
Upper Grade Handbook



St. John's Evangelical Lutheran School
Wauwatosa, WI

Contact Information

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*St. John's Lutheran School exists to **prepare** children for a lifelong relationship with Christ, **proclaim** the gospel message, and **provide** excellence in education in order to equip students for life and eternity.*

Middle School Structure

Grades 5 - 8 follow a departmentalized structure where students are instructed by different educators who specialize in a specific content area. Additionally, each teacher is assigned one grade level as his or her homeroom and serves as the main contact person. Mr. David Leyrer is the homeroom teacher for 8th grade, Mrs. Christine Rindfleisch is the homeroom teacher for 7th grade, Mr. Keith Hackbarth is the 6th grade homeroom teacher and Mr. Brett Kriese is the homeroom teacher for 5th grade. Our principal, Mr. Markgraf, will teach some religion courses and assist with supervision duties.

Through this model, teachers encourage students to:

- develop time management skills.
- organize materials in preparation for each class.
- transition smoothly and quietly from one class to the next.
- adapt to a variety of teaching styles and expectations.

All students begin in homeroom every day for attendance, lunch count, and to prepare materials for the school day. All students will have religion or catechism for their first hour class. After first hour, students will return to their homeroom to gather materials for the next class and proceed to second hour as a group. This procedure is followed for the remainder of the school day. A class schedule will be provided for your reference. Please keep the class schedule in mind when making appointments where your child will miss a portion of the school day. It is your child's responsibility to ask the content area teacher for the material that will be missed.

The following pages contain information about the classes taught in the departmentalized setting. Feel free to contact the content area teacher if you have questions or concerns about your child's progress in a particular class. For general concerns, your child's homeroom teacher is the first point of contact.

We look forward to partnering with you!

In his service,

Mr. Markgraf

Mr. Leyrer

Mrs. Rindfleisch

Mr. Hackbarth

Mr. Kriese

Religion

Grades: 5 & 6

Instructor: Mr. Brett Kriese

Content: Christ Light is taught twice a week in Mr. Kriese's homeroom. The curriculum alternates with studying the Old Testament one year and the New Testament the following year.

Homework: Students are expected to complete the study guide during class and may have additional worksheets for homework. Memory work will be assigned weekly and should be recited to the homeroom teacher on the morning that it is due before school.

Grades: 7 & 8

Instructor: Mr. Dan Markgraf

Content: Students meet with Mr. Markgraf in the lecture room once a week for religion class. The students are expected to bring their Bibles and hymnals each day. The format of the class is group discussion. The following Christ Light Topical Studies may be covered over a two-year period:

How Can I Get Along Better...?

God's Answers to My Questions

God's Gift of Sex

Christian Life Planning

Who Am I?

What Do I Say Lord?

How Can I Make God-Pleasing Decisions About...?

What About...

- Acts & Letters - by Julian Anderson
- Study Books of Genesis, Luke, and Revelation

Homework: The students will be assigned an application worksheet which is due by the next class. They are expected to participate with scripture readings and class discussion. Memory work will be assigned weekly and must be recited before school on the due date. Mr. Leyrer will listen to memory work for Grade 8, and Mrs. Rindfleisch will listen to Grade 7.

Catechism

Grades: 5 & 6

Instructor: Mr. Keith Hackbarth

Content: This class is taught using Course 2 of Faith Foundations which builds upon material from the previous year. The focus of study is The Articles, Ten Commandments, and Petitions of the Lord's Prayer.

Homework: The students are expected to take notes on the material and will complete a final test at the end of each section.

Grades: 7 & 8

Instructors: Pastor Schroeder & Pastor Bitter

Content: Catechism instruction is conducted by the pastors of St. John's Lutheran Church. Each pastor is responsible for the materials used with Luther's Small Catechism as the main resource along with the companion study guide, "Growing in Grace" which was published by NPH in 2017. The 8th graders will focus on preparation for Confirmation.

