate the discussion/education of Christian events and people, both historical and current, which have shaped and defined our church, faith, and religious privileges. Such topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Bible accounts (Old and New Testaments)
- Early church
- Martin Luther/Reformation

CHAPEL

Chapel is every Friday at 8:30 AM. Our time is spent in the church sanctuary under the leadership of our Pastor. An offering is collected on chapel days and used to support a designated mission project. Parents are encouraged to stay and attend this special event with their child. What better way to spend 30 minutes with your child than worshipping in God's house! We encourage your child to dress nicely for chapel.

CIVIC PRIVILEGES

MLS staff and students will regularly learn, recognize, and practice civic privileges granted to U.S. citizens through the Constitution as well as the events and people, both historical and current, which shape and define our country and responsible citizenship.

MLS staff will incorporate the practice of civic privileges into classroom routines. Such practices may include, but are not limited to:

- Pledge of Allegiance
- National anthem

MLS staff will incorporate the discussion/education of civic privileges into the classroom curriculum. Such topics may include, but are not limited to:

- U.S. Constitution
- Government structure
- Voting
- Jury duty

MLS staff will incorporate the discussion/education of U.S. events, both historical and current, which have shaped and defined our country and civic privileges. Such topics may include, but are not limited to:

- American Revolution
- American Civil War
- September 11th
- Veterans Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr.
- U.S. Presidents

SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM RULES

MLS establishes and implements school rules which will apply to all staff, students, parents/guardians while on MLS property at any time. Teachers establish and implement their own classroom rules which will apply to the students in their classroom during all classroom hours/activities. The classroom rules will support the MLS school rules and not conflict in any way.

MLS School rules:

- A. Be Kind.
- B. Be Safe
- C. Be Respectful.
- D. Be Responsible.

In an atmosphere of love and forgiveness, rules and procedures are shared with all the children at the beginning of the year and as needed thereafter. Every attempt is made to keep school and classroom rules simple and manageable by the children.

DISCHARGE OF A STUDENT

Mission Lutheran School reserves the right to discharge a student from MLS if the school administrator determines a discharge to be in the best interest of the child and/or the school community. Specifically, a discharge may be made within a 30-day probationary period for new students if MLS is unable to meet the academic/social/or physical needs of a student. After the 30-day probationary period, a student may be discharged from Mission Lutheran School following repeated suspensions; posing imminent danger to self, students, or staff; or if it is determined that Mission Lutheran School can no longer meet the academic/social/or physical needs of a student.

The discharge of any MLS student will be done prayerfully and with Christian love and concern for the student,

family, and MLS community.

The MLS administrator has the final decision regarding the discharge of a student.

Parents/guardians may appeal to the MLS Board within 1 week of a discharge.

Reasons for discharge:

- A discharge may be made within a 30-day probationary period for new students if MLS is unable to meet the academic/social/or physical needs of a student.
- After the 30-day probationary period, a student may be discharged from Mission Lutheran School following repeated suspensions; posing imminent danger to self, students, or staff; or if it is determined that Mission Lutheran School can no longer meet the academic/social/or physical needs of a student.

Notification:

- Parents/guardians will be notified in writing.
- Whenever possible, a meeting will be set between the administrator and family. Other staff/board members may be invited to attend.
- MLS Board will be notified at the next regular board meeting (or sooner if deemed necessary).

Financial Reimbursement:

- Any pre-paid fees/tuition will not be reimbursed.
- Tuition for the current month of enrollment will not be reimbursed.
- The family will not be financially responsible for any tuition remaining for the remainder of the year.
- Any Tuition Assistance or Angel scholarship funds will return to the appropriate fund.

DRESS CODE

As Christians, acknowledging that all we have belongs to God, staff and students should dress in a modest, age-appropriate, safe, and God-pleasing manner. Dress code principles apply to clothing, outerwear, shoes, hair, jewelry, makeup, etc.

Clothing should not cause a distraction to self and/or others in the classroom. All undergarments should be covered, shorts/skirts be fingertip length or longer, tops modestly cover the chest area, and clothing be free of holes, rips, and tears. In addition:

Staff will make every effort to represent themselves as professional church workers in their daily attire. Staff will refrain from wearing blue jeans to school except for Fridays or when the scheduled activities of the day make wearing such clothing appropriate.

Students will wear shoes with covered heels or heel straps at all times for safety. Students should wear athletic shoes on days P.E. is scheduled. Clothing with writing should not contain messages contrary to Biblical beliefs. Clothing advertising movies, TV shows, etc. should reflect those rated G or PG.

During inclement/cold weather, students will wear appropriate clothing for outdoor class time. The type/amount of clothing required for outdoor time will be at the discretion and determination of the classroom teacher.

The MLS administrator has the final word in deciding whether dress code choices are appropriate.

Specifically -

- Undergarments should be covered
- Shorts/skirts be fingertip length or longer
- Tops modestly cover the chest area
- Clothing be free of holes, rips, and tears
- Shoes will have covered heels or heel straps
- Athletic shoes should be worn on days P.E. is scheduled
- Clothing with writing should not contain messages contrary to Biblical beliefs
- Clothing advertising movies, TV shows, etc. should reflect those rated G or PG
- Appropriate gear for inclement/cold weather should be sent to school when necessary (wind/rain gear, jackets, coats, hats, mittens, etc.)

TRANSPORTATION

No transportation to or from school is provided by MLS.

Mission Lutheran School provides no school-owned transportation options for students. MLS coordinates transportation of students for school events using volunteer drivers. When transporting MLS students (not under the direct guardianship of the driver) on a school event, 2 adults (driver, +1) will travel in the car for the safety and well-being of students and driver/chaperone.

Volunteer drivers must follow established procedures and complete requested paperwork prior to transporting MLS students.

1. Eligible Volunteers:

- Staff, parents, grandparents, guardians may serve as volunteer drivers for MLS events.
- Drivers must be 21 years of age or older.
- Other volunteers may serve as approved by the administrator.

2. Required Documents:

- Before transporting students on a trip, drivers must have copies of these current documents on file:
 - ⇒ Driver's license
 - ⇒ Car insurance including at least minimum liability as required by the state of New Mexico
 - ⇒ Vehicle registration
 - ⇒ Signed statement indicating no prior DWI convictions

3. Borrowed Vehicles:

- Vehicles may be borrowed, with the owner's consent, to use for transportation.

