



STUDENT HANDBOOK

Our Mission:

***To foster lifelong learners
who live passionately for Christ
and compassionately for one another.***

***"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***

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**WESTSIDE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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Welcome to Westside!

We are so pleased that your family has decided to be a part of Westside Christian School. We trust that you will be blessed as we partner together with one another and God to seek His work in the lives of the children through relationships-- with one another, God's Word, and hands-on learning. This handbook is designed for parents and families to know Westside procedures and policies. While written guidelines, rules, and policies are useful, they can't replace common sense or be all-inclusive. Please become familiar with the handbook and let us know if you have any questions.

Westside's Story

Westside Christian School was started by a group of parents in the spring of 2016 upon learning that the Christian school on the west side of town their children were attending was closing. Passionate to pursue the opportunity to extend their children's foundational years within a strong faith community, they began to pray for God's leading and direction.

As God opened each door and provided each need, the faith, commitment, and confidence this group of parents grew. The desire since the inception of Westside Christian has been for children in this region to have an education of excellence, the opportunity to know and experience God's love firsthand each and every day at school, to build a solid foundation of faith in Christ, and to learn to serve Christ together in the community to impact the community of Sioux Falls.

Mission Statement

The mission of Westside Christian is to foster life-long learners who live passionately for Christ and compassionately for one another.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of our program is to prepare students academically, spiritually, socially, emotionally, creatively, culturally, and physically to go into the world and serve Christ through a joint discipleship with parents.

Vision Statement

It is the vision of Westside Christian School to partner with parents in developing a love for Christ and a love for learning. At Westside we specifically teach students about developing a growth-mindset and we model the importance of encountering God through His Word, through worship, and through serving others.

Our Statement of Faith

Westside Christian School is called to provide a Biblical education based on the following truths:

- *We believe the Bible to be the inspired and only infallible, authoritative Word of God inerrant in the original writings and the final authority in faith and life. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)*
- *We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 3:14-17)*
- *We believe in the literal account of creation (Genesis 1:1) in that man was created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), that man sinned (Genesis 3:6) causing not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which is separation from God, and that mankind is born with a sinful*

nature. (John 3:16)

- *We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died as a sacrifice for our sins, that He rose again for our redemption, and that all who believe in Him are saved by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ. (Romans 3:23)*
- *We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ (John 10:33), in His virgin birth (Luke 1:35), in His sinless life (Hebrews 4:15), in His miracles (John 2:11), in His vicarious and atoning death (Ephesians 1:7), in His resurrection (John 11:25), in His ascension to the right hand of the Father (Mark 16:19), and in His personal return in power and glory. (Revelation 19:11)*
- *We believe that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:17), that salvation is a gift of God by grace through faith in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8), that it is according to God's mercy through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5), that the Holy Spirit enables a believer to separate from practices and influences which hinder a Spirit-filled life (Romans 8:13-14), that those who do not believe in Jesus Christ are condemned (John 3:18).*
- *We believe that it is the privilege and responsibility of every believer to be an ambassador for Christ and share the Gospel of Christ with the world. (II Corinthians 5:20)*

Our Philosophy of Christian Education

1. **All truth is of God.** This is the unifying principle of Christian education. Truth found in the Bible and truth discovered in the created world form a seamless whole because truth has only one source.

2. **Christian education provides a focus on the truths of God as they relate to all subject areas.** Students gain a cohesive and consistent understanding of everything in the world from a continual acknowledgement of God's involvement in and truth found as it relates to all of it.

3. **A Christian school is more than a modified public school.** Christian education consists of more than superficially wedging Bible classes and Bible verses into a basically secular curriculum. All schooling, at every grade level and in every subject, will focus on instilling a relationship with God and understanding of the world that He created and the values through which to see, evaluate, and act in response to that knowledge.

4. **God and His Word are the ultimate education authority.** We pursue outstanding and rigorous educational standards for our students. While accreditation by the State of South Dakota is helpful, government mandates, laws, policies, or philosophies are subordinate to the Word of God.

5. **The primary responsibility for the upbringing of children rests with parents.** Christian school's role is to *partner with parents in providing a stellar education, to authentically model godliness and love toward one another, and to provide a Biblical foundation.*

6. **The purpose of our Christian education is to disciple children in order to prepare for Christian service and leadership in today's world.** Several types of Christian schools have been operated successfully— evangelistic schools where the primary focus is to reach lost children, reform schools where the main goal is to help troubled children turn around, and isolationist schools where the purpose is to remove children from the world. The purpose of our program is to prepare students to

go into the world through discipleship.

