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Family Handbook 2023-2024

Atonement Lutheran School, a ministry of Atonement Lutheran Church, exists to reach our students and their families with the good news of eternal salvation in Jesus and to provide our students with a high quality education, equipping them for a life of Christian service.



[Table of Contents](#)

THE HANDBOOK	3
ABOUT ATONEMENT	3
ATTENDANCE	4
ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS	6
PROMOTION / GRADUATION POLICY	8
RETENTION POLICY	8
ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS	9
USE OF IMAGES	9
SCHOOL PICTURES	9
ATONEMENT UNIFORM POLICY	10
DISCIPLINE	10
APPEALS PROCESS	13
CELL PHONE USE	14
SCHOOL TELEPHONE USAGE	14
ACADEMIC DISHONESTY / CHEATING	15
NON-HARASSMENT POLICY	15
SEXUAL HARASSMENT / ACTIVITY	15
GOVERNANCE	16
SCHOOL SUPPLIES	17
SCHOOL DAY SCHEDULE	17
SCHOOL DISMISSAL	18
BEFORE/AFTER CARE SERVICES	18
SCHOOL ENTRANCE / SCHOOL VISITORS	18
SCHOOL COMMUNICATION	18
PARENT / TEACHER CONSULTATIONS	19
MISSION OFFERINGS	20
EMERGENCY CLOSING	21
PIANO / BAND LESSONS	22
CHOIRS / CHURCH SINGING	22
TECHNOLOGY / ATHLETIC FEES	22
ATONEMENT LUTHERAN SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP	23



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THE HANDBOOK

The Atonement Lutheran School Handbook contains important information about Atonement’s policies, traditions, and expectations. Good communication between home and school is essential to your child’s education. Please read it carefully and keep it in a convenient place so that you can refer to it as needed. Please direct any questions or concerns about this handbook to Atonement Lutheran School’s principal by calling the school office (414) 871-1224.

While updated annually, Atonement reserves the right to make changes to the handbook at any time. An electronic copy will be distributed to each family at the beginning of the school year and one is located on the school’s website www.atonementmke.org. Paper copies will be available from the school office upon request.

ABOUT ATONEMENT

Who We Are

Atonement Lutheran School first began serving the northwest Milwaukee community in 1929. It is a ministry of Atonement Lutheran Church, a member congregation of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Atonement Lutheran Church is an ethnically diverse congregation united as a family through faith in Jesus Christ as the world’s Savior from sin and death. We believe and teach that the Bible is God’s inspired Word without error, and seek to operate our school in accordance with it.

4K Mission

4K Mission Statement at Atonement Lutheran School

“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” Matthew 19:14. Atonement Lutheran’s 4K program strives to lead little children to Jesus. The 4K students need to see that Jesus is their Savior.

Love is the key. Jesus’ love is great and constant. In the 4K program at Atonement Lutheran, that love of Jesus is expressed and felt daily in the classroom through Bible stories, singing, and social interaction.

With Jesus at the core of all we do, children develop a lifelong love for learning and a strong desire to follow in His footsteps.

Atonement Lutheran’s 4K Program provides activities that follow early childhood education best practices such as developmentally appropriate activities, observation and assessment, and positive



behavior guidance. Developmentally appropriate practice in the classroom is designed to promote our 4K students optimal learning and development. These best practices in early childhood are implemented when it comes to develop large and small muscles, communication, language and number skills, and artistic talents. As a child experiences this in 4K, he or she becomes better prepared to meet the demands of our progressive five-year-old kindergarten program, and becomes confident in his or her ability to do so.

4K has become an important part of the educational experience. Atonement Lutheran's 4K program exists to help parents meet the challenge of providing a Christ based education for their child in a changing and demanding world.

5K-8th Grade Mission

Jesus said in Mark 16:15, "Go out into all the world and preach the good news to all creation." Atonement Lutheran School has the wonderful news of sins forgiven and eternal salvation in Jesus Christ. At Christ's command and compelled by his love for us sinners, our mission is to share this good news with the students of our school and their families. God's Word is the centerpiece of the high quality education we offer. Students are encouraged to use their God-given gifts in everything they do. Every student of our school will receive:

- Daily devotions from God's Word
- Bible History as part of our regular curriculum
- Catechism class (focusing on the basic teachings of the Bible) for grades 5-8
- Chapel worship services for the entire student body every Friday
- Daily biblical encouragement from the faculty and staff of Atonement Lutheran

Mission

It is our mission to partner with families, our congregation and the community to prepare every child for eternity with Jesus and a life of Christian service.

Vision

It is our vision that, to the Glory of God, Atonement Lutheran will be a high performing Christian school renowned as a destination spiritually, academically, and creatively and compelled by the love of Christ to be a unique partner in transforming our community.

ATTENDANCE

At Atonement, regular attendance is required and parents/guardians are expected to ensure that their child is in school each school day. Regular attendance is the first step in ensuring academic success. In order for students to reach his/her personal best, they must show up and make their strongest effort at school each and every day. Our curriculum is an ambitious one; being at school every day is essential for students to keep pace. Missing school due to student illness or a death in the family are considered viable absences so we ask that you do not allow your child to miss a day of school except for serious illness or bereavement.

Definition of an Absence: A student is considered absent if he/she arrives after 9:00 a.m. Monday through Friday or leaves school before dismissal (3:15 for 4K-4th/3:30 for 5th-8th). Monday through Friday.



All Absences – “Excused” and “Unexcused” – Are Considered Absences: Any scheduled school day your child does not attend is considered an absence. This includes student illness, with or without a doctor’s and/or parent’s/guardian’s note, a death in the family, suspensions, or any day your child is absent from school. We expect and appreciate a call or written note from the parent/guardian and/or doctor explaining the absence.

Don’t Miss School for Appointments: Parents/guardians are responsible for scheduling their child’s medical/dental appointments outside of school time. The best times for scheduling such activities are after school hours or days when school is not in session. In the rare case that a student has an appointment during school, he/she should not be absent for the entire day.

Out of School Suspensions Are Considered Absences: If students are absent from school due to a suspension that requires them to stay home from school, it is treated the same as an unexcused absence. Students are responsible for the gathering and completion of all homework during this time.