- Registration and insurance records must be on file in the office for the borrowed vehicle.

4. Safety:

- All current NM car/booster seat regulations will be followed. (see below)
- Students are expected to follow MLS school rules when riding in cars.
- Student behavior which is disruptive/disrespectful after redirection/correction may result in the loss of transportation privileges.
- Drivers will comply with all traffic laws.
- *A child age 1 through 4 must ride in a child safety seat.*
- *A child under 40 pounds must ride in a child safety seat.*
- *A child age 5 or 6 must ride in a child safety seat or booster seat.*
- *A child under 60 pounds must ride in a child safety seat or booster seat, regardless of age.*
 - *A child age 7 through 12 must be properly restrained in a child safety seat, booster seat, or seat belt (see below for seat belt proper fit). A child age 13 through 17 must ride in a seat belt.*
- <http://www.safernm.org/child-safety-seat-basics.aspx>

5. Other:

- It is the responsibility of MLS parents to arrange transportation of their children to/from school.
- Parents/grandparents/guardian who transport only their own child(ren) do not have to leave the above documentation on file.
- No financial compensation is provided for transportation for MLS events.

FIELD TRIPS

Mission Lutheran School staff will coordinate class field trips throughout the academic year according to their calendar schedules. The purpose of class field trips is to supplement the current curriculum plan and/or enhance student physical, social/emotional, or religious development and education. Parent volunteers will be utilized as chaperones/drivers for field trips. Field trips are considered part of the MLS school day and attendance will be counted according to stabled MLS procedure.

Field trips are considered a privilege and MLS students/chaperones are expected to represent MLS in a God-pleasing manner. Should a student's previous classroom or field trip behavior put in doubt his/her readiness to participate in field trips, he/she may not be invited to attend a scheduled trip. In such a case, supervision and alternate classroom tasks will be provided at MLS during the trip.

- Once a field trip is scheduled, permission slips will be sent home to all families using the approved MLS format.
- Parent/guardian volunteers will be requested to serve as chaperones/drivers.
- Chaperones/volunteers will follow currently established transportation policy/procedures.

- Field trips are considered part of the MLS school day. Should a student not attend a field trip, supervision and alternate classroom tasks will be provided at MLS. Should a student not attend the field trip and choose not to remain at MLS during the activity, the student will be marked absent.
- Classroom teachers reserve the right to not invite a student to attend a field trip if previous field trip or classroom behavior has demonstrated a lack of appropriate maturity and/or respect. In such a case, parents will be notified in advance of the trip. Alternate work and supervision will be provided at MLS.
- Field trips may be cancelled due to insufficient chaperones/drivers.

PHOTOGRAPHS/MEDIA

MLS will annually provide opportunity for student/class/school photographs. Other photographs/media may be taken during the year for both family and school use. Parents will have the option to grant MLS permission to use photos/media using a general permission signed during registration. MLS follows current social networking policy when using student photographs/media.

Student/classroom/school photos:

- Student school photographs are taken once a year.
- Notice will be given in advance to allow for preparation.
- Purchase of photographs is always optional, but we do ask that all students have their picture taken for class collage and school yearbook purposes.

Other photos/media:

- MLS will use photography and other media forms to document students and activities throughout the year.
- Publication and use of the photos/media outside MLS will be by parent/guardian permission (signed at the time of registration).
- MLS will follow current social networking policy when using student photographs/media.

CELL PHONES

Student cell phones shall be kept in backpacks or in staff possession/supervision. Student use of cell phones is allowed with teacher/staff approval. The primary purpose of student cell phone use is communicating with parent/caregiver. Other acceptable uses of cell phones include educational support opportunities. Care of student cell phones resides with the student and his/her family.

Student Cell Phone Use:

- Phones should be kept with teacher/staff or in student backpack.
- Primary use: communication w/parent-caregiver, approved educational opportunities
- Students should ask permission from teacher/staff before use.
- Should a student not be respectful of cell phone policy and following appropriate warning, a phone may be held by teacher/staff member until retrieved by a parent/caregiver.

- Cell phone policy applies while student is on campus/field trips and under the primary supervision of and MLS teacher/staff member.

STUDENT RECOGNITION

Students at Mission Lutheran School may be recognized for personal achievement. (academic, spiritual, physical, extra-curricular, etc.).

Guidelines for Recognition:

1. Purpose
 - A. To recognize student achievement.
 - B. To encourage other students.
 - C. To set a positive example for other students.
2. School-wide student awards will be approved by MLS Administrator.
3. Students will be recognized and receive awards at mutually agreeable dates/times/locations for MLS students/staff.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Mission Lutheran School seeks to offer a variety of extra-curricular activities to enhance student life outside the regular school day. The decision to offer the activities will be based on student/family interest, instructor availability, and MLS scheduling logistics. Extra-curricular activities will compliment and support the mission and purpose of MLS. Established policy for staff requirements will be followed.

- The nature and scope of extra-curricular activities at MLS will be approved by the MLS administrator.
- Extra-curricular activities may be proposed and planned by MLS staff, MLS family members, and/or other MLS stakeholders.
- Upon MLS administrator approval, extra-curricular activities may be incorporated and begin as soon as program details and staffing is in place.
- Extra-curricular activities may or may not operate under the established Elementary Enrichment Classes program, depending on the nature of the proposed program/activity.
- Instructors will follow the established staff policies and procedures regarding background checks, training, etc.
- Activity budget needs (including the possible payment of an instructor) will fit within established program guidelines and current MLS budget or will receive approval by the MLS board for the initiation and implementation of a new program.
- Extra-curricular activities will support the MLS mission and purpose and will be designed to enhance/enrich the overall well-being of MLS students.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

MLS Use: Social network platforms will be used by MLS staff for the purpose of promoting MLS, its activities, and purpose to the Las Cruces community and beyond. When using social network platforms, students' photos will be used only with prior parental permission. Students will not be identified by name.

MLS Staff Use: MLS staff will use personal social network platforms in a God-pleasing manner reflecting their vocation as professional church workers. MLS staff will refrain from making personal contacts with current/former MLS students until the student is 18 years of age. MLS may make personal contacts with other MLS current/former parents at their discretion.