7. We embrace the idea that academic excellence is an important aspect of fulfilling God's purposes for our children. A strong education coupled with humble servant leadership skills are a means of great gain for the Kingdom of God and often the way in which God's purposes are fulfilled.

8. Christian education equips children for life in this world and fosters hope of eternity. Since each of our students will live on somewhere in eternity, we acknowledge that ultimately we pray for, encourage, and prepare our students for eternity.

Our Commitment to the Whole Child

All children are designed by God in the image of God, and have been made for the glory of God. We believe that God has entrusted us with the responsibility of nurturing and caring for children in a way that fosters growth to allow each child to thrive in every aspect of their lives. We do this primarily by living and modeling what we hope to foster in each child. We will do this through intentional teaching and instruction to encourage each child to flourish as God intended for them.



1. *Spiritual*: To glorify God by living our lives as an example to the students in order that they are prepared for an abundant life as servant-leaders who know, love, and serve God.
 - Become individuals who love God and have an understanding of His great love for them (Ephesians 3:14-21).
 - Establish a daily devotional time that includes Bible listening and prayer.
 - Demonstrate respect for God and others.
 - Grow spiritually through fellowship with other believers and have an understanding of God's purpose for His Church.
 - Be able to express their faith.
 - Apply Biblical principles to real life and personal moral choices.
2. *Intellectual*: To glorify God by striving to improve our instruction in order to prepare our students for an abundant life as literate critical thinkers, creative solution seekers, and

life-long learners. Teachers and staff will provide positive learning experiences that will enable students to meet or exceed learning outcomes.

- We will model and provide numerous opportunities for students to communicate effectively. Students will learn to:
 - Speak clearly and concisely in various settings.
 - Listen objectively.
 - Write with a command of the grammatical, mechanical, and usage conventions of composition.
 - Demonstrate competence in general skills and strategies of the writing process.
 - We will model and provide numerous opportunities for students to acquire critical thinking skills, which will enable them to utilize their higher order reasoning abilities. Students will learn to:
 - Read critically.
 - Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information.
 - Demonstrate logical and effective decision-making skills.
 - We will model and provide numerous opportunities for students to accept personal responsibility for the learning process. Students will learn to:
 - Listen attentively and participate appropriately.
 - Work cooperatively with others in the learning process- sharing ideas and participating in all aspects of instruction.
 - Demonstrate current abilities to read, write, and use mathematical reasoning in order to improve learning.
3. *Physical:* To glorify God by living and encouraging students to live life to the fullest by improving their physical well-being.
- We will model, explain, and encourage the importance of treating our bodies and the bodies of others with respect, and as a temple of the Holy Spirit.
 - We will model, explain, and encourage important concepts of health, physical fitness, personal hygiene, and nutrition.
4. *Emotional:* To glorify God by guiding students to become self-aware, able to exhibit self-control with our words and emotions, and monitor their own behavior. By modeling empathy, compassion, and understanding toward our colleagues and students, we foster the healthy emotional well-being of each child.
- We will model and explain acceptance of ourselves and others as beings created in God's image and evidenced by our words and actions.
 - We will model and effectively deal with stress by using time management techniques and develop a balanced life approach.
 - We will model and teach being responsible, respectful, and safe citizens.
5. *Social:* To glorify God by exhibiting proper interactions with colleagues, adults, and children in and out of the learning experience we will model how to get along well socially with others. We must consistently demonstrate how students are to participate effectively in groups, show cooperation and responsibility, and resolve conflicts through mutual respect. In order to model excellent adult social well-being, we must also actively encourage parents to become involved in the education of their children through regular communication as well.

- We will model and demonstrate how to work collaboratively by functioning positively in various group roles.
 - We will model resolving conflicts through mutual respect and compromise (Matthew 18:15 principle) and forgiveness (Colossians 3:13).
6. *Creative:* To glorify God by allowing students to learn through visual, auditory and kinesthetically creative learning experiences. We will provide creative thinking through music, art, drama, dance, and written and spoken word and model this behavior for students as well.
- Acknowledge the creative abilities that God has given each student, whether in music, drama, dance, writing, or art.
 - Participate in the creative expression of our culture and be willing to share that with the greater community.
7. *Cultural:* To glorify God by promoting a sense of care and responsibility in each child for the good of the school community, the city, the country, and the larger global ecological and educational environment through cultural events, projects, and experiences.
- Participate in a variety of cultural experiences that allow students to learn about their own culture and to learn about the cultures of others.
 - Understand the meaning and purpose behind cultural days, activities, and events.