Early Pickups: Students are expected to stay in school until the very end of the day; 3:15 (4K-4th)/3:30 (5th-8th) Monday-Friday. Early pickups are disruptive to the learning environment. Since we are intently focused on providing a high quality educational experience, we expect that students attend school for the full day. Please note that students being picked up early and without prior written notification will be marked absent for that entire day. Written notification includes a signed, hand-written note or an email. Texts and phone calls will be considered valid only if made before 9:00 a.m. that day.

Reporting Absences: If a child is not able to attend school, parents/guardians are asked to report the absence to the school office each morning before 8:00 a.m. so that the information can be passed along to the classroom teacher. If possible, arrangements should also be made for picking up the day’s homework so that the child does not fall behind academically. If a child has not been reported absent by 9:00 a.m., the school will contact the parent/guardian. Please inform your child’s teacher or the school office at (414) 871-1224 if your address, phone number, or emergency information has changed.

Prolonged Absence Due to Illness: In the case of a prolonged absence due to an extreme illness, communication from parents/guardians to the classroom teacher or school office is expected on a continual basis and shall include a doctor’s note excusing the absences. A child under a physician’s care following a communicable disease (chicken pox, mumps, etc.) must have a medical release form signed by that physician before returning to the classroom.

Attendance – Consequences:

- **5 unexcused absences in a year** are considered problematic. The parents/guardians will have a meeting with the administration and discuss ways to ensure better attendance through an attendance contract.
- **10 unexcused absences in a year** are considered habitually truant. The parents/guardians will be called to meet administration. The attendance contract will be reviewed and truancy notice placed with the student’s file.
- **15 unexcused absences in a year** are considered a chronic issue and will result in a meeting with administration. At this point, the purpose will be to discuss your child’s future at Atonement.



TARDINESS

Success in school, as in life, starts at the beginning of each day. Tardiness and/or not being ready to begin school on time is not acceptable. It results in students missing essential instructions, disrupts the learning of others, and ultimately puts student's academic success at risk. Therefore, every tardy your child acquires will result in a consequence.

Definition of Tardiness: The school doors open at 7:30 a.m. 4K-8th grade students are expected to be in their classroom by 8:00 a.m. "In their classroom" means that students have entered the threshold of the classroom by 8:00 a.m. Students who arrive after their expected time will be considered tardy. There is no distinction between excused or unexcused tardies. All tardies, regardless of circumstance, will be counted. Students will receive a consequence from the classroom teacher for each tardy.

Tardiness – Consequences: Classroom teachers are responsible for issuing appropriate consequences for a student being tardy through the ninth tardy. Chronic tardiness of ten(10) or more tardies will result in investigation by administration.

Failure to comply with the above mentioned consequences may result in a student's suspension/expulsion. Should a student exceed twenty (20) tardies in a school year, there will be a scheduled meeting with administration to discuss their future at Atonement.

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

All successful people spend extra time working to improve themselves beyond the minimal requirements of a specific task. We hope to instill these habits in our students—teaching them to maximize their learning potential both inside and outside of regular class time. Thorough, neat, accurate, prompt, and carefully completed assignments are the expectation.

Circumstances may arise that could interfere with the completion of an assignment. In such cases, parents/guardians must contact the teacher before 7:30 a.m. the following school day in order to receive an extension. In all such cases, it is **solely up to the teacher** as to approve the extension or not. The teacher's decision is to be respected. If a student is absent, he/she will need to complete the assignments no later than one day after returning to school (unless other arrangements have been made with the teacher). **Please refer to your child's teacher's assignment expectations and guidelines.**

It is the responsibility of the parent and student to review progress through the online grading system called GradeLink and contact the classroom teacher with any questions or concerns. Administration will use the current information on GradeLink to determine academic standing, including academic review and academic probation.

In order to focus all students on mastering skills at their grade level, Atonement has adopted Mastery Learning and a Mastery Learning Grading Scale. This scale is a 4 point grading scale that teachers use to determine the level of mastery towards a specific skill related to a content area. Using the Mastering Grading Scale allows teachers and students to easily understand which skills need to be addressed in order to meet end of grade exit targets. Only summative assessments will be used towards grades. All formative assessments will be used to give feedback and adjust instruction. Formative assessments will not be graded or included in the gradebook. An average of the skills mastered is taken to reflect the level of mastery in a given content area. Content areas are then averaged resulting in a Grade Point Average. Please note the following Mastery Grading Scale definitions:



- 4 - Advanced - Demonstrates in-depth understanding on all assessment items through shown work.
- 3 - Proficient - Demonstrates considerable understanding on most or all assessment items.
- 2 - Basic - Demonstrates partial understanding on some assessment items.
- 1 - Demonstrates limited understanding on assessment items.
- 0 - Far Below Basic - Student demonstrates no understanding on assessment items OR does not complete assessment.

Student academic progress for grades 5th-8th will be reviewed weekly. Any student with a GPA under 2.0 will be placed in Academic Recovery.

Academic Recovery

Academic Recovery is for students whose GPA is below a 2.0. Grade analysis and check occurs at the beginning of each week.

Students on academic review will be required to meet with the Dean of Academics and attend daily lunch/recess study sessions until the next review process which is monitored weekly. Any student who does not attend a lunch/recess study session will have that session added to the end of their review period. Any student who is late to lunch/recess study session will have that session added to the end of their review period. This includes if a student is serving a lunch/recess detention. Behavioral issues take priority over academic issues.

Parents and guardians will be informed of the beginning of Academic Recovery by administration via the parent email provided by the parent on the registration form.

Academic Probation

Academic Probation is for students whose GPA falls under a 2.0 at the end of a quarter grading period. A student does not need to be on Academic Recovery to be placed on Academic Probation.

A student on Academic Probation must complete the same requirements as Academic Recovery. The only addition is that Academic Probation lasts for an entire quarter. Any study sessions missed or late for will be added to the next quarter. Students may make and carry out a plan to remove themselves from Academic Probation during the quarter. The plan must be approved by the Principal.

Students on Academic Probation may not participate in athletics or other extracurricular activities. Any student who wishes to attend school sponsored events while on Academic Probation is required to write a letter to the Dean of Academics. The letter should include which school sponsored event and what progress is being made to improve the student's academic progress.

