

# Zion Lutheran School



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COLOGNE

## Faculty Handbook (2011) Update

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## A HANDBOOK FOR FACULTY

### Preface

This handbook has been prepared to serve as a convenient source of information concerning policies, practices, regulations, and teachers' responsibilities of Zion Lutheran School and the place of the teacher in the total program of the church. The materials in this handbook are to aid the staff to work in closer harmony in creating and implementing the best possible educational program for the development of each and every child.

The teacher who has served at Zion in the past will find this book a helpful reminder and a practical guide. The teacher who is new to the staff will obtain a clearer view of the entire program and the philosophy of the school, so that he/she may become adjusted more quickly to the routine of the school. To the student teacher who will be with the school only for a short time, this handbook will serve as a quick overview of the program with the hope that he/she will recognize their place and responsibility in the total program of the church.

It will be beneficial to consult the Parent Handbook and the Yearly Supplement for additional clarification of the rules and guidelines to be followed by the students and the parents.

May the God whose we are and whom we are here to serve, richly bless our work together in this small part of His kingdom to the glory of His name and the welfare of all the blood-bought souls that will be entrusted to us.

### Organization

Control and supervision of the school is exercised by the Voters Assembly of the congregation and its duly elected Board of Christian Education. The principal of the school acts as the agent of the Congregation and the Board of Christian Education in the direct administration and supervision of the school. Teachers who are members of Zion are eligible to be Zion voting members and, therefore, may assist in determining the policies for the school.

Zion Voters Assembly	Elects the Board of Christian Education
The Church Council	Monitors Board of Christian Education Activities
Board of Christian Education	General Administration and Policy
Principal	Day to Day Administration
Teachers	Teach and provide feedback on program
Students	Learn

## Policies

### 1. Professional Conduct

Teachers are expected to be competent professionals, grow professionally through continued education, participate in professional meetings (including faculty meetings), be active in Zion Lutheran School and Zion Lutheran Church functions, and conform to the moral, religious and dress standards of their profession and the congregation.

### 2. Contracts

Teacher calls are for a full year. It is considered a twelve-month call. Included in this call is a two-month vacation period. The contract period begins on August 1st. Teacher contracts for the following school year will be offered to Zion's faculty members on or about December 15th. The teachers are either to sign or return the contracts by January 31st.

### 3. School Day

Teachers are to be available in their classroom to their students by 7:30 A.M. and should remain in the school until at least 3:30 P.M. If for some reason you have to be late, the principal should be notified.

### 4. Holidays

The faculty will receive the same holidays as the students with the exception of some regularly scheduled events (such as Christmas programs, Teacher Conferences, etc.) where teacher participation is required. Faculty members are expected to be in attendance at events in which their students participate. In the event you are unable to attend, you may be able to make other arrangements with the principal.

### 5. Sick Leave Policy (Short Term)

Each teacher will accrue one day for each month of service with a maximum of 14 days for sick leave. Teachers are allowed to use sick leave for a sick child.

### 6. Extended Medical Leave

Zion pays 100% of the first two (2) weeks and 30% of the next four (4) weeks. (Concordia Health Plan will pay the remaining 70% of the salary). After this period of time, Zion does not reinstate pay until duties are resumed. Further details are available from the treasurer of the congregation.

### 7. Illness

In case of illness, teachers should call the principal between 6:00 A.M. and 7:00 A.M. We know that this is not always possible. The Teacher is responsible for finding their own substitute teacher.

### 8. Planned Absences

There are times when a teacher must be absent for personal business. The teacher may take up to two days without paying for the substitute teacher. If more than two days are needed, the Board of Education will need to be contacted. These planned absences must be requested from the principal as far in advance as possible so that a substitute teacher may be found. Payment for the substitute is the responsibility of the absent teacher. Payment is to be made to the secretary. Substitute teacher pay is currently \$90.00.