Homework: Students will have pages to complete in the study guide as well as additional writing activities and memory work. All homework is due by the next Catechism class. Quizzes and tests may also be given.

**Confirmation Examination takes place for the 8th graders on the last Thursday in April at 6:45. The 7th grade class is strongly encouraged to attend. Confirmation is held the last Saturday in April at 1:30.*

Science

Grades: 5-8

Instructor: Mr. Keith Hackbarth

Content: The overall objective of science is that students learn the scientific method and apply it to the classroom settings as well as their everyday lives. The focus of grade 5 is an introduction to Earth and life science, grade 6 curriculum is Earth science, grade 7 is life science, and grade 8 is physical science. Continuing this year, we will be incorporating STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) into the curriculum as part of our ongoing emphasis to stay current with new trends and adding new hands-on experiences as a part of science.

Homework: In the classroom, the student will be successful when they follow classroom rules and procedures. As a part of a daily structure, students will be expected to take notes, participate in labs or demos, and take tests or quizzes. In all the upper grade sciences, note taking is done from the readings of the book to help students master the understanding of chapter objectives in each section. Chapter worksheets, vocabulary checks, and exit tickets are all methods used to assess comprehension before the final chapter test is given. In addition to note taking in a binder, students also create a vocabulary list where vocabulary words from each chapter are written and defined. Due to the large amount of new vocabulary that is part of science, I have found this to be key in the success of students' retention of the material. As a "reward" for following this procedure, students often have an "open vocabulary sheet" quiz shortly before the test. This method provides a check to see that students are completing their assignments and to help them review for the test. If you notice a very low grade or a zero under a vocab check, most likely the vocab sheet was not done or was "forgotten."

Exit tickets are reviews based on objectives from each section to check that students have retained information through the unit by note taking, doing assignments, and participating in class. These also serve as great study guides for the test! When it comes time for tests, review and study should be easy and simple: notes, worksheets, and exit tickets.

If there is an absence, students can ask for the PowerPoint notes to be printed or sent electronically.

Mathematics

Grades: 5 – 8

Instructor: Mr. David Leyrer

Content: St. John's uses Saxon Math, which takes a spiral approach to learning. This method emphasizes incremental development of new material and continuous review of previously taught concepts.

Lessons contain a warm-up (with facts practice, mental math, & problem-solving exercises); introduction to the new concept, lesson practice exercises where the new skill is practiced, and mixed practice exercises, which includes 25-30 old and new problems. In-depth "Investigations" are provided every 10 lessons and have their own set of questions.

Homework: Much of the daily work is completed in class during whole class instruction, small group, or with a partner. When homework is assigned, it is due by the beginning of class the next day. Not all homework will be graded, but students are more successful when they complete all work on time. Students are encouraged to ask questions, make corrections, and learn from their mistakes. They should develop the mindset to work to learn instead of working for a grade. A final assessment is given after every ten lessons. Students are encouraged to make test corrections to monitor comprehension before moving on to the next concept.

Language Arts

Grades: 6 – 8 (Grade 5 for Composition & English)

Instructor: Mrs. Christine Rindfleisch

English:

Content: The Shurley English method is used. There is daily grammar work, in-class activities, journaling, quick writes, quizzes, and assessments.

Homework: The students can expect an English assignment for homework every day. Homework is always due the day after it is assigned by the beginning of class.

Language Arts continued . . .

Composition:

Book Reports (Gr. 6-8): One book report is due per quarter. Written reports may be handed in any time before the due date. Book talks and slideshows must be given on scheduled presentation days. Students will receive a schedule on the first day of school.

Other major writing projects:

Grade 5 - Personal Narrative, Biography, Tall Tale, How-To Presentation

Grade 6 - Realistic Fiction Story, Process Narration, Country Research Report

Grade 7- Science Fiction/Fantasy Story, Influential Person, World Religion Research

Grade 8- Historical Fiction Story, Memoir, Debate, Operation High School

Literature: (GRADES 6-8)

Content: Mixture of short stories, prose, poetry and a variety of genres. Stories are selected from our literature textbook and short novels are integrated about once per quarter. Classwork consists of a vocabulary study, comprehension questions (CYC), weekly selection tests, literary responses, novel units, and application of literary elements.