Students who are on Academic Probation for at least two quarters throughout the school year may lose their seat at Atonement or be asked not to return. The final decision as to whether a student will be allowed to continue or invited to return as a student at Atonement after being placed on Academic Probation for two quarters within a school year will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Dean of Academics. If parents do not agree with the school's decision, they may appeal the decision to the Principal through a formal, written letter.

Parents and guardians will be informed of the beginning of Academic Probation by administration via email. Parents may request a formal meeting concerning Academic Probation with the Dean of Academics. A letter will be placed in the student's file regarding placement into Academic Probation.



PROMOTION / GRADUATION POLICY

Atonement Lutheran School has high standards for promotion. It is not automatically assumed that students will pass from one grade to the next. The student must earn promotion by demonstrating mastery of the essential knowledge and skills. Students may not be promoted if two or more of the following requirements are not met:

- The student performs at least 0.5 years behind grade-level standards as evidenced by benchmark and STAR Assessments.
- The educational team assesses the student's maturity and academic progress to be below grade-level standards.
- The student demonstrates Below Basic understanding in two or more of his/her core classes for the year (i.e. science, math, social studies, English and language arts, also known as ELA).
- The student has more than 10 absences and/or 20 tardies, as stated in Atonement's attendance policy.
- The student obtains a cumulative GPA below a 2.0.

Teachers will have serious conversations regarding promotion and retention during the first and second quarter parent teacher conferences. Parents will receive notice by the end of the second quarter if a student is struggling to meet grade level expectations. In the third quarter the dean of students and/or the dean of academics will meet to discuss promotion or retention. Final promotion decisions will be made by the administration. The school reserves the right to make exceptions to this policy given special circumstances.

RETENTION POLICY

Atonement Lutheran School takes the social and academic development of all children very seriously. The decision to retain a student is made only to benefit him/her, and not as a punishment. Through a supportive partnership, retention can help a student progress.

When a teacher at Atonement begins to have a concern regarding whether a particular student may need to be retained, the teacher should bring his/her concern to the Dean of Academics and Guidance Counselor for discussion. The teacher should also fill out the appropriate documentation to note the possible recommendation. This group will be a place where strategies and support for the student in question are discussed. The decision to retain a particular student will be made as a last resort. Atonement does not practice retention in sixth through eighth grades.

Parents will be notified by the teacher of the student whose difficulties in the classroom raises concerns. The parents should be apprised of what strategies and supports have been put in place to help their child make progress. Notification to parents of concerns should occur as early as possible but no later than the end of Quarter 1 of the school year. Upon notification that their child is not experiencing normal progress in the classroom, a regular communication process should be established and agreed to for the purpose of working together to help the student achieve greater progress.



A second notification of retention recommendation will be communicated to parents by the Dean of Academics and the child's teacher if there are still concerns over academic progress. This communication will take place no later than the end of Quarter 2. Upon notification, the student of concern will be assessed by the Dean of Academics and Guidance Counselor.

Following the assessment of the student of concern, the school will make a retention decision, and the decision will be communicated to the parents no later than the end of Quarter 3. Parents will meet with their child's teacher for parent teacher conferences following the school's decision.

If parents do not agree with the school's decision, they may appeal the decision to the Principal through a formal, written letter. The Principal will share the decision with the parents once the appeals process has been completed. Any decision following the appeals process will be final.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

Students must be age appropriate to enroll into Atonement Lutheran School. This policy follows state law. A child must be 5-years-old by September 1 in the state of Wisconsin to be eligible for 5-year-old kindergarten.

USE OF IMAGES

The word "images" is used to include photographs, digital photographs, webcam, mobile phones, and film and video recordings. Images may be used for school publications and/or the school website as indicated below:

- The school will only take and use images that are considered appropriate and not open to misuse.
- If an image is used, the child's name **will not** be published. If the child's name is to be used, **specific consent by a parent/guardian will be requested.**
- Children will be made aware of why his/her picture is being taken and how it will be used.
- Images will be securely kept by the school.
- Images of children from the school will not be used to illustrate controversial subjects.
- Images of the children may be posted throughout the school to celebrate the student's/classroom's accomplishments.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Individual pictures of children are taken each year in September as a service to parents who want a record of their child's growth or who want to share their child's picture with others.



ATONEMENT UNIFORM POLICY

Students are expected to be dressed in a clean, full uniform each school day per school board policy. Students not in full uniform may receive a consequence in accordance with individual classroom procedures. The purpose of a uniform is to ensure a positive and safe learning environment. Any distracting or disruptive article a student may choose to wear will be addressed. Uniform expectations are as follows:

- Atonement logo long or short sleeve polo shirt *
- Atonement logo zip-up fleece (*orders may be placed through the school when available*)
- Khaki, knee-length shorts (May 1st - September 30th). **Note Well: Cargo shorts are not permitted**
- Khaki pants, knee length khaki skirt, or knee length khaki jumper **Note Well: no cargo pants, no joggers or pants with elastic waistbands or elastic around the ankles are allowed and all pants and shorts must have belt loops in grades 3-8.**
- Shoes must have closed toes, closed heels, and laces. **Note Well: Snow boots are not allowed to be worn during the school day. Parents must send students with shoes to change into.**
- Black or Brown belt for grades 3-8 - **Note Well: no embroidery, embellishment, bedazzlement, and/or decorations are allowed**
- **Only solid white or solid black underclothing is to be worn under the uniform, this includes thermals, long or short sleeve t-shirts, leggings, and tights.**
- Polos are required to be tucked in for grades 3-8.

** These items are exclusive to Atonement Lutheran School and must be ordered and purchased through our on-line order website
<https://www.frenchtoast.com/schoolbox/schools/atonement-lutheran-school-QS458JN> Orders will be shipped to the home.*

Note: The only acceptable jewelry to be worn are watches and earrings, provided that the earrings are no larger than the size of a dime. Smart watches or anything that can be used as a communications device are not allowed. Bracelets or wristbands of any kind are not permitted. Necklaces must be tucked into the polo.

Note: Students may only have one backpack/bag - no fanny packs, belt bags, purses, clutches, etc are allowed to be worn during school hours but may be kept in student backpacks

Note: Boys in any class are not allowed to wear any sort of headwear while at school.