Disclaimer: Social networking posts, whether made on professional or personal accounts, are public and available for review by MLS governing authorities. All current harassment policies covering interactions between MLS staff and students also apply to social networking platforms.

Abuse of Social Networking Policy:

- Should it become evident that MLS staff have used social networking platforms in a way that violates policy, staff will receive one warning. Further abuse will be documented and staff member will be led through the disciplinary due process.
- Should it become evident that MLS students have used social networking platforms in a way that violates policy, an incident report will be completed and parents informed. Further abuses will result in the student being led through the disciplinary due process.

HEALTH & SAFETY

ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE

Elementary school begins at 8:00 AM and dismisses at 3:00 PM. Elementary students (K-5) may arrive as early as 7:45 AM. If a family needs to drop off a student earlier than 7:45 AM due to extenuating circumstances, please make prior arrangements with the school office.

Elementary students are dismissed by classroom teachers from the school parking lot at 3:00 PM. Every effort is made to dismiss promptly.

Departure Procedures:

1 *"I want to stay in my car"* - Pull in to the drive closest to Roadrunner Pkwy. Drive around the curve and form a single-file line in the marked drive-thru lane (passenger side facing the sidewalk). At 3:00 PM, teachers will walk students outside and supervise as they get in to cars. You may leave the line once your child is secure. Cars should continue to move forward as able. Please drive slowly and carefully watching for students and parents.

2 *"I want to get out of my car"* - Pull in to the drive closest to Roadrunner Pkwy. Park in a marked spot in the center of the lot. Walk to the sidewalk. Retrieve your child, wave to the teacher, and cross the parking lot carefully.

Note: During bad weather or if you are running a few minutes late and miss the curbside pick-up, please park and walk in to Luther Hall. Reminder: Following established policy, students who are still in Luther Hall at 3:15 PM, will join After School Care.

Preschool sessions begin at 8:15 AM and dismiss at 12 PM. Preschool students may arrive as early as 8:00 AM. If a family needs to drop off a student earlier than 8:00 AM due to extenuating circumstances, please make prior arrangements with the preschool administrator. Parents/guardians of preschool students need to sign children in and out from the preschool program daily. As a result, please park your car in a marked space in the center of the parking lot and do not park in the pull-through lane.

As with elementary families, please pull into the parking lot using the drive closest to Roadrunner Parkway and exit the lot using the drive furthest from Roadrunner Parkway.

Handicapped Zone/Upper Parking Lot:

- The marked handicapped zone is reserved for drivers displaying a handicapped parking permit.
- If parking in the handicapped zone or upper parking lot, please note that you will be unable to leave the zone (or lot) when children are arriving/departing. See designated arrival/departure times for MLS.

Designated Arrival/Departure Times for Mission Lutheran School:

- Monday - Friday
 - 7:30 - 8:30 AM
 - 11:45 - 12:15 PM
 - 2:45 - 3:15 PM

Note: Should a person other than the usual parent/guardian pick up your child, whether preschool or elementary, please notify the classroom teacher in advance, and advise the person picking up your child to have his/her photo ID available. Please note that additional 'pick-up' people are recorded on registration papers. For everyone's benefit, please be sure to keep the school office updated with current lists of approved names and contact numbers.

ILLNESS/COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

MLS staff/students exhibiting signs of illness, infectious disease, and/or other communicable condition (eg. lice) will remain at home following printed guidelines (see staff/student illness procedures and appendix). Staff/students may return to MLS when procedure guidelines have been met. Students who become ill during the school day will be isolated (under supervision) until a parent/guardian can pick up student. Staff who become ill during the school day will leave school as soon as alternate job responsibilities can be arranged. MLS families will be notified of the presence of illness/communicable conditions if it is unique in nature or is evident across multiple students/classrooms.

Stay at home if:

- Exhibiting viral infection to the extent that daily work cannot be effectively accomplished.
- Exhibiting fever (>100.1), diarrhea, and/or vomiting.
- A bacterial infection is present.
- A communicable health condition is present.

Return to school when:

- Able to comfortably complete daily work.
- Fever, diarrhea, vomiting absent for 24 hours.
- Antibiotics have been administered for a minimum of 24 hours.
- Treatment for communicable condition has been administered.
- Permission received from medical personnel (if applicable).

MLS general notification:

- Parents/guardians will be notified of illness/communicable conditions if the administrator considers the extent of classroom/school illness to be widespread or if the communicable condition is unique in nature.
- Parents/guardians may be notified by text message or print information sent home with students.
- Should MLS document school absences due to illness at 30% of student body expected to be present on any given day, the MLS administrator may make the decision to close school for a period of one or more days.

FIRST AID/MEDICATION

When medically necessary, MLS staff will administer basic first aid/CPR to MLS students. Emergency personnel will be called for additional support if needed. Prescription and over the counter medication will be dispensed from the school office following established procedures. Emergency medications will be kept in the appropriate classrooms and used when necessary.

First Aid/CPR:

- MLS staff is annually trained in first aid/CPR practices.
- Basic first aid supplies are kept in the school office and classrooms.
- When medically necessary, first aid supplies will be used to care for students.
- Incident reports will be completed by MLS staff when first aid (beyond a simple bandage or ice pack) is administered.
- If your child requires medical attention beyond our capabilities, you will be contacted for non-emergency situations.
- If an accident occurs which requires immediate advanced first aid, professional help will be called first and the parents second.
- CPR/AED will be used by MLS staff should the need arise.

First Aid/CPR Procedures:

The first staff member to reach the child verbally alerts the second staff member to the problem. The first staff member on the scene then cares for the needs of the child while the second staff member supervises the remaining children and assists the

- first staff member as necessary.
- The first aid kit is located inside the MLS office behind the office door. Always wear disposable gloves when dealing with any body fluid. Disinfect any area contaminated with body fluid immediately.
- Wash a wound with soap and water.
- Cover a wound with band aids or sterile pads as necessary.
- Complete an incident report. Keep the original in the medical notebook located in the classroom. Make a copy of the report to send home with the child.
- Should the child need prompt medical attention, but it is not an emergency, call parents or emergency contact person. Medical forms for enrolled students are located in the medical notebook in each classroom. Copies are in the student files in the office.
- Should a child need immediate emergency medical attention, call 911 first and the parents second.
- Remember! Never leave a child unattended.