Homework: Monday: Read Story, Vocabulary Study & CYC; Tuesday: Reading Strategy WS; Wednesday: Literary Focus WS; Thursday: Review; Friday: Selection test. All homework is due the next day to prepare for in class discussion.

All language arts materials are to be kept in a 2" binder.

Special Events:

***Forensics Festival:** Grades 7/8 – Early November; Grades 5/6 – Mid March

***Spelling Bees:** Grades 5 – 8 - Wisco Spelling Bee – October; Grade Level & School Spelling Bees – January; District Spelling Bee – February

Social Studies/History

Grades: 5 – 8

Instructor: Mr. Brett Kriese

Content: 5th- U.S. Regional Geography and Civics; 6th- World Geography;
7th- American History; 8th- World History

The classes are predominantly lecture and group discussion based. Students are guided through taking notes using a topical outlining format. PowerPoints, YouTubes, and videos are utilized to enhance the content and to help students apply history to current events.

Homework: Assessments are given at the end of each lesson. The assessments will consist of lesson recall, vocabulary, mapwork, critical thinking/analytical questions and other applicable social studies skills. The chapter exams/tests will consist of a variety of questions. There will be multiple choice, short answer, matching, true/false, short answer, and essay questions. The essay questions will be provided to students prior to the chapter test so students may prepare their answers. Students will be allowed to use their notes for the first two exams. Students should study their notes multiple times throughout the week in preparation for upcoming tests. The final lesson prior to the test will be a class review of the chapter to assist students in their preparation for the exam.

Spanish

Grades: 6-8

Instructor: Mr. Keith Hackbarth

Content: Spanish class is conducted entirely in Spanish. Truly learning a language is to immerse oneself in it. It is how we learn our own primary language. We are not merely learning words or phrases, rather we are learning the language in its entirety. With time and application, this is the most successful way to learn a language.

The textbook used provides a comprehensive curriculum that incorporates group and partner work, writing, speaking, reading, listening and other projects to determine grades earned in class. The same binder that is used for science should also be used for Spanish. Students should have index cards to write and drill vocabulary words.

Homework: A letter grade will be given for daily work, vocabulary quizzes, group work, and participation. The overall success and understanding in the class are a result of the effort a student puts into the class. This leads to deeper comprehension and the mastery of the language.

Physical Education

Grade: 5

Instructor: Mr. Brett Kriese

Grades: 6 – 8

Instructor: Mr. Keith Hackbarth

Content: Activities in P.E. will change approximately every 3-4 weeks. Grades will be determined by participation and effort. Grades will NOT be determined by ability or level of performance. Attitude and behavior are weighted with stronger influence than athletic ability or prowess.

Students are expected to have appropriate attire for P.E. days including shoes whether they are for indoor, gymnasium use or outdoor use. During mild weather days, we will take advantage and be outside (traffic and church event parking permitting). Class will be in the gym during rain or extreme cold or snow (based on the discretion and consensus of the teachers).

Music Block

Grades: 5 – 8

Instructor: Miss Mandy Treder

Content: Students will have music class once per week with Miss Treder. Music theory, studying composers, preparing songs for church, and playing percussion instruments are part of the curriculum. Students in grade 5 – 8 may sign up to participate in Junior Choir which meets once per week during the music block. The students who are not part of Junior Choir are supervised by an upper grade teacher for a Sustained Silent Reading time or SSR.

**7th & 8th graders have the option of joining Junior Handbells. This involves attending a one-hour rehearsal during the music block and participating in approximately ten worship opportunities throughout the school year. This choir is directed by Mrs. Julie Handeland.*

Art

Grade: 6-8

Instructor: Mr. Andrew Duncan

Content: Mr. Duncan will teach art class once per week for each grade.