DISCIPLINE

“Since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.” 1 John 4:11

Christ’s love for us as revealed in the Bible is our guide for discipline at Atonement Lutheran School. Out of love for our Savior and respect for others, students are expected to conduct themselves as Christians at all times. This can be achieved only through continued study of God’s Word, which is the means through which the Holy Spirit creates faith and causes it to grow in the hearts of believers. Out of such faith grows the desire to obey God’s commands and to show love for others. Thus the goal of the disciplinary process is to develop self-discipline motivated by love for the Lord and for humanity.



In practice, this self-discipline reveals itself when students honor and respect all members of the school staff. Moreover, it further reveals itself when students encourage one another, forgive one another, sacrifice for one another, and demonstrate God-pleasing humility and self-control. As the Scripture verse above instructs and reinforces, God's love for us compels us to love others the way we are loved. Ultimately, all aspects of Atonement's student discipline system are designed to achieve this goal.

We also believe that the learning environment is to be rigorously protected. We work to ensure that every child is safe (physically, emotionally, and intellectually) and can learn without needless disruptions. We have very high expectations for student behavior to create and preserve a focused learning environment.

Students are taught that they have many choices throughout the day. Many of the choices they make may result in something positive such as a good grade, a thank you from a classmate or teacher, or an extra opportunity afforded to them. However, when students fail to make positive choices, Atonement reserves the right to determine necessary consequences to promote appropriate changes in student behavior. The following are examples of specific consequences typically utilized at Atonement:

4K Behavioral Management Procedures

Teacher's Steps for Dealing with Misbehavior

1. Nonverbal Correction

- ★ Let a student know to get back on task quickly without stopping class or interrupting the "flow" of the lesson.

2. Positive Group Correction.

- ★ Remind students what the expectation is in school.

3. Anonymous Correction

- ★ Give a chance for the student to correct it without publicly calling them out

4. Private Individual Correction

- ★ Talk to a student privately to remind them of what they should be doing

5. Lightning Quick Public Correction

- ★ Quickly redirect a student, but move on to the positive so that student doesn't take the spotlight

6. Consequence

- ★ A deduction (loss of a pom pom or ticket) is necessary because the student has not fixed their behavior.

Levels of Consequence

1. Deduction (student will lose pom poms).

- ★ The amount deducted may vary according to the level of infraction.

2. Loss of Privilege

- ★ The student may lose a recess, time off of gym play, etc. Serious behavior infractions may result in non-participation in a class celebration or loss of a field trip.

3. Isolation



- ★ The student is distracting or has not fixed any of the misbehavior so they need to be isolated.

4. Phone Call Home

5K-8th Grade Management Procedures

1. Students sit or stand in an isolated location to think about behavior.
2. Students write documents or copy papers focused on behavioral improvement.
3. Students lose privileges including field trips, incentive trips, recess, athletic participation, or other enrichment opportunities.
4. Students serve detentions during school where they “work off” or reflect on their poor choices.
5. Any student may receive a detention for inappropriate behavior. The level of consequence increases the older the student gets:
 - a. Most detentions will be served during the school day - either the same day or following school day - at lunch/recess.
 - i. 1st-4th grade detentions will be served with their teacher unless stated otherwise.
 - ii. 5th-8th grade detentions will be served with the Dean of Students unless stated otherwise.
 - b. In the middle school, detentions 1-3, in a quarter are served as detentions.
 - c. In the middle school, detention 4, in a quarter = 2 hour in-school suspension.
 - d. In the middle school, detention 5, in a quarter = half day in-school suspension.
 - e. In the middle school, detention 6, in a quarter = full day in-school suspension. A mandatory parent meeting will follow with the Dean of Students. The child will not be able to return to class until the suspension has been served and the parents/caregivers have met with the Dean of Students.
 - f. In the middle school, detention 7, in a quarter = 3 day in-school suspension. Parents/Caregivers sit down with the Dean of Students before the student is allowed to return to class.
 - g. In the middle school, detention 8, in a quarter = 5 day in-school suspension. A mandatory parent meeting will follow with the administration team. The future of your child at Atonement will be determined.

***5th/6th Grade Detentions will reset every Quarter**

***7th/8th Grade Detentions will reset at Semester**

Suspension and Expulsion Policy

Suspensions (the temporary elimination of educational services) and expulsion (the permanent elimination of educational services) are part of the student conduct due process. A serious incident of student misconduct or an accumulation of less serious misconduct may result in a suspension or expulsion with the ultimate purpose of identifying sin and moving the student to repentance so that the gospel and forgiveness can be pronounced.

Suspensions, in-school or out-of-school, will be issued by the administration. Parents/guardians will be notified the day a suspension is issued. The suspension must be served immediately. A student may return to class only after the length of the suspension has been served.

Expulsions can only be issued by administration. Parents will be notified of any expulsion. Students will be moved from the learning environment.



At times, when a student's character is particularly disruptive, disrespectful, or otherwise inconsistent with Atonement's partnership agreement, it becomes necessary to remove students from the academic environment. Such removal is based upon our belief that behavioral and moral development are of primary importance and ultimately crucial for student growth. Therefore, we regularly enforce in-school and out-of-school suspensions. We also issue expulsions when deemed necessary. Behaviors which may lead to an automatic suspension or expulsion include but are not limited to the following:

1. Receiving too many detentions
2. Excessive tardiness and/or truancy
3. Verbal or non-verbal defiance that seriously disrupts a safe or effective learning environment
4. Physical or verbal harassment that is deemed as bullying or threatening behavior
5. Physical or verbal harassment from a parent to staff member
6. Repeated minor infractions accompanied by a refusal to repent
7. Consistent failure to complete and hand in schoolwork or homework
8. Physical fighting or play-fighting including but is not limited to throwing objects with intent to harm, hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, or spitting on
9. Possession or use of a controlled substance or a substance that is otherwise illegal for the use of a minor
10. Possession or use of a weapon, fake or real, without the consent of Atonement administration
11. Possession or use of an item that has the ability to inflict or cause harm, jeopardizing the safety of the school
12. Gross misuse of any form of media that is conduct unbecoming of a Christian
13. Theft or unauthorized use of another person's property
14. Extreme or repeated cases of vandalism which include but are not limited to: writing on, damaging, or defacing any part of the school building, school grounds, furniture, non-consumable textbooks or other property of the school. Students and/or parents/guardians will be responsible for the cost of cleaning or repairing all defaced or damaged property

