

Anchor Lutheran School

PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

Kindergarten - Eighth Grade



Mission Statement

The mission of Anchor Lutheran School is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the children and families whom we touch, and to provide quality, relevant education and Christian awareness that will prepare children to become life-long learners and successful adults.

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Welcome!

Anchor Lutheran School offers the opportunity for children to receive instruction and training in five specific areas of development:

- Spiritual
- Academic
- Physical
- Social
- Emotional

Philosophy & Purpose

It is the purpose of Anchor Lutheran School to assist the home and church in developing the total child, mind, body, and soul. We will equip the child with tools necessary to carry on a life of confidence and security in a challenging world. The child will be better able to cope with the everyday problems of this world while keeping his/her sights on our Savior Jesus and the hope of eternal life.

Christian Beliefs

At Anchor Lutheran School, we expect that the families of our students will not act in a way that is directly in opposition of or disrupts the teachings of this school in matters of religious faith and personal conduct. Family members are not required to believe or confess the teachings or beliefs of the LCMS. However, family members may not act in a manner that may negatively affect the school, promote beliefs at the school or its activities that are contrary to those of the LCMS, or otherwise weaken or undermine the Christian atmosphere of Anchor Lutheran.

Program Information

Accreditation

Anchor Lutheran School is nationally accredited through National Lutheran Schools Accreditation (NLSA). NLSA is the accrediting body of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Its mission is to ensure quality within Lutheran Schools as they share the Gospel with boldness and purity, transforming lives with the love of our Savior Jesus Christ.

Curriculum - Academics

Kindergarten through 8th Grade students are taught the standard subjects using a wide variety of educational techniques and opportunities. We encourage creativity and innovation at Anchor Lutheran, especially in our Fine Arts and Exploratory programs. Curricular materials are reviewed and updated regularly to stay current with today's educational trends and to ensure the high standards we wish to maintain. Supplemental materials are used in all grades to provide practice and variety, supporting the diverse range of learning styles within each classroom.

Curriculum - Spiritual

Faith instruction at Anchor is taught using Christian materials. We feel that it is vital that children know and understand God's will as revealed in the Holy Bible, and how His will can and should affect their relationship with God and those around them. The children are involved in a variety of faith experiences throughout the school year. An all-school Chapel service is conducted once each week. Service activities on both the classroom and school-wide level provide students the opportunity to put faith into action. We expect all

children to take an active part in the faith instruction classes and activities throughout the school year.

Teacher Certification

Anchor Lutheran only hires fully certified teaching staff for its K-8 classroom teaching and administrative positions. Faculty members either hold certification through the State of Alaska or another state. As we often hire from outside Alaska, faculty members may first hold out-of-state licensure while they pursue Alaska certification.

Enrollment Requirements

Admissions

Children entering Kindergarten must be five years of age on or before September 1st. Those entering First Grade must be six years of age by that date or be a graduate of an accredited Kindergarten program. Anchor Lutheran does a formative assessment on all incoming students to ensure correct placement in our program.

A wait list will be established if a class is filled to capacity. Placement on this list is determined by the date the application (with registration fee) is received in the school office, with the exception that preference is given first to children of current ALS families and then new children from families of our association churches. Parents will be notified when an opening for their child becomes available.

Entrance Requirements

Parents of children entering Kindergarten are required to provide a copy of their child's birth certificate, a current physical examination (dated less than 12 months prior to September 1st of that school year) and an up-to-date immunization record that includes a current Purified Protein Derivative test (this last within 90 days of the start of school). PPD is commonly known as the tuberculosis test. **All students in Kindergarten and 7th Grade, as well as any new-to-district students, are required to receive a PPD test within 90 days of the start of school.**

Parents of transfer students are required to provide a copy of their child's birth certificate, a copy of their current physical examination and an up-to-date immunization record which includes a current PPD test.

A transcript from the previous school attended will be required during the first month of attendance, typically requested directly from that school. A recent report card and a copy of the most recent standardized testing data submitted with enrollment application is appreciated. A placement test is administered as part of the admissions process for all new students.

Fees

A detailed fee schedule for our programs, including payment options and any penalty fees, is set by the LSAA Board of Directors for each school year and is published in the enrollment packet. Changes to fees will receive a 60-day notice.

A non-refundable **Registration Fee** for each child is due upon submission of paperwork for enrollment / re-enrollment. A student is only considered enrolled once this fee has been paid. **This fee is non-refundable.**

Tuition is due on the first of each month. **Child Watch Fees** (before and after school care) are required in advance based upon estimated monthly usage. A statement of your account is sent out at the beginning of each month.