#### 9. Funeral Leave

In case of a death in the immediate family (spouse, child, father, mother, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law), you are eligible for up to three (3) days with no forfeiture of salary. Extenuating circumstances can be reviewed by the Board of Education.

#### 10. Continuing Education

The Board of Education will assist in a teachers continuing education program at the boards discretion. Teachers must provide the principal with the original invoices from colleges and college book stores. This policy becomes effective after one year of service in Zion Lutheran School. Money to pay for these bills is to come from our school treasury.

#### 11. Membership on Church and other Official Committees

Zion will permit its principal or teachers to hold offices on official church/synodical/district committees and will pay for a substitute teacher occasionally so that the principal or teacher may fulfill his or her duties on such committees.

#### 12. Concordia Retirement and Health Plans

Zion Lutheran Church participates in both Concordia Plans. All employees of Zion Lutheran School are automatically enrolled in the Concordia Retirement Plan, the congregation paying all the premium charges. Each teacher has an opportunity to participate in the Concordia Health Plan. Further details are available from the treasurer of the congregation or write to Concordia Health Plans.

#### 13. Social Security

A certain percent of each month's salary is withheld from teachers' checks for Social Security. Zion contributes an amount matching that withheld from the monthly checks.

#### 14. Classroom conduct

Item Number 1 states that a teacher must be able to teach. There is also another area of professionalism that must be addressed. In our school there is a close physical relationship between classrooms, the classes themselves, and the rest of the church. The teacher must provide and maintain appropriate student conduct throughout the school, church, and school ground so that:

- a) There is a good learning environment for the entire class;
- b) No other classes are disturbed;
- c) A good image of our school is maintained.

#### 15. Discipline Policy

All teachers in a Lutheran School should consider it a part of their responsibility to guide, direct and encourage the Christian discipline of the entire student body during the lunch hour, on the playground, and on the school premises in general. Students will be supervised at all reasonable times including before school, lunch hour, and after school for pick-up by the school bus or parents. In serious cases, the child's teacher should be informed and involved.

Classroom discipline is the responsibility of the individual teacher. During the first several days of school, each teacher should establish a workable student-teacher relationship. The teacher must be firm, but flexible. They should present rules of procedure and listen to suggestions from their pupils. The teacher should be able to solve behavior problems and guide the children into patterns of desirable Christian behavior.

Imposed discipline is usually the starting point, but each teacher should strive to develop self-discipline in children. "If you love Me, keep my commandments."

Corporal punishment must not be used.

Teachers are to use discretion in keeping children in the schoolroom during the lunch period or the physical education period.

Infraction of any rules will be handled in five steps:

- a) the teacher and the pupil;
- b) the teacher and the parent;
- c) the teacher, the principal, and the parent;
- d) the teacher, parents, student, and the Board of Education;
- e) expelled or referred for counseling.

#### 16. Suspension and Expulsion

Only the Principal has the authority to suspend a student. Expulsion requires action by the Board of Education. If a teacher feels a student has done something to warrant the action, the teacher must consult the principal.

#### 17. Classroom Arrangement

Each teacher is responsible for the physical arrangement and orderliness of the various furniture and teaching aids in their classroom. It must be maintained in as neat a condition as possible, not only to provide a good learning environment, but also to impress your substitute teachers, visitors, and people simply walking by. Do not have your classroom arranged in such a manner that the janitor finds it impossible to sweep your classroom. In addition we ask that you help to keep our entire building tidy (workroom, restrooms, office, etc.)

#### 18. Classroom Collections

Always seek the Principal's permission before proceeding with special collections of monies. Money collected from students should be given, to the school secretary.

#### 19. Vacations

A two-month vacation is scheduled from June 15th to August 15th. As you can see, there is a period of time after the students are dismissed for the school year and another period of time before the students return in the fall when the teachers on staff are officially "on duty". The Principal, at the board's discretion, may be authorized to excuse teachers from being at the school during these times, as long as the school's "shut-down" and "start-up" functions are completed.