APPEALS PROCESS

Appeals must be made in writing (email or hard copy) to the Principal (chris.bartsch@atonementmke.org) no more than ten (10) business days after the notice of expulsion. All appeals should include the following:

- Date
- Your full name
- Your student's full name
- Your contact information
- Reason for the appeal

Upon receiving the appeal the steps are as follows:

1. Administration informs the school board chair of the appeal and forms an Appeals Committee.
2. Interview the Classroom Teacher
3. Interview the Dean of Students, Principal, and Guidance Counselor
4. Review any evidence related to the situation
5. Staff's eyewitness account if available
6. Disciplinary Notes, History, and/or Academic Probation concerning the student



7. Reviewed the Disciplinary Process and/or Academic Probation that took place regarding the situation
8. Review the Parent Communication Process
9. Review the Family Handbook – Discipline Section and/or Academic Probation Section
10. Principal turns all pertinent information over to the Appeals Committee to make official decision over the appeal
11. Principal will contact the home regarding the final decision of the appeal

CELL PHONE USE

Students may bring cell phones to school. Other electronic devices can be used only by permission from a teacher or administrator. The following restrictions apply:

- Cell phones and smart watches must be turned in to homeroom teachers upon arrival at school. They will be returned when students are leaving the school campus.
- Cell phones, smart watches, and wireless/bluetooth earbuds must remain off and turned in to homeroom teachers while students are on campus during the school day (7:30 AM - 3:45 PM). This includes while walking onto campus and/or being dropped off as well as walking off campus and/or during dismissal. Wireless/bluetooth earbuds must remain out and off during the school day, including arrival and dismissal.
- Cell phones cannot be used during school hours (7:30 AM - 3:45 PM) unless used with express permission of a present staff member for short term use. Cell phones will be returned to the staff member following the communication.
- Cell phones that are visible, ringing, vibrating, or used for any type of unapproved texting or calling during school hours (7:30 AM - 3:45 PM) will be confiscated by staff and given to a Dean of Students.
- Smart watches may not be worn during the school day.
- Cell phones and smart watches should not be used during any after school activity.
- Recording video or images for the purposes of sharing on social media or in any way promoting behavior that is contrary to Christian standards is subject to discipline, including, but not limited to, detention, suspension, or expulsion.

The following consequences will be applied for violation of this policy:

- First offense: The student may pick up the cell phone or device at the end of the school day and a detention will be assigned. In addition, for the next three school days the cell phone must be turned in to a Dean of Students before school and picked up after school.
- Second offense: The student may pick up the cell phone at the end of the school day and two detentions will be assigned. In addition, for at least the next five school days the cell phone must be turned in to a Dean of Students before school and picked up after school.
- Third offense: At the discretion of a Dean of Students a suspension, in school or out of school, will be assigned. A parent must come to school to pick up the cell phone and meet with a Dean of Students to put in place a behavior contract related to the use of a cell phone or other electronic device. Atonement Lutheran School is not responsible for any damage to or loss of cell phones.

SCHOOL TELEPHONE USAGE

School telephones are available for student's use – only in case of emergency. A teacher or staff member must give permission before a student is allowed to make a call. Calling parents for forgotten lunches or homework, or permission to go to a friend's home is not considered an emergency. Children



may use the telephone if the school has changed its schedule affecting after school activities. Planning ahead is essential for reducing the number of telephone calls made by students.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY / CHEATING

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense and may result in a student receiving a detention, suspension, or expulsion. If a student copies, shares answers, or puts his/her name on another student's paper, it is considered cheating. **Additionally, if a parent completes any part of the homework without teacher approval, it is considered cheating.**

Plagiarism is also academic dishonesty and involves the stealing of someone else's ideas or words and presenting them as one's own. It is the imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author (or person) and presented as one's original work. This is considered cheating.

The first time cheating happens, the teacher will notify parents/guardians, a grade of zero/Far Below Basic will be given to the student on the assignment and the student will receive a detention. The student will serve the detention redoing the assignment. Full credit will be given to the work completed at this time. If a student cheats or plagiarizes a second time, the matter will require a conference with the student, parent/guardian, and the dean of academics. Continued cheating and plagiarism are grounds for suspension, retention, or expulsion, as deemed by the administration.

NON-HARASSMENT POLICY

Reporting of harassment should first be done to the classroom teacher. The teacher will thoroughly investigate the reported incident and formally report the incident to the Dean of Students. The report should include the names of all those involved and a detailed description of the harassment. The teacher will thoroughly investigate the reported incident. The results of the investigation will be filed and a copy given to the parent/guardian and Principal. If the issue is not resolved, the Principal will further investigate. From there a more thorough investigation will be conducted, reported, and kept on file. Finally, if the issue has not been resolved in a satisfactory manner, the administrative team will aid in finding a peaceful resolution.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT / ACTIVITY

A student of Atonement Lutheran School may not engage in any sexual activity. Knowledge of such activity is grounds for suspension or expulsion. Pregnancy will result in immediate expulsion for both the girl and/or boy followed by pastoral counseling. Participation in homosexual activities is also grounds for expulsion.

Public displays of affection, also known as PDA, is defined as kissing, inappropriate touching, or sexual dialogue (including written notes or graphic pictures). PDA is grounds for disciplinary action. Offenses will follow the detention or suspension process.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Atonement Lutheran School admits students of any race, color, sex, national and ethnic origin and grants them all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Atonement Lutheran School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color,



sex, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, or athletic and other school programs.

Parents/guardians and students are not to promote or disseminate information for other religious beliefs or morality, which is contrary to the religious beliefs and morality advocated by Atonement Lutheran Church and School. This includes, but is not limited to, the dress, statements, and actions of parents/guardians and students while on campus, as well as, at school activities. Atonement Lutheran School reserves the right to dismiss a student at any time on account of the parent's/guardian's action in disseminating or promoting religious beliefs or morality contrary to those taught at Atonement Lutheran Church and School.

GOVERNANCE

Atonement Lutheran School is governed by a school board which consists of members of Atonement Lutheran Church or another church in fellowship with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS).