Our Academic Program

Accreditation: Westside Christian School is an accredited entity with the State of South Dakota through its rigorous efforts to provide a safe and intentional learning environment for all children enrolled.

Extended School Day: Westside Christian School offers a unique opportunity to further learning experiences past the school day. Our extended school day has similar components of an afterschool program such as snack and play time. Kids who stay till the end of the program may also work on reading, math, Bible memory, or other academic subjects. We offer specialized opportunities during the school year by bringing in people from the community to give our students opportunities to develop lifelong skills related to art, play, journaling, foreign languages, sports, drama, etc.

The program is offered only on full school days and only to students enrolled at Westside Christian. All families must register to participate in the event that their child is not picked up by 3:30. A drop-in tuition rate of \$25 will be charged to the family per student.

Courses are not taught by certified instructors and are not graded, but are an enrichment extension of the school.

Costs for Extended School Day:

Full-Time Student attending 3 days or more: \$50/week

2 student family discount \$20/week & 3 student discount \$50/week

Part-Time Student attending 2 days or less: \$40/week

2 student discount \$10/week & 3 student family discount \$30/week

Drop-In Student: \$25 per drop-in session per student

Payment Plans will be set up to be withdrawn the week following participation.

Art Education: We are blessed to have an excellent art education program at Westside Christian School. Students receive art instruction each week for 45 minutes.

Balanced Literacy & Numeracy: Westside Christian believes in empowering its students with a balanced literacy and balanced numeracy approach. When students master basic skills, they gain confidence and efficiency that equips them to address in-depth thinking skills. ***Parents are greatly encouraged to support literacy and math efficiency at home in a way that fosters a love for learning.***

Bible Instruction: We use a Christian School Bible curriculum that develops a Biblical worldview and apologetics.

Chapel: Each school day begins in the classroom with a time of prayer, worship, and heart preparation for the day. Each Friday the school gathers corporately to worship together for chapel.

Field Trips: Westside Christian believes that field trips are an important aspect of the student's learning experience. A participation waiver must be on file for each student participating beforehand.

“Just Right” Learning: At Westside Christian School, we believe that each student should be appropriately challenged in math, reading, and language development. We intentionally teach students about his or her unique learning styles and how God made each of them smart. Regardless of whether a student learns quickly or through repeated practice, all students at Westside will be appropriately challenged by the structure of our multigrade and multi-age program.

Music Education: Our music program will prepare students to understand concepts of music and become worshipers. Students receive two 35 minute sessions of music weekly.

Parent/Teacher Conferencing: Two formal parent/teacher conferences are scheduled during the school year. Parents and teachers are encouraged to contact one another frequently with updates, concerns, or progress related to student success academically, socially, emotionally, etc. ***Parents and teachers are expected to discuss student concerns with one another. If problems persist or are not improving, the parent is encouraged to go to the Principal for direction and to assist with student support.***

Participation in P.E., Music, and Art: All students are required to participate unless the child has a signed note from the parent. In the event of a parent requests an extended period for non-participation is needed, a note from the child's physician stating a medical reason that prohibits them from participating is required. Proper footwear and equipment are required for PE. This year, in an effort to protect the health of our Art teacher, we will ask students to wear a neck gaiter or a

mask during Art.

Physical Education: Westside Christian School has been blessed with the *PLAYEverything* Program. Twice each week one or two certified trainers from GreatLife Golf & Fitness engage our students in sports and activities that foster an active lifestyle.

Report Cards: At the end of each trimester, an academic report card is compiled and sent home.

Retention in Grade: If either teachers and/or parents have concerns about student progress, they may ask for a retention evaluation or request further testing for potential special education services or related services

1. Teacher's initial evaluation
2. Parent input
3. Administrator Evaluation/Scoring
4. Parent, teacher, Administrator meeting
5. Parent decision

Definitions:

"Special education," instruction specially designed to meet the unique needs of a student with disabilities, at no cost to parents/guardians or guardians, including classroom instruction in physical education, home instruction, instruction in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings.*

"Related services," services that support the provision of special education, including transportation and those developmental, corrective, and other supportive services determined by an IEP team to be required for an eligible child to benefit from special education.*

"Individual educational program," a written educational program for a specific individual, in accordance with state rules, based on the multidisciplinary evaluation and developed by an IEP team.*

"Individualized educational program team," "IEP team," as used in this article, the term individualized education program team or IEP team means the group of individuals described in § 24:05:27:01.01.*

"Parent/guardian," a natural or adoptive parent/guardian, a guardian, a person acting in the place of a parent/guardian such as a grandparent/guardian or stepparent/guardian with whom the child lives or a person who is legally responsible for the child's welfare, or a surrogate parent/guardian who has been appointed in accordance with these rules, but not the state if the child is a ward of the state.*

"Regular Classroom with modifications," a student is in this category if he/she receives special education or special education and related services outside the regular classroom for less than 21 percent of the school day (up to 85 minutes per day.)