Students will:

- Recognize, explain, and demonstrate the basic elements and principles of art.
- Use a variety of art materials, techniques, and processes to communicate ideas.
- Develop and use their God-given talents to express their thoughts, feelings, and faith through art.
- Appreciate various artistic styles and forms.
- Evaluate artistic productions based on the influence they may have as a child of God.

Homework: Students will be graded on an E, S, N U scale. Grades will be determined based on the students' ability to follow directions, use class time wisely and complete the work of art based on a predetermined criteria or rubric.

Special Education

Mr. Duncan is our on-site special education teacher. He offers whole class, small group, and individual support for teachers and students. Teachers may refer students to see Mr. Duncan for short term assistance like getting caught up on late work or guiding students through difficult concepts. Students may meet with Mr. Duncan for long term assistance in an area of struggle or to learn study skills, organization, and test taking strategies. Evaluations are completed upon teacher or parent referral using a combination of data from grades, MAP test scores, classroom observation, and interview. Parents may also reach out to request an evaluation for additional services for their child. Please discuss any academic or behavioral concerns with your child's classroom teacher first, and they will follow up with Mr. Duncan to determine if additional services are in the best interest of your child.

Electronic Devices

Cell phones are to be silenced and turned in to the homeroom teacher before school. Students may retrieve their phone at the end of the school day. If students are caught using them without permission during the school day, the phone will be kept in the office until a parent retrieves it. School issued **Chromebooks** are provided for students' use during the school day and must be returned to the charging cart at the end of the day. Chromebooks may only be used under the direction of a classroom teacher for educational purposes. Students may not use them independently without permission. Students should use the Chromebook number assigned to them. Students may be held responsible for any damages to the device assigned to them.

Additional policies regarding grading, dress code, and conduct can be found in the school handbook.

	MONDAY			TUESDAY			WEDNESDAY			THURSDAY			FRIDAY			
	5	6	7	8	5	6	7	8	5	6	7	8	5	6	7	8
8:00-8:10																
8:10-8:50	Christ-Light	Cate-chism	Cate-chism	Christ-Light	Cate-chism	Christ-Light	Cate-chism	Cate-chism	Christ-Light	Cate-chism	Christ-Light	Cate-chism	Cate-chism	Christ-Light	Christ-Light	Cate-chism
8:50-9:30	History	Math	Spanish	ELA	History	Math	Phy Ed	ELA	History	Math	Spanish	ELA	History	Math	Spanish	ELA
9:30-10:10	Math	History	Science		Math	History	Science		Math	History	Science		Math	History	Science	
10:10-10:50	Science	ELA	Math	History	Science	ELA	Math	History	Science	ELA	Math	History	Science	ELA	Math	History
10:50-11:30	Study			Spanish	Study			Phy Ed	Study			Spanish	Study			Spanish
11:30-12:10	ELA	Tech	History	Science	ELA	Study Skills	History	Science	ELA	Art		Science	ELA	Study	History	Science
12:10-1:00	Lunch/Recess			Lunch/Recess			Lunch/Recess			Lunch/Recess			Lunch/Recess			
1:00-1:40	Spelling	Study	Study	Music	Tech	Study	Music	Art	Music	Study	Art	Jr Bells	Spelling	Music	Art	Study
1:40-2:20	Reading	Science	ELA	Algebra	Reading	Science	ELA	Algebra	Reading	Science	ELA	Algebra	Reading	Science	ELA	Algebra
2:20-3:00	Phy Ed	Spanish			Phy Ed	TKF	Phy Ed		Phy Ed	Spanish			Phy Ed	Spanish		
	Mr. Kriese	Mr. Kriese			Mrs. Rindfleisch				Mr. Markgraf				Miss Tredler / Mrs. Handeland			
	Mr. Leyrer	Mr. Leyrer			Mr. Hackbarth				Pastoral Staff				Mr. Duncan			



God's blessings on our school year!