The principal is responsible for overseeing and managing the day-to-day administration of the school and is responsible to the CEO; the CEO is responsible to the school board; which reports to the church council of Atonement Lutheran.

DEAN OF OPERATIONS

The Dean of Operations, Mrs. Gail Demitros, will be available daily in the office from 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Please schedule your office activities during those times. The school office is located at the north end of the school in the administrative wing of the building. The Dean of Operations is the primary administrator of registration, records, fee collection, billing, and communications. She is responsible for the publication of Weekly Notes (a school newsletter) and important written correspondence. You may reach Mrs. Demitros via phone (414) 871-1224 or email at gail.demitros@atonementmke.org

TUITION AND FEE PAYMENTS

All fees are to be paid by the tenth day of each month in order to avoid a 5% late payment fee. If a family is experiencing financial difficulties, which prohibit them from maintaining their current payment plan, they are asked to contact the school office and submit an alternative plan in writing. Families who miss two consecutive payments without proper communication may have their child suspended from school until such time a payment is made or a plan is agreed upon. Report cards and school records will be withheld until all tuition and fees are paid in full. Students will not be considered registered for the next school year until all tuition and fees are paid.

Payment options are as follows: (Your choice was indicated on your registration form)

- ◆ Payment in full at the time of enrollment
- ◆ Nine-month plan – first payment due on enrollment day and on the first of each month October – May thereafter

Personal payments – cash, check or money order

Please note: A \$25.00 fee will be assessed for each returned check for any/all school payments.



MILWAUKEE and WISCONSIN PARENTAL CHOICE PROGRAMS (MPCP/WPCP)

School Choice is a city of Milwaukee/state of Wisconsin program providing tuition money for low-income families who live in the city of Milwaukee/state of Wisconsin allowing them to send their children to a private school. Atonement accepts Choice applications for the following school year only during the months of February through September from the first through the twentieth. Choice applications must be completed in full with supporting residence, birth, and income verification. These applications are available through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) website (<https://apps4.dpi.wi.gov/ChoiceParent/>). Please call the school office for more details.

W-2 CHILD CARE PROGRAM

The Atonement Early Childhood Center (ECC) provides a structured full time 3-year-old preschool program as well as a before and after school extended day care program. The ECC accepts private pay and the State of Wisconsin W-2 income based payments. For additional information or to determine W-2 eligibility, please contact the ECC Director, Ms. Jennie Schleiden at (414) 445-1011 to enroll.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Lists for school supplies, which are not included in tuition fees, are included in a summer mailing. Extra lists are available in the office.

Please be advised that school rules prohibit students from bringing non-school related items to school unless the teacher grants permission. This includes electronic games, I-Pods, I-Pads, trading cards, toys or any item that may cause problems or disruptions during the school day. The school will not be responsible for personal items, which are not school related. Such items may be removed by the teacher and returned to the student or parent/guardian at a later time as determined by the teacher and/or Principal.

SCHOOL DAY SCHEDULE

Children are allowed to enter the school building at 7:30 a.m. unless there is a scheduled meeting, rehearsal, or practice. Siblings of students who must come to school early must have prior approval. If at any time, you wish for your child to enter the school building before hours, it must be communicated and approved with your child's teacher and/or the administration.

Before and after-school childcare is available through the Atonement Early Childhood Center (ECC) extended day care program. Please contact the ECC Director, Ms. Jennie Schleiden at (414) 445-1011 for more information or to enroll.

The faculty arrives by 7:15 a.m. and has a devotion every morning until 7:30 a.m. Calls made to the school before 7:30 a.m. are directed to voicemail. The office personnel will note all messages and communicate the information. A typical school day schedule is as follows:

- Monday - Friday
 - 7:30 a.m. - 7:45 a.m. Ideal arrival time for students (Breakfast is served)
 - 8:00 a.m. Classes begin for 4K-8th (Tardies marked)
 - 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Lunch and Recess
 - 3:15 p.m. School Dismissal for 4K-4th
 - 3:30 p.m. School Dismissal for 5th-8th



SCHOOL DISMISSAL

NEW: K3 and K4 students will be dismissed on 42nd Street along the brown fence next to the gym. K5 will be dismissed on Ruby Ave along the sidewalk next to the gym.

1st-8th grade students are dismissed from school through the north door facing the parking lot.

Students who walk home are to leave the school grounds by the driveway that goes on to Ruby Avenue or the new back sidewalk by the north entrance. They are not allowed to walk under the church carport.

Drivers may choose to park on the street and walk on to the lot to pick up their rider. The best procedure for safely picking up students is as follows:

1. Slowly enter the lot from Ruby Avenue using the driveway closest to the school.
2. Please, follow directions of the security guard(s) and stay within posted traffic cones.
3. Park in a lined parking place – DO NOT stop and pick up children without parking!
4. Exit using the driveway that goes on to Sherman Boulevard.
5. Instruct and remind your child repeatedly to watch for moving cars on the lot.

BEFORE/AFTER CARE SERVICES

If you need before/after care services, please reach out to the ECC director, Ms. Schleiden, at 414-445-1011. This program is governed by private pay or Wisconsin Shares.

SCHOOL ENTRANCE / SCHOOL VISITORS

Children who come to school on-time should enter the building between 7:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. through the north doors located off the parking lot. If you wish to meet with the teacher – please contact him/her to set up a meeting time in advance. Teachers are not allowed to have meetings during school hours without express permission from administration.