Special Education Policy: Westside Christian School utilizes the services of the Sioux Falls Public School Special Education Department when necessary. Children with suspected needs are referred to Laura Wilder Elementary and are evaluated by building teams with the input of parents/guardians, classroom teachers and administrators. The referral may be made by a classroom teacher or

parent/guardian. If a parent/guardian feels there is a need for an evaluation of their child, they should contact the classroom teacher first. The initial referral form, supplied by Laura Wilder for evaluation must be signed by the parent/guardian.

If it is determined that a student qualifies for special education and/or special education and related services, services are provided through dual enrollment at Westside Christian School and Laura Wilder. Services offered to the dually enrolled student will be provided at Laura Wilder. The responsibility of transportation to and from services will be that of the student's parent/guardian.

Children in need of special education or related services shall be provided special programs and services to meet their individual needs which are coordinated with the regular education program whenever appropriate.

Removal from the regular educational classroom shall occur only when the nature or severity of the child's needs are such that the education program in the regular classroom is determined not to be sufficient to meet the needs of the student. To determine how much time a student is in the regular classroom, complete the following formula:

Total number of hours per week spent in the regular classroom:	_____
Total number of hours per week spent in recess with typical peers:	_____
Total number of hours per week the student spends in lunch and lunch-time recess with typical peers:	_____
Total number of hours per week spent in art, music and physical education with typical peers:	_____
Total number of hours per week passing between classes with typical peers:	_____
TOTAL	_____
Subtract from 30 total school hours per week:	_____

If a student's needs are able to be met through the regular classroom with modifications the student may be admitted and allowed to attend Westside Christian. If special education or special education and related services are needed beyond this category, enrollment at Westside Christian would be a disservice to the child and therefore will not be permitted.

It is required at Westside Christian School that the parent/guardian cooperate with staff in the referral process and all other steps involved in special education and/or related services. Without cooperation, the parent/guardian will be asked to withdraw his/her student, as the school will not be able to meet the needs of the student.

Standards & Curriculum: Westside Christian has established the highest standards of learning for its students. The South Dakota State Standards are a good start, however, our desire is to exceed and

extend those expectations of learning for every student and apply what we learn to what God teaches us. This is not accomplished through one particular curriculum. ***We use a wide variety of resources in order to meet and exceed learning standards, goals, and objectives. We especially seek to apply what we learn and look for the ways that God is involved in all we are learning.***

Student Success: In the event that a teacher or parent believes there are concerns regarding student success, the teacher or parent should communicate their concerns to one another. If there is reason to suspect that the student has specific learning needs not being met in the regular classroom, the Student Assistance Referral (SAR) process will be implemented. Parents will be informed and asked for input. The teacher will identify and evaluate the area of student concern using observation, daily work, tests, participation, and attendance to task comparison, performance and/or a record of attitude/behavior. The teacher will document intervention strategies that have been used in the classroom and their results. The teacher will inform and work with the SAR Team and parents.

If it is determined that there are needs that the classroom teacher is unable to meet or address successfully, the student will be referred for further evaluation through the process set forth by the Sioux Falls School District. This student may qualify for services that extend beyond the ability of Westside Christian School regular classroom. Refer to the School's Special Education Policy

Testing: Students in grades K-5 participate in MAP testing in the fall, mid-year and spring of each school year. These assessments give an indication of student growth in the area of math and reading. Each student is given a Developmental Reading Assessments for reading, and we also assess student progress in mastery of math content throughout the school year as well. These assessments are used to evaluate the overall effectiveness of our program and specifically used to determine how to support individual achievement.

Our Admissions Process

Acceptance: Acceptance into the program will be based on availability, deadlines, needs of the current and potential students, parental agreement and support of the Biblical Christian mission of the school, along with the strength and vitality of the financial needs of the program.

The administrator of the school will make recommendations to the Board in regard to concerns in relation to any of these areas. All registration, fees, and past due accounts must be current before enrollment is completed. Students will be enrolled continuously in the program, unless there is a compelling reason regarding the wellbeing of the school that would hinder acceptance.