Prescription & Over the Counter (OTC) Medication:

- Any prescription or ingested OTC medication will be dispensed from the school office by an MLS staff member.
- All medication left in the school office will be kept in a secure lock box.
- Such medications should be in their original container and be accompanied with a current set of doctor/pharmacy instructions (if prescription) or written parent/guardian instructions (if OTC).
- A record of medication dispensed will be kept in the school office.

Emergency Medication:

- In the case of emergency medication (ex. EPI-pen, inhaler), the classroom teacher will keep the medication in a safe location in the classroom. Similar labeling/instructions are required.
- Should an emergency medication be dispensed, an incident report will be completed and the parents/guardians notified by the school.

Topical OTC:

- Topical OTC medications for chapped lips, dry skin, etc. may be kept in the classroom and dispensed only to the child who brought the medication and according to the teacher's instructions/procedures.

FOOD & NUTRITION

Mission Lutheran School will provide food and food service on a limited basis to students as outlined in the procedures. Mission Lutheran School will be aware of generally recommended guidelines for food & nutrition and seek to provide food options within those guidelines. Mission Lutheran School will be aware of students who have documented food allergies and do all they can to provide allergy-free food options & space for the students'

safety. Mission Lutheran School will be aware of students who have documented food-related medical issues and are affected by the food they consume and do all they can to provide appropriate food/snack opportunities. To that end, the parents/guardians of students with allergy/other medical issues may be asked to provide 'safe' food options to have readily available at MLS.

Lunch

Preschool - No lunch is provided for preschool students.

Elementary - As a matter of daily routine, lunch is not provided by MLS.

- Students provide their own sack lunch, including beverage, on a daily basis.
- Refrigeration is not available to students. Ice packs are encouraged if lunch items are best kept chilled.
- Likewise, the use of a microwave is not available to students. Foods should be kept warm in a thermos or similar container.
- Presently, our lunch room monitors volunteer to heat meals in the microwave on a first-come, first served basis. Please be sure food items are in a microwave-safe container. Out of general consideration, please keep heating times to 2 or less minutes.
- Lunch room monitors joyfully assist students who need help opening containers. Please have other food items pre-cut/peeled.
- Paper goods (cups, silverware, napkins, etc.) should be brought from home. MLS keeps some supplies available if a student forgets.
- Note: Students in Grade 4/5 have microwave privileges. Parents/guardians should instruct their student on method/time for reheating food and provide any necessary containers.

Pizza Days -

- MLS schedules a Pizza Lunch day monthly for elementary students
- The menu is generally: pizza, milk, fruit option, veggie option. A small fee is charged to cover expenses.
- Reservation forms will be sent home on Monday of the week a Pizza Lunch day is scheduled. Please return forms and payment by noon on Thursday.

Other Box Lunch options -

- MLS may schedule a Box Lunch option occasionally on Fridays (not Pizza Lunch days).
- A menu is posted once it is known. A fee is charged to cover expenses.
- Reservation forms will be sent home on Monday of the week a Box Lunch day is scheduled. Please return forms and payment by noon on Thursday.

Snacks

Preschool -

- Snack is provided daily to preschool students.
- Parents/Guardians provide snack for the entire class on a rotating basis.

- Snack items will meet all current ECECD regulations.
- The daily snack menu is posted in the preschool room.

Elementary -

- Students bring their own daily snack.
- Snack is eaten in classrooms following the teachers' established procedures.

Allergies

- A student with a known food allergy will have documentation on file in the MLS office.
- Charts documenting all MLS student allergies (food or otherwise) will be created and posted in each classroom and the MLS kitchen annually.
- MLS will do all they can to ensure a safe-food zone if the nature of the allergy requires it.
- Parents/guardians of a student with food allergies may be asked to keep a supply of non-allergy food items available at MLS in the event of a school/classroom event where allergy-inducing foods are present.

Other Food-related Medical Issues

- A student with a known food-related medical issue will have documentation on file in the MLS office.
- Charts documenting all MLS student medical issues (food or otherwise) will be created and posted in each classroom and the MLS kitchen annually.
- Parents/guardians of a student with food allergies may be asked to keep a supply of non-allergy food items available at MLS in the event of a school/classroom event where allergy-inducing foods are present.

Birthdays

- Student birthdays may be celebrated during the year with special snacks, meals, or other treats as the classroom teachers/parents agree.
- Such treats may be provided to a classroom only or to the whole school as the classroom teachers/parents agree.

Special Class Parties/Events

- Classroom parties may be organized by the classroom teachers/parents during the year.
- Classroom teachers will try to organize such events to include food items generally recognized as healthy and nutritious.

INCLEMENT WEATHER/EMERGENCY

In the case of inclement weather or other emergencies, MLS may announce a delay start or cancellation of school for one or more days. Instructional hours will not be made up as long as total instructional hours for the year meets or exceeds requirements as written in current NMAC (New Mexico Administrative Code).

Notification:

- Should MLS make a delay/cancellation decision, MLS will make every reasonable attempt to notify parents/guardians of their decision. Notification methods may include, but are not limited to: text messages , email, and social media posts.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

An Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is in place to prepare for natural, technological, and human hazards. The plan includes action to take before, during, and after an incident resulting from one or more hazard. Staff will annually review EOP. Fire drills and other hazard drills will be conducted according to current ECECD regulations.

Terms/Definitions:

Natural hazard - severe storm, tornado

Technological hazard - hazardous materials spill/leak, fire

Human hazard - suspicious person in the area or on campus (armed or otherwise)

Incident - actual occurrence of one or more of the above hazards.

Fire drill - Staff and students evacuate the building, but remain on campus in a safe, but out of the way location. Used in the case of fire in one of the campus buildings or on the campus grounds.

Shelter-in-Place - Blinds closed, all doors (including classroom) locked, door windows covered, lights on, no building entry/exit, classroom activity/routines continue within these constraints. Used in the case of one of the above hazards when the concern is not so extreme as to require a Lockdown. If hazard is weather-related, students will be moved to a safe location away from exterior doors/windows.

Lockdown - Blinds closed, all doors (including classroom) locked, door windows covered, lights lowered or off, no building entry/exit, students/staff move to out of sight location in rooms. Used in the case of on-campus human hazard.