The north door is locked at 8:00 a.m. for security purposes. Anyone who wishes to enter the school at any other time should come to the north doors. All visitors must set up an appointment before entering the school building. This is for all school hours including drop off and dismissal. All visitors must stop by the office to identify themselves and their purpose for visiting the school before going to any other part of the building. Visitors may be asked to wear a Visitor's Badge and will be escorted through the building. **Due to the health and well-being of our students and staff, we will continue to practice a closed campus to non-essential visitors not meeting emergency criteria. We want to lessen foot traffic to minimize the spread of all viruses, illnesses, or disease throughout the school. We want to keep the children entrusted to our care safe from any outside threats. We appreciate your support and understanding as we implement this health and well-being guideline.**

SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Good communication is an important element in the partnership between the home and the school. Good communication begins at pre-registration meetings between the parents/guardians and the teachers and/or administration. It continues with attendance at meetings such as parent orientation and scheduled parent-teacher conferences. Teachers attempt to keep parents/guardians informed of their children's academic progress and classroom behavior on a regular basis. Various other means for regular communication with parents are as follows:



- **School Notes** will be e-mailed home as needed to keep parents informed of school activities. This is the main tool for communicating school information. Paper copies will only be available upon request and if no internet access is available. Please notify the office with your request.
- **Classroom newsletters** may be sent home by teachers informing parents of classroom activities and assignments.
- **Report cards** are distributed at the end of each quarter. Teachers in grades 1 – 8 will send home weekly progress reports every Friday. Additionally, all parents have access to their child's grades through a Gradelink account that is given to them at the beginning of the year.
- **Parent-Teacher Consultations** are scheduled after the first, second, and third quarters. Conferences are scheduled as closely as possible to times requested by parents/guardians. Attendance is mandatory – appointments not kept will be rescheduled. Additional conferences may be scheduled at any time by request of the teacher or the parent.
- **Other ways** to communicate regularly with the teachers include phone calls, texts, emails, written notes, and scheduled after school meetings. You may obtain telephone numbers and email addresses directly from your child's teacher.

PARENT / TEACHER CONSULTATIONS

Conferences between the parents/guardians and teachers are an important component of the home-school partnership and are required at various points in the year. In order to form a partnership, parents and teachers must communicate regularly. Parent-teacher consultation days are scheduled following the distribution of progress reports mid-first quarter (late September), at the end of the second quarter (mid-January), and again at the end of the third quarter (late March). All parents/guardians are expected to attend.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to consult with their child's teacher at any time about questions or issues of concern to avoid misunderstanding. If you have a concern about something in the classroom, please go directly to the teacher rather than contacting the Principal, the Pastor, or discussing the issue with other parents. If the problem persists, consult with the Academic Dean for school work issues or the Dean of Students for disciplinary issues. Since it is very important for the sake of the child that parents/guardians and teachers present a united front, please do not discuss concerns in front of a child unless he/she is specifically invited to offer comments for the sake of information. Parents/guardians and teachers making negative comments about each other, especially in front of the child, accomplishes nothing.

PARENT / STAFF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Christ states, "My command is this: Love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12) If we humble ourselves for our neighbor as Christ humbled himself for us, then we truly strive to serve them in the capacity that is best for them. If we are rooted in Christ, then we can begin to see the needs of our fellow man and how we can best help them; educationally or otherwise. Below are steps that all adults should follow in order to resolve any conflicts they may have with each other at Atonement.

1. Clearly identify the conflict problem between the two parties.
2. Determine best form of communication.



- a. Text Message (only if the conflict is a matter of simple miscommunication or a lack of information)
 - b. Phone Call - This should be if a longer explanation is needed. It is possible that any electronic message could be misinterpreted and increase conflict.
 - c. After School pick up – The conflict could possibly be resolved with a brief face-to-face meeting after school.
 - d. Private sit-down – This should be scheduled for a convenient time for both parties.
3. Listen to each other. Allow each other to explain frustrations or concerns.
 4. Explain the problem as you see it. Help them to see where you are coming from.
 5. Identify common ground. Work to see if the common ground is enough to eliminate the differences of opinion.
 6. Resolve the issue.
 - a. Both parties have reached an understanding and the conflict is over.
 - b. The parties don't agree, but the issue is not worth continued conversation. Respectfully agree to disagree. Continue to support each other in the spirit of Christian love.
 - c. The parties disagree but cannot seem to resolve the issue in a sit-down meeting.
 - i. Agree to meet again at a later date if the issue is not pressing.
 - ii. Agree to get administration involved so that a neutral party can assess the situation and help resolve the matter. NOTE: Involve the appropriate administrator according to the conflict. i.e. – academics (Mr. Bartsch) or discipline (Mr. Harms - 5th-8th / Mr. Gorsline 4K-4th)

MISSION OFFERINGS

Every year Atonement School adopts a mission to support. Offerings are collected every Friday during chapel and information on the mission is given to the students in order to acquaint them with different ways of spreading the Gospel in different places of the world. This regular offering gives the children an opportunity to worship God through the support of a mission. This also helps them develop the practice of Christian stewardship, putting God first in their lives.

BREAKFAST / HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

All students will receive free breakfast and hot lunch throughout the 2023-3024 school year due to our direct certification process to determine automatic eligibility for free lunch. Those not eligible under direct certification will need to complete a free or reduced price lunch application. This applies even if a family qualifies for MPCP/WPCP (Milwaukee/Wisconsin Parental Choice Programs). Please direct any questions to our Food Service Director, Mrs. Dana Block (414-871-1224). Breakfast and hot lunch service will begin August 16, 2023..

We encourage students to eat healthy meals and snacks every day. Atonement's food service programs are serviced by the Milwaukee Center for Independence. The meals are nutritious, and lunch offers more fruit, vegetables, grains, meats/meat alternatives and milk. Students who participate in the program must take the required menu items. We ask that they do not waste food by throwing it away. Monthly menus are available from the office lobby. Hot lunch must be taken every day, even if students do not like the lunch. A lunch from home may be supplemented only due to allergies, a doctor's notice, or religious beliefs. All students must take a hot lunch every day.



MILK

Breakfast and lunch include one carton of low fat milk. In accordance with federal guidelines, Atonement offers 1%, 2%, and 1% chocolate milk to all students in K4-8th grade.

HEALTH / IMMUNIZATION

State law (140.05 WI's Stats.) requires that all children entering elementary school in Wisconsin be immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, rubella and mumps. Verification of having chicken pox or receiving the varicella vaccine is also required. Certification of these requirements must be on file in the school and can be waived only if a properly signed health or religious exemption form is filed with the school. Failure to comply with state law may result in exclusion from the classroom. The school is required to submit immunization records to the district attorney who in turn enforces the state statutes. Please contact your doctor or city health department to make arrangements for having your child properly immunized before school begins. Direct any questions or updated immunizations to Mrs. Demitros at (414) 871-1224.

MEDICATION

Students who use daily or seasonal medication during the day must have a Medical Authorization form on file. Medication will be administered to a student only with a signed Medication Authorization form on file indicating medication, dosage, and time of distribution. Children are never to have prescription medication stored in their desks, backpacks, or lunch bags. Teachers or staff may not give over-the-counter medication such as aspirin or cough drops without written permission. Medical Authorization forms are available from the school office.