Age: An applicant for Kindergarten must be at least five years old by September 1 of the year entering school.

Application/Registration Procedure: General information and application forms may be obtained from the school office or through Westsidechristiansf.org website online. The following forms are required before application/registration will be considered:

- An Application/Registration Form must be submitted with Registration Fees.
- A copy of an original birth certificate copy must be on file with the school.
- An Immunization Documentation or Physician's Waiver Form submitted.

- **Transferring students:** Parents must complete an Authorization to Transfer Records Form. The school may conduct an interview with parents and former schools for verification that we are a good fit for one another in helping the child be successful, as well as making sure the needs of the school are being met.

General Requirement: Parents are expected to support the Statement of Faith, Mission Statement, Philosophy of Christian Education, and policies of the school as a general requirement for enrollment in the school. Parents are expected to communicate information to the school that might be relevant to the wellbeing and success of the student, other students, the school in general, or the staff.

Immunization Requirement: South Dakota codified law requires that any pupil entering school in this state be required to present prior to admission to the school certification from a licensed physician that the student has had adequate immunization; or Certification from a licensed physician stating the physical condition of the child would be such that immunization would endanger the child's life or health; or a written statement signed by one parent or guardian that the child is an adherent to a religious doctrine whose teachings are opposed to such immunization.

Non-Discrimination Policy: Westside Christian School will not, either by action of the Board of Directors or by administrative practice, discriminate against any student because of race, color, national or ethnic origin.

Program Placement: Westside Christian focuses on meeting the “just right” needs of students. Our desire is to ensure we are able to meet the needs of each student adequately and appropriately AND that we have adequate resources to meet the needs of its students. If a student is new to the school, the school may request a special meeting or evaluation of the student in order to determine the best placement for the student upon entry into the school.

Fees & Tuition

Books and/or Technology Fees: Annual fees may be needed from time to time to help defray the cost of regular annual expenses—such as textbooks, computer software, or related materials. These fees are non-refundable and must be paid by mid-year. This year, there is a \$75 technology fee for every student enrolled, as well as a \$15 fee for 4th and 5th grade students.

Other Fees: School tuition payments are due the 1st of the month. Parents are strongly encouraged to use EFT. Payments made any other way will be assessed \$5 each month. They become past due after the 15th of the month. A \$50.00 late fee will be assessed for past due payments. Parents are responsible to communicate financial difficulties to the Head of School proactively.

Registration/Enrollment Fees: The registration fee must be paid in full before registration is complete. It is non-refundable. Enrollment is continuous after registration. It is the responsibility of a family to report if a student will not return or transfer from the school before the end of the school year.

Tuition Assistance: Westside Christian School is a member of the South Dakota Partners in Education (SDPE). You can apply for a scholarship under their guidelines and criteria. Westside has also developed a local tuition assistance program called Compassionate Tuition Assistance that is available as local community funds (donors) give to our tuition assistance fund. Families that feel they might

qualify for tuition assistance that do not meet the criteria of SDPE as a kindergarten, 1st grade, or transfer student should request to meet with the Administrator. All families that receive Tuition referrals are asked to consider a donation of that amount to support our tuition assistance students.

Tuition for Transfer Students: Students enrolling or withdrawing during the school year need to meet with the Administrator and/or the Treasurer to determine total fees due. For students transferring to another school, all fees due must be paid before Westside Christian will release school records.

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is critical for healthy schools and is a cornerstone of excellence in education. Westside Christian School is dependent on parents, guardians, and/or grandparents to volunteer in a variety of ways to support the wellbeing of the school and student body. Parents, guardians, and grandparents are encouraged to share hobbies, talents, occupations, skills, and to serve with and for our students.

Parent, guardian, and grandparent volunteerism is what allows us to offer tuition that is affordable to families. Tuition payments simply do not cover the costs that we have. Therefore, we depend not only on God's blessing through the generous donations of others, but through the hard work of parents, guardians and grandparents to not only keep our school operating, but to enrich the lives of our students. All parents having students in WCS are members of the Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF) and are encouraged to attend meetings and activities.

Parents, grandparents and/or guardians are required to either contribute ministry hours annually to the school or pay a non-participation fee of \$500 for the 2020-2021 school year.