Campus evacuation - Staff and students transported off-campus using all available vehicles to a pre-determined safe location. Used in the case of technological hazard or in the aftermath of a human hazard if recommended by government authorities.

Preparation for a hazard/incident:

1. Drills - Fire

- Fire drills will be practiced monthly according to current ECECD regulation. Drills are coordinated and conducted by office staff.
- Central fire alarm is used for notification.
- Students and staff will evacuate the school building according to plans posted in each room.
- Office staff is responsible for the safe evacuation of teaching staff and any other visitors/staff in building.
- Teaching staff is responsible for the safe evacuation of students in their classroom.

- Teaching staff carries with them the following equipment: keys, cell phone, emergency bag including, but not limited to: student information, basic first aid supplies, emergency medicine/medical equipment needed by themselves or students in their care.

- Records reporting date/time/comments will be kept of all drills.

2. Drills - Other

- Shelter-in-Place, Lockdown, and Evacuation drills will be practiced 3 times a school year according to current ECECD regulations. Drills are coordinated and conducted by office staff.
- Central intercom system is used to announce drills by name.
- Shelter-in-Place, Lockdown drills follow steps outlined in definitions above.
- Evacuation drills involve the simulation of loading staff/students into any available vehicles and driving to a pre-determined safe location. In the case of an actual hazard/incident, students will go to the car belonging to their classroom teacher. As many students as possible will be placed in the car. Any remaining students will travel in the cars of additional school/church staff. Since such an evacuation indicates the presence of extreme hazard/incident, the use of car seats/booster seats/seat belts will not be a priority.

- Evacuation locations:

1. Desert Hills Elementary School - 280 N. Roadrunner Parkway
2. Highland Elementary School - 4201 Emerald St.
3. Jornada Elementary School - 3400 Elks Dr.

- Office staff is responsible for the safety of teaching staff and any other visitors/staff in building.

- Teaching staff is responsible for the safety/supervision of students in their classrooms

- Teaching staff carries with them the following equipment: keys, cell phone, emergency bag including, but not limited to: student information, basic first aid supplies, emergency medicine/medical equipment needed by themselves or students in their care.

- Records reporting date/time/comments will be kept of all drills.

3. Training

- Teaching/office staff maintain current CPR/First Aid certification.
- EOP are reviewed by staff annually.
- New staff received training in EOP at time of employment.

4. Facility/Equipment

- Doors

⇒ For general security/safety purposes, MLS exterior doors will remain locked and closed while students are on campus.

- ⇒ General entry into the building will be through the main door of MLS or MLS annex.
- ⇒ Doorbells are mounted and maintained at each of these locations.
- ⇒ Doors should be opened only by MLS staff or regular volunteers.
- ⇒ During times of general drop-off/pick-up, doors may be unlocked, but will remain supervised.

- Fire/Electrical Safety

- ⇒ School/Church fire extinguishers and exit lights are maintained annually using a licensed company.
- ⇒ Las Cruces Fire Department is contacted to conduct annual fire inspection per ECECD regulations.
- ⇒ Fire extinguishers are checked monthly by office staff for proper pressure, location, wall mounting, and obvious damage to canister. Date of monthly inspection is recorded on extinguisher tag.
- ⇒ Electrical outlet covers will be used in the preschool classroom.

- EOP and Drills

- ⇒ Drill and evacuation plans are posted in each classroom.
- ⇒ Teaching staff has ready access to classroom emergency bags which contain: student information and basic first aid supplies at a minimum.
- ⇒ Emergency supplies of water will be stored in school kitchen.
- ⇒ Emergency supplies of food will be stored in school kitchen.
- ⇒ Parent will provide and school staff will keep an extra set of clothing at school for preschool and Kindergarten students.

During an actual hazard/incident:

1. Action

- Once nature of hazard/incident is determined, the appropriate notification method will be used.
- Office/teaching staff will direct people/students under their care to follow the appropriate steps as planned.
- Office/teaching staff will contact 911.
- Students safety/supervision will be a priority.

2. Safety

- Office/teaching staff will administer any necessary first aid.
- Office/teaching staff will call first responders (911) for any additional medical assistance needed.

3. Notification

- Once students have been settled to a safe location, office staff will use text message system to notify

MLS families of current situation/status.

After an incident:

1. Safety

- Office/teaching staff will administer any necessary first aid.
- Office/teaching staff will call first responders (911) for any additional medical assistance needed.

2. Notification

- Once an incident is deemed clear and safe, office staff will notify teaching staff using central intercom system or some other effective method.
- Once students have been settled to a safe location, office staff will use text message system to notify MLS families of current situation/status.

3. Reunification

- If an incident requires locked doors, office staff will unlock doors, once safe to allow for family reunification with students.
- If a building or campus evacuation was required, office staff will assist teaching staff in reuniting students/families in a safe manner.
- Teaching staff will supervise the safe reunification of students with their families following an incident.

Child Missing from School:

- The first teacher to discover a missing child verbally relates the situation to a second adult.
- The first teacher then begins a search for the child by physically searching and verbally calling.
- The second adult supervises the remaining children and assists as necessary until the missing child is returned.
- Staff members will not hesitate to call 911 for outside assistance if it is deemed necessary.

HARASSMENT

Harassment and bullying of students and employees are against federal, state and local policy, and are not tolerated by Mission Lutheran School/Mission Lutheran School Board. Mission Lutheran School (MLS) is committed to providing all students with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. Bullying and harassment of students by students, school employees, and volunteers who have direct contact with students will not be tolerated in MLS.

Mission Lutheran School does not tolerate harassment, bullying, hazing, or any other victimization, of students/staff based on any reason. This policy is in effect while students or employees are on property within the jurisdiction of MLS or while attending or engaged in school sponsored activities while away from school grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school.

If, after an investigation,

- a student is found to be in violation of this policy, the student shall be disciplined by appropriate measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion.
- a school employee is found to be in violation of this policy, the employee shall be disciplined by appropriate measures up to, and including, termination.
- a school volunteer is found to be in violation of this policy, the volunteer shall be subject to appropriate measures up to, and including, exclusion from school grounds. "Volunteer" means an individual who has regular, significant contact with students.