EMERGENCY CLOSING

Emergency closings are announced on local radio and TV stations, AM 620 / WTMJ, WISN, Fox 6. Atonement is automatically closed if an announcement is made that Milwaukee Public Schools is closed for severe weather such as snow or cold. Please do not call the school to ask if it is closed. Listen to the radio, watch the news, or check online. If bad weather occurs once the school day is in session, classes will be conducted for the remainder of the day except in the case of extreme emergencies. In case of bad weather, parents/guardians may pick up their children early if necessary. Please call in advance.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES / FIELD TRIPS

Numerous activities to supplement the regular classroom instruction are provided for the children as a way of expanding their experiences, enriching their lives, and broadening their Christian outlook of the world. Children are encouraged to participate in co-curricular activities because they create wonderful memories and promote skill development. When available, Atonement offers the following co-curricular activities for students:

- *Children's Choir*
- Athletic Competition for boys and girls (cross country, basketball, volleyball, wrestling, track, cheerleading, *co-ed softball*)
- Drama (public speaking)
- Musical and/or Theatrical Productions
- Spelling/Math Contests



Teachers also schedule field trips for which additional fees may be collected. If possible, buses are rented, otherwise, transportation is provided by classroom parents/guardians who have proof of insurance. Students must be in good academic and behavior standing to attend field trips. Students will not participate in a field trip without written parental consent.

PIANO / BAND LESSONS

Piano lessons are offered at Atonement Lutheran School during the school day for children in grades 3-8. Younger children may be given lessons before or after school. Parents/guardians may obtain more information regarding scheduling by contacting Kevin Poston, Staff Minister of Music and Worship.

Band lessons are offered to students in grades 5-8 through Wisconsin Lutheran High School. Information will be made available from the high school the first week of school. All students must be in good academic and behavior standing to attend these lessons.

CHOIRS / CHURCH SINGING

Each classroom participates in choral singing during worship at Atonement Lutheran Church throughout the school year. The students practice in the classroom and in church and all students are expected and encouraged to be a part of the singing group during the service. Singing provides an excellent opportunity for children to improve their musical abilities as well as to enhance worship by singing praises to the Lord. Parents are to notify the classroom teacher or choir director in advance if the child is unable to participate in the service. Proper respect, communication, and planning asks that the parents notify the classroom teacher or choir director in advance if the child will not be able to participate in the service.

TECHNOLOGY / ATHLETIC FEES

While Atonement has a physical education curriculum for children of all grade levels, most competitive sporting activities begin in fifth grade. Girls may participate in cross country, volleyball, basketball, cheerleading, softball, and track. Boys may participate in cross country, basketball, wrestling, softball, and track. An athletic policy governs all of the sports programs. Only students in good academic and behavioral standing may participate in the sports programs. Parents must read and sign supporting athletic paperwork which will be shared by coaches and the Athletic Director(s) as each sport begins.

Atonement does not require athletic fees in order to participate in any of the sports offered, but a **\$20 user fee is paid to defray physical education and technology costs**. Any damage or loss of Atonement property that is used is expected to be repaid in the form of replacement or reimbursement. Failure to replace or reimburse for damaged or lost equipment will result in your child being suspended indefinitely from any and all athletics until restitution is made. **The \$20 fee is paid on Enrollment Day to the teacher.**



ATONEMENT LUTHERAN SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

God has given the primary responsibility of raising and educating children to parents/guardians. The level of success of your child's education largely depends on the cooperation between parents/guardians and teachers. Therefore, upon enrolling, families are asked to read this handbook. Enrolling your student at Atonement Lutheran School signifies agreement to this partnership. By signing registration forms, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the policies here within the Family Handbook. The roles and responsibilities of the partnership are outlined as follows:

As a teacher at Atonement Lutheran School, I agree to:

1. Faithfully teach God's Word in truth and purity, and instruct children on how it applies to life. Be an example to the students and to the congregation in regard to my life of faith.
2. Help all students in the best way I know how and do whatever I can for them to learn, not only teaching them about God's love in Jesus, but showing it to them.
3. Constantly monitor the strengths, weaknesses, and progress of my students, both academically and behaviorally, and provide extra academic support on a regular basis.
4. Consistently enforce the code of conduct and school-wide procedures.
5. Communicate respectfully and regularly with my students' parents/guardians, and make myself available to students and families for any concerns they might have.
6. Form meaningful and positive relationships with my students and their families, and collaborate with my colleagues.

As a parent or guardian of a child at Atonement Lutheran School, I agree to:

1. Be open to encouragement from Atonement Lutheran Church and School staff regarding the Christian education of my child, and my growth in faith and in knowledge of God's Word.
2. Agree to be contacted by staff from both Atonement Lutheran Church and School.
3. Help my child in the best way I know how and do whatever it takes for them to learn.
4. Ensure my child is at school, in his/her desk, and ready to learn by 8:00 a.m.
5. Ensure my child is dressed in a clean uniform at the beginning of each school day.
6. Support Atonement staff by encouraging my child to follow the code of conduct and school-wide procedures.
7. Attend parent-teacher conferences, mandatory meetings, and communicate with my child's teacher regularly regarding my child's academic and/or behavioral progress.
8. Stay actively informed about important events and updates at Atonement.
9. Support the school and its staff with positive words and actions.
10. Allow pictures and/or videos of my child to be used for promotional purposes.
11. Support my child in the completion of assignments by providing a regular time and place at night to work and then ensure my child leaves home ready to hand in homework as he/she enters school each day.

As a student at Atonement Lutheran School, I agree to:

1. Live by Biblical principles as a redeemed child of God and follow school-wide procedures.
1. Learn more than is expected in the best way I know how and help my fellow students do the same.
2. Demonstrate my Christian character by being a positive influence to the students around me, taking responsibility for my failures, and humbly encouraging others in my success.
3. Complete my assignments each night to the best of my ability and leave home ready to hand in homework when entering school each day.
4. Do everything I can to arrive ready for school on time, and be sitting in my seat ready to learn by 8:00 a.m.
5. Be dressed in full uniform each day.