Financial Aid is available for tuition only. An Aid Grant applies only to the current school year; reapplication for financial aid is required yearly. Inquire with the school office for more details.

A **Late Payment Fee** will be assessed for all accounts 15 days past due. This applies to tuition, Childcare and Child Watch charges, and any other fees on the families balance due. A **NSF charge** of \$25 will be assessed for checks returned for non-sufficient funds.

See the appropriate financial schedules for current year rates. All other financial questions or concerns should be directed to the Bookkeeper.

Families in Partnership

Families in Partnership: Each family must complete 20 hours of Families in Partnership service, 5 of which must be in service toward Anchor's Annual Auction. Each hour not contributed will be charged to the family's account at a rate of \$25 per hour. We strongly prefer your service over your money, so please see and keep the details included for guidance.

Parent participation and support of school fundraising efforts are vital to the continuing excellence and growth of our school. The primary fundraiser is the school auction. The tuition we choose to charge per student is intentionally insufficient to cover all expenses of the education, programs and activities we provide.

Non-Discrimination

Anchor Lutheran School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. We do not discriminate in administration of educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Parent Conduct Guidelines

We ask all parents to abide by these guidelines when interacting with the Anchor Lutheran family (students, staff, and other parents), for the benefit of all:

- ◆ Act in a manner that reflects the Christian values of Anchor Lutheran.
- ◆ Treat others with respect and dignity.
- ◆ When expressing questions, concerns, and suggestions, speak calmly and listen with an open mind.
- ◆ To help ensure a teacher's full attention, request an appointment to meet.
- ◆ Everyone makes mistakes. As you show kind understanding over occasional staff errors and oversights, you can be assured that you will receive the same. We are on the same team, with the same focus - a great Christian educational experience for the children.
- ◆ Never directly confront or challenge a child not your own while such a child is under school supervision, unless as a volunteer you have been so empowered (i.e. field trip chaperone). If you otherwise observe behavior that concerns you as possibly inappropriate or unsafe, inform the proper school authority.
- ◆ Please refrain from indecent language in the presence of our students.
- ◆ The school is a drug-free zone. No smoking or drinking is allowed on campus. This carries over to chaperone activities.
- ◆ Please respect our dress code in regards to *your own attire* when choosing to be involved with school functions.
- ◆ All adults in the building for greater than 30 minutes must have a background check on file with Anchor.

General Information Policies, Practices, & Procedures

Attendance / Tardiness

Classrooms open at 8:45 a.m. and school begins at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m. Regular attendance is important for the greatest academic growth of a child. If an absence occurs, the child will need to make up missed work. If parents are aware of an upcoming extended absence, we ask that they notify the teacher in advance, two weeks ahead of time, this allows teachers time to gather as much material as possible. Extended absences for reasons other than illness are discouraged. If a child is absent more than 25% of the school year advancement to the next grade is subject to review. **Parents are asked to inform the school when a child is or will be absent for any reason.**

A child is tardy if he or she arrives after 9:00 a.m. While an occasional late arrival is understandable, frequent tardiness will disrupt the class as well as have an adverse effect on the child's daily schedule. **When a student is tardy, a student is to first stop at the school office and receive an admit slip before proceeding to class.**

Church Membership

Anchor Lutheran School serves in partnership with the family, assisting in the God-given responsibility to nurture the spiritual development of children. Families without a church home are welcome and invited to worship at any of our school association churches. Beautiful Savior Lutheran shares our facility here at the Lutheran Center. Anchorage Lutheran is in Midtown (W 15th & N) and Zion Lutheran is at Boniface and 21st in northeast Anchorage. Our

pastors welcome questions you may have concerning your family's spiritual needs.

Communication

Regular communication between the school and home is essential to the successful growth of our children. Accordingly, we have many different avenues for communicating at Anchor:

- ◆ A calendar is available online at www.ALSalaska.org
- ◆ Each week the office and classrooms send out a newsletter
- ◆ FastDirect Online Student Information System allows parents to check academic progress
- ◆ For urgent issues contact the school office during the day, otherwise use email

It is important that parents feel comfortable and appreciated when contacting the school and/or the teacher with concerns or questions. In general, teachers are not available before school, as their focus at that time is preparing for the day at hand and their time with the children. They will return messages as soon as they are able, but sometimes that will not be until the end of the school day. If you would like to meet with a teacher, we encourage you to make an appointment so that your concern/question may be given as much attention as is needed.