Harassment means any digital, written, verbal, or physical act of conduct toward a student which is based on any actual or perceived trait or characteristic of the student and which creates a hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:

1. Places the student/employee/volunteer in reasonable fear of harm to their person or property;
2. Has a substantially detrimental effect on the student's/employee's/volunteer's physical, social, emotional, or spiritual health;
3. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or
4. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Harassment includes the following behaviors and circumstances:

- Verbal, nonverbal, physical or written harassment, bullying, hazing, or other victimization that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim;
- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim.
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, property, etc. that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim;
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student that have the purpose or effect of causing injury, discomfort, fear, or suffering to the victim; and/or
- Unreasonable interference with a student's performance or creation of an intimidating, offensive, or hostile learning environment.

Sexual harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to the conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a term condition of the student's education or benefits;
- Submission to or rejection of the conduct by a school employee is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that student; or
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive education environment.

In situations between students and school officials, faculty, staff, or volunteers who have direct contact with students, bullying and harassment may also include the following behaviors: Requiring that a student submit to bullying or harassment by another student, either explicitly or implicitly, as a term or condition of the targeted student's education or participation in school programs or activities.

Any person who in good faith reports an incident of bullying or harassment under this policy to a school official, shall be immune from civil or criminal liability relating to such report and to the person's participation in any administrative, judicial, or other proceeding relating to the report. Individuals who knowingly file a false complaint may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Retaliation against a person because they have filed a bullying or harassment complaint, assisted or participated in a harassment investigation or proceeding is prohibited. An individual who knowingly files a false harassment complaint and a person who gives false statements in an investigation shall be subject to discipline by appropriate measures, as shall a person who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy. A student found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. A school employee found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, termination of employment. A school volunteer found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, exclusion from school grounds.

The school will promptly investigate allegations of bullying or harassment. The Administrator of MLS or designee will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging bullying or harassment. The Administrator or designee will be responsible for handling all complaints by employees alleging bullying or harassment. It also is the responsibility of the Administrator, in conjunction with the investigator to develop procedures regarding this policy.

Individuals who feel that they have been harassed should:

Communicate to the harasser that the individual expects the behavior to stop, if the individual is comfortable doing so. If the individual wants assistance communicating with the harasser, the individual should ask a teacher, Administrator or School Board Chairperson (designee) to help.

If the harassment does not stop, or the individual does not feel comfortable confronting the harasser, the individual should: tell a teacher, Administrator or School Board Chairperson who will write down exactly what happened on a school incident report form:

- what, when and where it happened;
- who was involved;
- exactly what was said or what the harasser did;
- witnesses to the harassment;
- what the student said or did, either at the time or later;
- how the student felt; and how the harasser responded.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

An individual who believes that they have been harassed or bullied will notify the Administrator/School Board Chairperson who will fill out the school incident report form and include evidence of the harassment, including,

but not limited to, letters, tapes, or pictures. Information received during the investigation is kept confidential to the extent possible. Parents will be notified if a complaint has been made involving their child/children. The school Administrator/School Board designee has the authority to initiate an investigation in the absence of a written incident report.

INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

The Administrator and School Board designee or member will promptly commence the investigation upon receipt of the complaint. He/she will interview the complainant and the alleged harasser. The alleged harasser may file a written statement in response to the complaint. The Administrator/School Board Chairperson may also interview witnesses as deemed appropriate.

Upon completion of the investigation, the Administrator/School Board designee will make written findings and conclusions as to each allegation of harassment. The Administrator will keep a copy and file a copy in the student's or employee's official record which is kept on file in the school office. A copy of the written findings will be sent to respective parents/guardians.

MLS administrator and staff will make reasonable effort to involve parents/guardians in a resolution/reconciliation meeting.

CORRECTIVE ACTION PROCEDURE

In the case of behavior deemed harmful or violent (either actual or threatened) to self, another student, or MLS staff member, one or more of the following actions may be taken by MLS staff:

- A. The classroom teacher, with the assistance of the school administrator, will determine the best course of discipline. Disciplinary actions will be used for the purpose of facilitating repentance, forgiveness, and restoration to the MLS community.
- B. A student may be removed from contact with other students as a temporary measure lasting part or all of a school day. MLS staff will determine if the separation can be done in the classroom setting or if removal to the office for supervision is the best interest of the student, classroom, and MLS staff.
- C. If a danger to students or staff members is present, the principal may immediately remove the student from school, contacting the parents and arranging for immediate pick-up.
- D. The authority to discipline or suspend a student for up to three (3) days rests with the school Administrator. A suspension may be assigned on or off campus at the discretion of the school administrator (taking into consideration the best interests of the student, MLS staff, other parties involved and the nature of the incident).
- E. Incident reports will be written and filed for any incidents resulting in (but not limited to) such disciplinary actions.
- F. Should an incident require CYFD and or police intervention, the MLS administrator will make the appropriate calls or ensure that the appropriate staff member makes the report.

When a separation, suspension or expulsion is involved:

1. If the separation occurs during the day, parents/guardians will be notified during or at the end of the day. Notification will be made by the teacher or administrator, as deemed most appropriate.

2. If a suspension is issued, parents/guardians will be notified verbally or in writing explaining the nature of the incident and length/terms of the suspension.
3. No appeal is available for a short-term (1-3 days) suspension.
4. If it is determined a school expulsion is the best course of action for the well-being of the student and all MLS students/staff, a meeting will be held with the parents/guardians and school administrator (Pastor and an MLS board member will be asked to be present whenever possible). A written document stating the incident and resulting disciplinary action will also be written.
5. Any appeal regarding a long-term suspension (4+ days), required actions (evaluations, counseling, etc.) or expulsion may be made directly to the school board for consideration.

RESOLUTION OF THE COMPLAINT

Prior to the determination of the appropriate remedial action, the Administrator/School Board Chairperson may, at his/her discretion, interview the complainant and the alleged harasser. A written report closing the case and documenting any disciplinary action taken or any other action taken in response to the complaint will be filed. The complainant and the alleged harasser will receive notice as to the conclusion of the investigation.

MANDATED REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

MLS employees will serve as mandated reporters and as such work to identify signs of child abuse/neglect. Reasonable suspicions will be reported to the state of New Mexico authorities as required by law.