Families are expected to donate a minimum of 40 ministry hours at the school or in relationship with school activities each year. Activities include, but are not limited to the following: Sharing a hobby, talent, or occupation with a classroom or the student body, helping with library check out, lunch room or recess supervision, preparing teacher projects at home, organizing service projects for the school, driving for field trips, attending PTF meetings, cutting out or laminating, assisting the teacher in the classroom. If you are having trouble finding ways to volunteer, just ask the Head of School or board member for alternative/additional ways you can participate and make WCS great.

Families needing special accommodations to meet this obligation that cannot afford the ministry fee must meet with the Head of School for a resolution. If a specialized solution is not found, the Head of School will notify the Board for a special hearing.

Board members will communicate with families each year to find out how we can work collaboratively support the mission of the school.

Our School Rules & Policies

At Westside, the goal of our rules and policies are not just to fulfill the letter of a law, but are to meant to be used to help children learn how to honor Christ in what they say and do. The goal of our instruction is to lead children to love others and learn to be self-controlled. Our desire is to demonstrate honor to one another in Christian love. Teachers and Administration are expected to love and honor students and parents. Students are expected to love and honor those in authority at

school. Parents are expected to love and honor other students, teachers and administration as well. Respect is to be modeled by all who enter Westside, whether parents or students, teachers, or visitors.

Students are expected to have prompt obedience to all those in authority at school- teachers, parents helping at the school, administration, and even volunteers assisting at school. Respect is expected in all areas of the school and community. The hope and desire is that respect be cultivated in the inner spirit and demonstrated through the tone of voice, facial expression and content of speech. Conversations are expected to be constructive, friendly, and wholesome. Foul language, gossip and degrading names will not be tolerated. Courtesy and respect to all is expected.

Absences/Make-Up Work: The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the critical nature of elementary students attending school in-person. Attendance and classroom participation is critical to learning at this level.

Extra precautions will be taken to ensure that students attending school are in good health before, during, and after school. Parents are expected to keep students home when having symptoms that might be contagious-- such as a fever, headache, sore throat, cough, fatigue, nausea/vomiting, or diarrhea.

It is critical to ensure the health and wellbeing of others by making sure children stay home when they do not feel well. As we move into this new era where students will likely miss more school due exposure and symptoms, it is even more critical for parents to schedule trips and vacations, appointments, etc. outside regular school hours and days whenever possible.

We will of necessity learn to work more flexibly with students staying home for health reasons. We will not be able to cater to vacations and non-essential loss of learning in the same way. Students will be expected to complete all assignments when in good health within a period equal to the time missed. Loss of learning due to potential COVID-19 will be handled on an individual basis.

Parents should inform the teacher in advance if a child will be absent or dismissed early for any reason.

Attendance: For the purpose of counting perfect attendance, there are no excused absences. Children are counted tardy if they are not in their classroom at 8:15.

Absences, tardies, or appointments should be reported to the school office or classroom teacher by 8:15 am each school day.

Before-School Supervision: Student supervision begins at 7:45 am. Students should not be delivered before 7:45 am. All WCS students will enter the school's automatic double door entrance. **The automatic doors will be locked at 8:45 am.** If a student comes after that time, an adult must call the school office and sign their student in at the school office.

After-School Supervision: Student supervision ends at 3:30 pm. A student not picked up by 3:30 will be taken to the Extended School Day program and be charged \$25 tuition rate per occurrence. Parents will be expected to sign them out from the program.

Cell Phone Use: Student cell phones must be turned off before, during, and after the school day and left in his/her backpack. Students are not to take out their cell phones for calling, emailing, using the Internet, texting, taking pictures, or any other purpose before school, during school, on field trips, during community service days, or after the school day. If a cell phone is seen or heard during school hours it will be taken and may be picked up by the parent at the end of the day. If it is suspected that a cell phone has been used by the student during the school day, the school reserves the right to search the device.

Change of Student Information: The school must be informed IMMEDIATELY of any change of address, phone number or other information. All children must have registration papers, a current immunization record or waiver, an official copy of the student's Birth Certificate, and an Emergency Health Card in their student records.

Dress Code: Outward appearance is not the primary focus at Westside Christian. Since God is primarily focused on the heart, that is what we promote amongst the students. Outward appearance in school is only relevant in that it is not to be a distraction to learning or in any way draw attention away from learning.

Dressing children in modest, clean, comfortable clothing that is weather appropriate for the whole school day is important to the learning environment of all students. The following will be enforced to prevent distraction to learning:

- Logos, writing, and pictures on clothing must not be contradictory to Christian values or be a distraction.
- Shorts, pants, skirts, and shirts should fit appropriately. Midriffs must be covered. Underwear must not be visible. Shoulder straps should be at least tank top width.
- Shorts may be worn the first 8 weeks and last 8 weeks of the school calendar when the weather is appropriate.
- Headgear such as caps, hats, scarves, kerchiefs, hoods, or bandanas are not to be worn inside the building.
- Hairstyles that cause distraction to the learning environment are not allowed.