In the case of a disagreement or conflict with a teacher or another member of the staff, parents are asked to follow the following procedure:

1. **Speak first with the teacher or staff person involved.**
2. If not resolved, Speak to the School Administrator about the problem.
3. If still not resolved, submit your concern in writing to the President of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will only address a matter of parent concern if it is determined that

the School Administrator has not given appropriate consideration to the matter brought forward.

We encourage and value communication between home and school. Your child's well-being is a primary concern for everyone.

Disabilities

Anchor Lutheran School lacks the resources to meet the needs of children with certain learning disabilities, physical handicaps, and/or emotional challenges. When the teacher suspects difficulties of this nature, he/she may recommend that formal testing of the child be done, available through the Anchorage School District at no cost to parents or through private practice at the parent's expense. The test results will be utilized in determining proper placement for the child, including whether continued enrollment at ALS is appropriate. If the teacher and School Administrator feel that our classroom setting and resources cannot adequately meet the needs of the child, other agencies will be suggested through which the parents may be able to acquire the appropriate instructional resources.

Discipline

We utilize an approach of fairness, firmness, and consistency grounded in Christian love. Students are taught and expected to care for each other. Corrective measures, when necessary, are designed to develop more favorable attitudes and to help with social and spiritual growth. Children are expected to display proper classroom behavior, and be respectful of authority, classmates, property and themselves.

Parents will be notified of major or repeated misbehavior and may be asked to meet with the teacher and/or the School Administrator to work towards resolution. If improper behavior persists after discipline and consultation, the School Administrator

may initiate proceedings involving the Board of Directors. In such cases, two members of the Board will meet with the teacher, administrator, and the parents to determine further action, which may include expulsion.

Anchor Lutheran School does not administer physical or corporal punishment. Application of reasonable physical contact with students is considered an acceptable disciplinary measure when deemed necessary by the teacher to ensure order and safety.

Dress Code

Please choose your children's clothing for school with these things in mind: **Christian Values, Modesty, Safety, Neatness, Weather Conditions and Cleanliness.**

Clothing may not have holes (including intentional "style" holes), may not be frayed or torn, and must fit properly. This means extremely tight, extremely baggy, or extremely loose clothing may not be worn to school or to school events. Clothing may not contain logos which advertise alcohol, marijuana or cigarettes, contain rude, offensive or political language, or contain inappropriate or sexual connotations.

Specific Details:

Bottoms: Extremely baggy pants may not be worn. Pants may not be worn in a "sagged" fashion or be cut extremely low. Properly fitting overalls and jeans are appropriate. **Leggings and "yoga pants" may not be worn uncovered as pants, and will not be accepted in any manner 4th Grade and higher.** When students wear shorts to school, the length is to be mid-thigh or longer. These are commonly referred to as Bermuda or walking style shorts. Cut-offs or the shorter athletic style shorts are not permitted. Dresses and skirts must be at least mid-thigh in length.

Shirts/Tops: Hemmed sleeveless shirts and tops may be worn. Tank tops are not permitted. The midriff (stomach) area may not be exposed. Necklines must be cut modestly. Undergarments must not be exposed or visible at any time.

Shoes: Proper shoes must be worn to participate in the activities of the day, both in the classroom and outside. In the winter, students must have proper footwear for outdoor play. Winter footwear may be left at school during the week. Each student is required to have a separate pair of gym shoes that provide proper foot support. Shoes with black soles and slip-on style shoes are not acceptable as gym shoes. **Sandals are seasonally reserved for 4th Grade and above, and must have a heel strap (no flip flops).**

Socks: Socks and/or tights must be worn with shoes and students are encouraged to have an extra pair at school during the winter months.

Caps/Hats: These may be worn outside. They may **not** be worn inside the building. This applies to both boys and girls.

Make-up & Nails: The wearing of facial make-up is reserved for girls in the 7th & 8th Grades. Make-up must be modestly and tastefully applied. The length of nails cannot prohibitive to learning and classroom participation.

Hair: Hair styles are to be modest and appropriate for our school setting. Extreme hair styles and coloring are not permitted. Only natural hair colors are accepted. All hairstyles must be well kept as not to become and academic distraction.

Jewelry and Accessories: These must be in good taste. Items and fads that are potential safety hazards will not be permitted. Earrings may be worn, but other forms of body piercing are not accepted.

Outside Attire: Requirements during winter months for outdoor play include a coat, hat (or coat with hood), boots, gloves/mittens, and snow pants or snow suit. Summer attire requirements are dependent on weather conditions and planned activities.