ALCOHOL/TOBACCO/ILLEGAL CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

For the health and safety of MLS staff & students, alcohol/tobacco/illegal controlled substances will not be used on Mission Lutheran School property.

- Should the use of such substances be observed or reported, MLS staff will remind user of policy.
- Should alcohol/tobacco/marijuana/illegal controlled substance use continue on property, user will be asked to leave MLS property.

Should MLS staff have reasonable suspicion that a parent/guardian is under the influence or intoxicated, MLS staff will keep student under supervision and will contact an alternate responsible party to pick up child.

Should MLS staff have reasonable suspicion that a parent/guardian or visitor is under the influence or intoxicated, user will be asked to leave MLS property immediately or police will be contacted for support.

WEAPONS/FIREARMS

Dangerous weapons (as defined below) are not allowed anywhere on MLS campus without the authorization of the person serving as school administrator. The only exception is any law enforcement officer acting in an official capacity and/or carrying a weapon required by his/her department rules.

Dangerous weapons include any firearm whether loaded or unloaded, any electric weapon or stun gun, brass knuckles, and various weapons associated with martial arts. Dangerous weapon also includes any BB, pellet, or air

gun, and knife with the blade open, any crossbow, any bow with hunting arrows, and any item which gives the appearance of being a dangerous weapon.

1. No student, staff member, or visitor shall bring any dangerous weapon onto the school premises without the authorization of the administrator.
2. The only exception to number 1 above is any law enforcement officer acting in an official capacity and/or carrying a weapon required by his/her department rules.
3. The administrator may authorize dangerous weapons to be brought onto the school premises only for valid educational purposes.
4. Any student who brings any unauthorized dangerous weapon onto the school premises shall be referred to the MLS administrator for possible suspension or expulsion and shall be referred to the Las Cruces Police Department for violation of state law if deemed necessary by MLS administrator.
5. Any staff member who brings any unauthorized dangerous weapon onto school premises shall be referred to the Las Cruces Police Department for violation of state law.
6. Any visitor who brings any unauthorized dangerous weapon onto the school premises shall be referred to the Las Cruces Police Department for violation of state law.

FAMILY COLLABORATION/INVOLVEMENT

NOTIFICATIONS & COMMUNICATIONS

Parents will be regularly informed of the academic, special activities, and Christian worship/education opportunities available at MLS and Mission Lutheran Church (MLC). In addition, parents will be notified under special circumstances involving the academic, social, emotional, and spiritual development/behavior of their child; student safety; and administrative issues.

1. MLS Academic, Special Activity, Christian Education/Worship Opportunities:

- The administrator will inform MLS families of news/events at MLS and MLC through means to include, but not limited to: regular school newsletters, text messages, social media, print information.
- Special care will be used to provide information regarding Christian worship/education opportunities.
- MLC pastor may reach out to MLS families a minimum of once a year through print or personal contact.

2. Academic, Social, Emotional, Spiritual Issues:

- Should any special/significant concerns arise, the administrator will reach out to communicate with families in order to keep them apprised of current situations, concerns, and possible corrective plans.
- The administrator will support classroom teachers to make the first contact with parents as concerns arise.

3. Safety Concerns:

- The administrator and/or classroom teacher will contact MLS families should a safety concern arise

involving their student.

- The administrator will contact all MLS families should a general safety concern arise.
- The administrator/school office/classroom teacher will contact the family should a child become ill or require medical attention during school.

4. Administrative Issues:

- The administrator/school office will contact families if there are issues regarding registration/vaccination/records information.
- The administrator will contact families in writing if tuition is more than 10 days and/or 1 month late.

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PARENT/GUARDIAN ORIENTATION

MLS will make reasonable effort to provide MLS families with necessary information regarding MLS, its programs, and policies/procedures in order to support a successful experience at Mission Lutheran School. Items to be publicly available include, but are not limited to:

- General school information and student/family programs
- MLS mission and purpose
- MLS philosophy
- Basic Christian tenets upon which MLS believes and bases decisions
- MLS policies and procedures (especially those which pertain to student & family life at MLS)
- Tuition information including opportunities for tuition assistance and scholarships

Such information may be shared in print, via the internet and/or social networking, phone, and/or in person.

In order to make reasonable effort to support MLS families with appropriate school information to support a successful school experience, communication of pertinent MLS information may be provided using the listed means. (Note: as times/trends change, MLS may change the means of communication to best suit the needs of parents/guardians.)

Print -

- MLS Family Handbook
- MLS registration folders
- Individual classroom handbooks/inserts
- MLS information sent home with students
- Current Event bulletin board
- Classroom newsletters (if applicable)
- MLS policy/procedure handbook (available in the school office)

Internet/Social Networking -

- MLS website
- MLS newsletters (regularly scheduled and special)
- MLS Facebook page and Instagram
- Classroom newsletters (if applicable)

Phone -

- Text messages

In Person -

- School tours
- MLS Back to School Night
- Parent Forums
- Parent/Teacher conferences
- Conferences/meetings as requested

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher conferences are held once per semester. However, additional conferences may occur if the parent or teacher feels it is necessary.

1. Two parent/teacher conferences are scheduled during the school year. Dates will be made available at the beginning of the school year on the school calendar.
2. In advance of the scheduled conference dates, classroom teachers will establish and maintain a conference sign-up schedule.
3. All parents/guardians are encouraged to sign up for conferences.
4. Should the scheduled date not be convenient for a parent/guardian, the teacher should be contacted to arrange an alternate conference time.
5. Should a teacher not be available on conference day, she is responsible for alternately scheduling all conferences before/after school on alternate days.
6. Additional parent conferences may be scheduled with the classroom teacher on an as-needed basis.

VOLUNTEERS

Mission Lutheran School welcomes volunteers on both a regular and occasional basis for the benefit of students, staff, and school programs. Volunteers serving as 'regular volunteers' will receive an orientation and be asked to follow certain procedures, outlined by the school administrator, for the safety and well-being of students and staff at MLS.

DEFINITIONS:

Occasional volunteers -

- Adults who volunteer in the school 4 or fewer times in an academic year.
- Adults who serve as drivers/chaperones on class field trips.
- Note: Occasional volunteers are not left unsupervised with students, except for time of car travel for a field trip.