#### 20. Health and Safety

With the group of people involved in our school, it is necessary that the faculty remain ever alert to any health or safety hazard that may exist, and be trained to minimize the danger.

The teacher shall:

- a) Be familiar with and train his or her students in proper fire evacuation procedures;
- b) Be able to operate the fire extinguishers;
- c) Educate the children in bus transportation safety;
- d) Be familiar with and train his or her students in proper tornado evacuation procedures;
- e) Be observant for signs of illness in his or her students and when able to determine that a particular student has a contagious condition, remove that student from the classroom;
- f) Make every effort to communicate with a child's parents in regard to any symptoms or signs he or she observes that may be indicative of physical disability and/or illness; (Note: No child is to be sent home unless the teacher has talked to a parent, guardian, or day care-provider and they then come and pick up the child.)
- g) Be on the alert for child abuse. You can be held responsible by the State of Minnesota if you choose to look past such a situation.
- h) Report cases of suspected child abuse. You must report to the Department of Social Services if you suspect: Neglect, emotional, sexual or physical abuse.
- i) Use appropriate procedures as outlined in our blood pathogens policy for body fluids.

#### 21. Lesson Plans

Teachers will make daily plans that are current and self-explanatory to everyone who might need to refer to them. Careful and thoughtful pre-planning is expected. Lesson plans should consider the overall ability of the class, be creative in nature, be specific, realistic, and flexible. Lesson plans for the upcoming week should be completed the Friday before.

#### 22. Lunchroom Duty

The teacher is responsible for maintaining the discipline of his or her class during the lunch period.

#### 23. Recess/Free Time/After School

Students will be supervised, in the presence of an adult staff member or aide, at all reasonable times. Teachers should monitor playground activities during recesses, noon-hour breaks, and physical education periods. There must be supervision to minimize the possibility of accidents, dangerous activities, etc. Proper supervision helps to cut down the insurance claims. Staff should share in the supervision of students during group activities

#### Cold weather Policy

In the event that the windchill is below zero, students will remain inside. WCCO/Channel 4 weather for Cologne/Twin Cities will be used to determine the windchill.

#### 24. Other School Activities

It is assumed that all of the teaching staff will actively participate in the school-sponsored programs. While not all events require the need for all of the teachers, and because the interest and skills of each teacher are varied, each teacher should try to participate in as much as is possible. Some examples of events included are:

- a) Arts Fair
- b) Music Fair
- c) Spelling Bee
- d) Science Fair
- e) Various Athletic Functions and Tournaments
- f) Play Day
- g) Christmas Worship Service
- h) School Choirs
- i) Dramatic Activities
- j) Etc.

#### 25. Teacher Certification in Elementary Education (Lutheran Teaching Degree)

All faculty members are required to have an up-to-date Minnesota State Teaching Certificate. A listing of requirements for such certification shall be available from the principal. Those teachers not certified at the beginning of the school year are required to submit to the Board of Christian Education a timetable and a plan outlining their requirements for certification and shall be subject to the board's approval.

In addition, the Board of Christian Education requires a teacher at Zion to have their Lutheran Teachers Degree. A teacher that does not meet this requirement must successfully complete one class per year pertaining to a degree as a Lutheran teacher. This is the minimum requirement. Failure to meet this requirement will be subject to review by the Board of Christian Education and may result in disciplinary action and the termination of the teacher's contract.

#### 26. Faculty Meetings and Devotions

Faculty devotions and staff meetings will be held daily from 7:15AM-7:30AM. The Pastor could meet with us whenever possible. All teachers are required to attend.

#### 27. Conference Expenses

All teachers' conference expenses including the registration fees, meals in connection with the conference, and transportation to and from the conference site are paid for by the Zion Lutheran School Fund Treasury.

#### 28. Handling School Funds

Hot lunch funds are collected by the school office. Forwarding these monies to the office on a timely basis assists with the handling of funds and billing.