Children wearing questionable clothing will be required to change at the discretion of the teachers or the Principal. Parents are expected to support the school's decision to enforce the dress policies in order to maintain a focus on learning.

Drop Off/Pick Up Procedures: *We will have the most efficient and safe student drop off and pick up if everyone follows the same procedures.*

- **The driver at the front of the line should pull up underneath the canopy.**
- **Each driver must pull all the way forward so that the line of cars will not go down to the street.**
- **If in line, parents should not leave their car for any reason. If you need to get out of the car, you need to park in the lot.**
- **If your child tends to need or take more time, please park in the lot and wait to receive him/her rather than holding up the line. This will allow the traffic to flow and most**

students to be dropped off and/or picked up at once.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies. Appointments should be made with the Head of School for review of student records.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

Schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31): school officials with legitimate educational interest; other schools to which a student is transferring; specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes; appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student; organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school; accrediting organizations; to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law.

Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification is left to the discretion of each school. For additional information or technical assistance, you may call (202) 260-3887 (voice). Individuals who use TDD may call the Federal Information Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339. Or you may contact us at the following address: Family Policy Compliance Office; U.S. Department of Education; 400 Maryland Avenue, SW; Washington, D.C. 20202-5920.

Health and Illness of Students: It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to make the school aware of any and all health-related concerns or conditions their child may have. Parents are expected to keep students home when having symptoms that might be contagious-- such as a fever, headache, sore throat, cough, fatigue, nausea/vomiting, or diarrhea. They should notify the school of their symptoms as soon as possible. If a child is given a fever reducer before school, they must stay home. If a child is given pain reliever before school for any purpose, they must communicate with

the office about the situation. Failure to report known communicable diseases to the school is taken very seriously. Due to the pandemic, daily procedures are in place at school and required at home as well.

Before each school day, the school expects that parents will do the following:

1. Check for Symptoms of Illness

- **Fever or chills**

*If your child has a fever of **100.4 or higher** or chills, keep them home until they have been **fever-free for 24 hours without a fever reducer.***

Other Serious Communicable Disease Symptoms

- Fatigue, muscle or body aches
- New onset of headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- New Sore throat
- New onset or worsening cough or shortness of breath
- **Nausea or vomiting (Stay Home for 24 hours from last episode of vomiting)**
- **Diarrhea (Stay Home for 24 hours from last episode of diarrhea)**

If your child has any of the symptoms in red above, you may not send your child to school until that symptom has been absent for 24 hours without medication of any kind.

REPORT YOUR CHILD'S ILLNESS: Call the school right away and keep your child home until they are feeling better.

During the time of the pandemic, the school will administer and monitor temperature checks when concerns arise. All students suspected of being ill while at school will be taken to an area of "isolation" away from other students and staff while determining what a child's symptoms are. Parents will be notified if their child's temperature is 100.4 or higher and will be required to come and pick their child up from the school within one hour of notification. If he/she cannot be reached, the child's emergency contacts will be notified to come and get the sick child.

Common Communicable Diseases Policy

- RSV- requires a doctor's note before returning to school.
- "PINK EYE" CONJUNCTIVITIS Incubation period: 24-72 hours Communicability: While signs/symptoms are present Signs/symptoms: Tearing, irritation, puffy eyelids, mucus and pus-like drainage, and intolerance to light. Policy: Child is to stay home until drainage stops or after 24 hours of appropriate antibiotic treatment.
- RINGWORM Scalp Incubation period: 10-14 days - 6 - Body Incubation period: 4-10 days Communicability: As long as lesions are present and living spores persist on contamination materials. Signs/symptoms: Scalp: Small pimple-like lesion that spreads leading to scaly

patches and causing temporary baldness. Body: Flat, spreading lesion. Policy: Child is to stay home as long as lesions are present and living spores persist.