Regular volunteers -

- Adults who volunteer in the school more than 4 times in an academic year.
- Adults who may be in a position to supervise students.

Requirements/Procedures:**Occasional volunteers -**

- Will work under the supervision of a classroom teacher or school administrator.
- Drivers/chaperones for field trips have required documentation on file in the school office. (see Appendix)

Regular volunteers -

- Adults seeking to become regular volunteers will coordinate their tasks/duties with a supervising MLS staff member.
- Will complete background checks using the procedure currently in place for MLS staff.
- Complete BSA Youth Protection training biannually.
- Will complete a basic orientation to MLS school rules and MLS policies/procedures which apply to the tasks they will be doing.
- Will complete a basic staff information form containing contact information, emergency information, etc.

CONFLICT/GRIEVANCES

When a complaint/grievance occurs involving a student/classroom/school matter, parents/guardians are asked to use the following sources, in order, to resolve the concern: 1) lead classroom teacher 2) school administrator 3) Pastor and/or school board. Out of love and respect for all concerned parties, every attempt will be made to resolve complaints and conflicts in a Christian manner as outlined in Matthew 18.

Reporting/resolving a conflict/grievance:

- In the case of classroom/student conflict or grievance, please consult first with: 1) lead classroom teacher 2) school administrator.
- Should the need exist for further arbitration, the Pastor and/or school board will be invited to give counsel and assistance.
- Parents/guardians may be asked to document concerns in writing in order for MLS staff to best work toward resolution of the reported issue and reconciliation between involved parties.

- MLS staff may document conflict/grievance in order to best work toward resolution and reconciliation
- Out of love and respect for all concerned parties, every attempt will be made to resolve conflicts and grievances in a Christian manner as outlined in Matthew 18.

Christian Conflict/Grievance - Matthew 18

1. The one offended will discuss in private with the offender the perceived offense. If the parties are reconciled, no further action is necessary.
2. If the first step is unsuccessful, the offended party will take one witness along and attempt to repeat the first step.
3. If the second step is unsuccessful, the offended party and witness will ask their immediate supervisor to mediate. If the dispute is between teachers, the immediate supervisor is the administrator or Pastor.
4. If the third step is unsuccessful, or if the dispute is between the administrator or a teacher and the Pastor, the situation will be mediated by the MLS board and/or MLC elders which are the final authority in all grievances.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

MLS allows for the organization and operation of a Parent-Teacher organization. PTO will operate as a support organization for Mission Lutheran School, its students, staff, and families. PTO will organize and operate using written by-laws as approved by the MLS Board.

All staff/parents/guardians are encouraged to participate in PTO events!

Meetings:

- PTO meetings will be organized and run by the PTO officers throughout the calendar year.
- PTO meetings will be announced using various notification methods; including, but not limited to: monthly newsletters, text messages, MLS current events board, MLS on-line calendar, and paper handouts.

Fundraisers:

- PTO will organize and conduct fundraisers throughout the year.
- Funds generated from PTO-sponsored fundraisers will be used for PTO-sponsored projects.

MISCELLANEOUS

DONATIONS/GIFTS OF EQUIPMENT/RESOURCES

Gifts of academic equipment/resources to MLS are allowed and encouraged. In accepting a gift (whether new or used), MLS becomes the owner of the gift and reserves the right to incorporate or dispose of the item using good stewardship decision making and skills .

Any equipment/resources provided to the school as a loan will be marked as such. Written ownership and use expectations will be kept on file in the office.

- Upon receipt, gifts of equipment or materials to MLS become the property of MLS.

- The decision to keep or dispose of equipment/resources gifts will be the decision of MLS based on the condition, appropriateness, and likelihood of use by MLS.
- Should equipment/resources be disposed, wise stewardship skills will be used.
- For items valuing more than \$50, a thank you letter will be sent to the donor.
- Any equipment/resource provided to the school on a loan basis will be clearly labeled with the owner's name.
- Written documentation regarding the ownership of the equipment/resources and terms of use will be kept on file in the MLS office.

FUNDRAISERS

Mission Lutheran School will, at its discretion, hold fundraisers on the premises for the purpose of raising funds for the school, or those in need.

Mission Lutheran School will hold fundraisers for the purpose of generating funds for the general operating budget, special school projects, mission projects, and/or individuals in financial need. The use determination of the generated funds will be decided by the MLS administrator with input from the MLS staff and with the approval of the MLS board.

The use determination of funds generated from a PTO-initiated fundraiser will be decided by the current PTO organization with approval by the MLS Board where appropriate.

Fundraisers held will comply with the Mission Lutheran Church constitution and will be in doctrinal agreement with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS).

Student fundraisers for the purpose of personal extra-curricular activities will be allowed at the approval of the administrator. Student fundraisers will follow the currently established procedures and will be mindful of other established MLS fundraisers.

- Students/families may advertise an extra-curricular fundraiser through established MLS/MLC means of communication.
- Students/families may collect orders/purchase requests by providing their contact information.
- Fundraiser items will not be set up and directly sold on MLS campus.
- Fundraiser items previously ordered/purchased may be delivered on MLS campus.

WAYS TO SUPPORT MISSION LUTHERAN SCHOOL:

PRAY

There is no better way to support Mission Lutheran School than by prayer! Pray boldly and with complete confidence knowing that our God hears and answers our petitions. Keep the safety, well-being, Christian growth, and academic learning of all our students and staff in your prayers.

SCRIP

This program offers percentages back to the school simply by purchasing gift/shopping cards to many common and local businesses! Even better, we now offer the opportunity to earn credit for tuition! Look for detailed information in the Fall and on the school/classroom websites.

GOODSHOP/GOODSEARCH

Two ways to earn money for the school simply by searching and shopping online! Look for detailed information in the Fall and on the school/classroom websites.

BOX TOPS 4 EDUCATION

We participate in the Box Tops 4 Education program. The program has recently transitioned to an app-based platform. Download the app, register with Mission Lutheran School, and scan your shopping receipts to earn money for MLS!

EXTRA NOTES

- Preschool licensing regulations for the State of New Mexico are posted outside the school office.
- Daily classroom schedules are posted in each classroom and in the school office.
- The Policy and Procedures manual for Mission Lutheran School is available for viewing in the school office.
- School colors are red and blue.