#### 29. Attendance At Meetings

Full time attendance by Zion's faculty is desired at divine worship services, faculty meetings, Education League meetings, teachers' conferences, and other related professional meetings.

#### 30. Field Trips and Tours

Children can learn a great deal from well-planned field trips and tours. Each teacher is responsible for such planning for his or her classroom. All students must be encouraged to participate if the event is scheduled during school hours. Parental permission for the pupils to participate must be had in writing prior to the trip or tour. The principal must be notified of any such planned field trips. Bus transportation may be used for field trips into the metropolitan area where traffic issues are a concern.

#### 31. Tobacco Use In School

All tobacco use by teachers in the school building or on the school grounds during the regular school day is strictly prohibited.

#### 32. Telephone

All personal calls made by our teachers on school phones that are long distance should be paid for by the teacher to the congregation. Students must have permission from a teacher to be able to use the phone.

#### 33. Janitorial Responsibilities of the Teacher

- a) Keep all desks clean
- b) Dusting of your room
- c) Clean counter tops and sink
- d) Help our building look presentable

#### 34. Curriculum

Curriculum at Zion Lutheran School should include religion, memory work, reading, choir, English, Spanish, social studies, science, computer science, health, math, spelling, handwriting, physical education, and art. A curriculum guide will be established by the faculty in these areas.

#### 35. Chapel

Weekly chapel services will be held, currently on Thursday. Collections for various mission endeavors will be gathered at each service. Each teacher and the Pastor will take turns leading the chapel service.

### 36. Keeping Confidences

Teaching is a profession and as such there are many instances in which information regarding parents, students, and fellow teachers must be kept confidential. Our professional status, just as doctors, pastors, lawyers, bankers, etc., demands that we be extremely careful in what we say. Remarks made while students are present or to friends and spouses may ruin the reputation of our students, parents, and/or fellow workers.

### 37. Sexual Harassment Policy

It is the policy of Zion Lutheran School to strictly prohibit any conduct which constitutes sexual harassment and to discipline any employee guilty of such conduct. This policy is based on Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and court decisions.

Any employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment shall immediately report in confidence the conduct to the school administrator (or pastor) who will thoroughly investigate the incident and will present the investigated incident to the Board of Education. The board will decide the appropriate discipline the situation warrants. This could include termination of employment. All staff members are responsible for working together to create an atmosphere free of sexual harassment. It is the responsibility of each employee to respect the rights of other employees.

This subject area is further addressed in Zion Lutheran Church and School Harassment and Violence Policy.

### 38. General Regulations

- a) All recess periods are to be supervised;
- b) No running or jumping in the halls;
- c) Controlled discipline in the lunchroom;
- d) Stress cleanliness and great care of all school property;
- e) Encourage neatness of dress among the students;
- f) Students should have no reason to be in someone's desk other than their own.  
Teacher's desk drawers are definitely off limits;
- g) Students are not required to go outside when temperatures are below zero. If they do, good common sense must be used;
- h) Discourage gum chewing and candy in the classroom;
- i) No throwing snowballs, unless the activity is supervised by a teacher.

### 39. Staff Development

- grow in their commitment to the discipleship of their students through the teaching of the Christian faith and guidance in the Christian life.
- be committed to students and their learning.
- know the subjects they teach and how to teach the subjects to students.
- be responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
- think systematically about their teaching practices and learn from experience
- be members of a learning community
- be life-long learners
- be in God's Word

### 40. Staff Discipline Procedure

- a) If a staff member fails to follow board policy, a written reprimand will be given to that staff member and a copy will be placed in their file.
- b) If there is a second instance of failure to follow the policy, the staff person is to meet with the principal and pastor to explain why they did not follow the policy. A report is then given to the Board of Education by the pastor and principal recommending reprimand, censure, suspension, or termination.
- c) The board, after consulting their published guidelines as well as the report and any other pertinent information, renders a decision.