The dress code is always subject to interpretation by the School Administrator.

Parents are asked to use their discretion in choosing appropriate clothing for their children considering weather conditions, floor activities, etc. Keep in mind that all children go outside for at least one recess, at lunch time, weather permitting. As the year progresses, please remember to check the fit of their clothing regularly. In other matters of dress, we ask that clothing and styles are neat and modest, keeping in mind that children represent the school they attend as well as the family of which they are a part, including God's family.

Electronic Devices

Electronic devices of a personal nature such as video games, MP3 players, iPads, etc., are not to be brought to school. This includes our Child Watch program. Students may bring cell phones for use before and after school **only** for communicating with parents and after receiving permission from a school employee. Cell phones used for other purposes will be confiscated, and will only be available for parent pick-up. For most school technology needs, Anchor will be providing the equipment used.

Emergency School Closures

Anchor Lutheran School will usually close for emergencies in conjunction with the local public school system. We will close in the case of hazardous weather conditions, volcanic ash, or other natural catastrophe. If the decision is made to close, the announcement will be made on the school's website, Facebook page, via email, Remind, radio and TV stations.

In case of fire or other emergencies impacting our facility during program hours, students will be walked to the South Anchorage Church of Christ (Stanley Dr.) near the school. Parents will be notified as quickly as possible. Children will be kept at that location until pick-up by a parent or other authorized person.

Please contact the school office for further information regarding Anchor's Emergency Management Plan.

Extracurricular Eligibility

In order to participate in school extracurricular activities students must maintain a "C" or better in all subjects. Exceptions to this requirement may only be made by decision of the School Administrator, and will only be considered for extenuating circumstances. For students participating in extracurricular athletics, physicals are required on an annual basis.

FastDirect Online Information System

Anchor Lutheran utilizes an online information system to provide parents 24/7 access to academic progress and lunch menus. Referred to as "FastDirect", this web-based password-protected site is accessible to all K-8 parents using uniquely assigned ScreenNames and Passwords (contact the school office if you do not know or remember your log-on information).

Field Trips

The primary purpose of field trips is to extend classroom learning through “real world” experiences and service opportunities. Each child must have a parent-signed permission slip in order to leave campus for any field trip. Students without signed permission slips will not be permitted to attend. Parents may be asked to help transport and/or supervise students on such trips pending background checks. If parents agree to drive, a proof of insurance form (available in the office) must be completed. This form states that the minimum state-required insurance coverage is in force for the driver of the vehicle. The school’s insurance policy covers limited liability in excess of personal coverage.

Homework

While sufficient class time is generally allotted for children to complete classroom lessons, students work at a wide variety of speeds. It may be necessary to take some classwork home to be completed. Separately, some assignments are intentionally designed as homework for the purpose of reinforcing and extending the content introduced in the classroom. Due to the unique learning styles and needs of each child, homework may be more frequent for some children than for others. If you come to suspect that the homework load your child is experiencing is too great or too frequent for your child, you are encouraged to contact the teacher to discuss the situation.

Homework may be requested in advance for absences of several days. We request that you speak to the teacher at least two weeks in advance when possible. In case of illness, parents may request student work to be prepared and waiting in the school office at the end of the school day.

Hygiene

As students grow, it becomes necessary for them to utilize increasing hygiene practices to maintain a healthy appearance and socially acceptable body odor. Students are encouraged to bathe regularly. Parents should make certain the children properly use deodorant starting around the 4th Grade level. Students should also practice daily dental care as recommended by their dentist. Failure to impress good hygiene practices upon your children may result in otherwise avoidable social difficulties for your child in peer interaction, so please help **us** to help **them**.

Illness

If your child is absent as a result of illness, please notify the school office of the nature of the illness. We care about the welfare of our students and will wish to pray for those who are ill. When advisable, a release from a physician will be necessary for the child to return to school. When we are able and aware we will notify parents of any communicable diseases to which children may have been exposed. **For the protection of all our children, sick children are not to attend school.**

Parents will be **notified and asked that their child be taken home** if any of the following symptoms are present:

- listlessness
- confusion and/or unusual behavior
- severe runny nose, cough, and/or sore throat
- fever
- red eyes with discharge
- abnormal irritability
- nausea and/or vomiting
- diarrhea
- unknown rash/itching
- difficult or rapid breathing
- pain or discomfort

- skin lesions/patches
- lice

If any of these symptoms are present in your child at home, **please** do not send him/her to school. In the event a child becomes ill while at school, an effort will be made to contact a parent or responsible adult. The child will be made comfortable until the parent or responsible person arrives. The child must be symptom free, without the aid of medication, for 24 hours before they can return to school.

Medication

ALS teachers and caregivers may not dispense either doctor-prescribed or over-the-counter medications. If a child needs to take medication during the day, a formal request must be filed with the school office. All medication is to come to the office in its original container with instructions printed on the label. Prescription medication is to include physician's name and phone number, special care needed and dosage. All medications will be kept in the office and administered by office personnel. Medication will be dispensed as noted in the instructions printed on the label, and will be documented by school personnel regarding date, time and dosage. Any dosage change must be accompanied by a physician's note. Long-term medication also needs to be accompanied by a physician's written order. Additionally, a physician's written order must accompany any sample medication and is to include all of the information needed for the administration of the medicine. **Medications must not be kept/left in a child's bag, backpack, or classroom.**

Parties

Class parties are planned each year in conjunction with Christmas and Valentine's Day. Specific details are shared with parents in advance by each classroom teacher.

Many students enjoy bringing in a classroom treat to celebrate their birthdays. Parents are welcome to send such treats in with their child, but are asked to consult the teacher **at least** the day prior to sending in such treats. We encourage healthy snacks and speak to teachers about classroom allergies. **Please, do not simply surprise the teacher with food the day of the birthday. Gift and treat bags are not allowed.**

If parties of any kind are planned outside of school hours, invitations should only be passed out at school if **every** child, **every** girl, or **every** boy is included. If you wish to invite only a few students, or even students from another classroom, please use the school's family directory for mailing party invitations. *Leaving students out can be emotionally devastating, so thank you in advance for your intentional sensitivity.*

Recess

All children go outside for recess. The temperature cut-off we utilize for outdoor recess is 0°F. Teachers on recess supervision will observe common sense when it is close to 0°F, making recess adjustments as deemed appropriate. Exceptions to being outdoors at recess are made only through the School Administrator, and in most cases would need a physician's note or other extenuating circumstance. **Children must have appropriate clothing for outdoor play.**

Report Cards

Report Cards are prepared four times per year. These are available within two weeks of the end of the quarter via FastDirect. You may monitor ongoing academic progress via FastDirect throughout the school year. Academic grade scores and behavior marks are intended to show a measure of progress, growth, and effort. It is not necessary to wait until report cards are issued to ask to speak with a teacher if you are concerned about your child's progress.

Testing

Placement testing is administered to all new enrollees for Grades 1-8. A readiness assessment is administered to Kindergartners.

A nationally recognized, norm-referenced standardized achievement test is administered to the 2nd-8th Grade students three times throughout the year. We request that parents work to avoid planned absences during testing. We utilize the annual achievement test as another objective means to measure student growth. Testing results and explanations are provided to parents.

Extended Care Programs

The purpose of our extended care programs is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children while fostering healthy social, emotional, spiritual, and physical development. These programs offer experiences through the use of art, music, free play, science, and Bible stories, as well as physical activities that are age appropriate yet challenging for each child.

Child Watch

Anchor Lutheran offers a well-organized, established, state-licensed before and after school program for children enrolled in Kindergarten through Grade 6. This program is open to all children throughout the school year, as well as most days that school is not in session by reservation. This also includes an enhanced summer program. Parents may drop off their children at school as early as 7:00 a.m. They are offered crafts and activities as well as a snack and are supervised until they are released to their classrooms at 8:45 a.m. Children who arrive before 8:45 a.m. are to be signed into the Child Watch program. If a parent or other authorized person has not arrived within 15-minutes of the end of the school day to pick up a student, the child will be signed into Child Watch and supervised by a staff member. The program closes at 6:00 p.m., late fees begin at 6:01 p.m. and continue until the child is picked up.

Child Watch use is billed on actual usage time based on the recorded sign-in and sign-out times, with a minimum one-half hour charge per use. Please see fee schedules available in the school office or in the enrollment packet for current rates, including late pick-up and other fees associated with the program. Parents wishing to regularly use the Child Watch program, or those wishing to reserve space on teacher in-service days or other “by reservation only” days, must fill out usage forms available in the school office.

Our Child Watch program shares some facilities, and even some staff, with the Child Care program (see below). Both of these programs are under the direct supervision of our Child Care / Child Watch Director, who serves under the supervision of the School Administrator.

Early Childhood Program

Anchor Lutheran also offers an all-day early childhood education and child care program for children 3-5 years of age. This program is state-licensed as a care and educational center and focuses on providing developmentally appropriate educational experiences. Further information is available in the school office.