- IMPETIGO Incubation period: 4-10 days Communicability: As long as lesions continue to drain. Self-infection may continue for a period of nasal colonization or duration of active lesions. Signs/symptoms: Superficial: vesicular pustular and encrusted stages. Policy: Child is to stay home during draining stages of infection.
- CHICKEN POX Incubation period: 2-3 weeks or 13-17 days Communicability: As long as five days before eruption and not more than five days after the last eruption. Signs/symptoms: Elevated temperature and rash. Policy: Child may return to school after all lesions have crusted over.
- STREP THROAT Incubation period: From 2-5 days Communicability: During the acute phase of respiratory illness. Signs/symptoms: Sore throat, difficulty swallowing, swollen glands. Policy: Children may return to school after receiving antibiotic therapy for at least 24 hours.
- PEDICULOSIS (HEAD LICE) Incubation period: Eggs of lice usually hatch in a week - 7 - Communicability: As long as lice or eggs remain alive on the infested person or in clothing. Signs/symptoms: Severe itching and excoriation of scalp or body. Adult lice and nymph are very small, 1-2mm long, and gray-tan in color. Eggs are about ½ the size and attach firmly to the hair shaft. Policy: It is recommended that the child be treated via his/her family physician. The child may return to school 48 hours after treatment with no lice present. The child may return sooner with a doctor's note verifying that the child no longer has lice.
- RASH: If your child has a rash of any kind that develops, the school may require you to get a note from a physician to assure the school that the rash is not contagious.

Hours: School begins at 8:15 am and ends at 3:15 pm. Students may arrive at 7:45 and should be picked up by 3:30.

Injuries: The school will notify parents as soon as possible if a head or other serious injury occurs at school. The school will not call parents for smaller incidents such as falls, scrapes, and cuts with no apparent other injury.

Library Policy: Library books can only be checked out by students during library time on Friday, with the exception of reference material to be used in the classroom. Library books are due on Thursdays. Parents will be notified if a book becomes overdue. Parents will be charged the replacement cost of lost or damaged books.

Lost But Found: Lost, but found items are located near the automatic entrance of the school. Students are responsible for their own belongings. Items not claimed are donated to charity regularly.

Lunch: School lunches are provided by Active Generations. Parents will be responsible to pre-purchase lunches if they want to order a lunch for their child. Each morning as students arrive they will designate whether they are eating a hot lunch or whether they brought a lunch. Parents will be responsible to pay for lunch orders made by their students in error.

Medications: Prescription or non-prescription medicine is not permitted to be administered during the school day without a medication administration form signed by the parent/guardian with all of

the materials needed and with specific details in regard to dosage, time, etc. Medication must be in the original container with the doctor's instructions for prescriptions. No medications will be provided by the school. Cough Drops will only be allowed for a limited time with a written note from the parent. They will not be allowed without a written note from a parent/guardian.

Pandemic Protocol: During the time of the pandemic, the school has developed additional protocol for the safety and wellbeing of students and staff. Additional cleaning and sanitizing of classroom surfaces have been added to each school day. Additional handwashing and sanitizing are built into the school day. Classroom groups are socially distanced during school-wide activities with the 15 minute guideline for potential exposure to prevent the spread of COVID-19 between groups of students.

Parking in Front of School:

- **No one is permitted to park in front of the school doors or in the driveway on either side of the circle drive at any time before, during, or after the school day.**
- **The circle drive is only for before and after school pick-up and drop-off. All parents and visitors are expected to park in the parking lot.**
- **NO STUDENT SHOULD EVER WALK TO OR FROM THE PARKING LOT WITHOUT AN ADULT.**

Recess: All students must go outside for recess unless they have a signed slip from their parents stating a medical reason that they cannot go outside. A doctor's note is required if a child needs to stay inside for a prolonged period of days. In the event of inclement weather, the whole school would stay indoors at the discretion of the administrator. Students are expected to follow all recess rules.

Safe Driving: Please double-check before pulling out of line or backing up. Remember that little people are difficult to see. Reckless driving will not be allowed in the parking lot. Parents must follow the school traffic plan for entering and exiting the circle drive and the parking lot.

School Closings: School closing due to inclement weather will be announced on KSFY TV, KELO TV, and KNWC Radio. Families will be contacted by text message or phone call. Westside Christian follows the Sioux Falls Christian School closing schedule, early dismissals, and late starts related to weather. Parents are encouraged to use their own discretion regarding attendance when the weather is questionable.

One Hour Late Start: Classes begin at 9:15 am.

Two Hour Late Start: Classes begin at 10:15 am.

One Hour Early Dismissal: Dismiss at 2:15 pm.

Two Hour Early Dismissal: Dismiss at 1:15 pm.

School Records: The school must be informed IMMEDIATELY of any change of address, phone number or other information. All children must have registration papers, current immunization records or waivers, a copy of the student's Birth Certificate, and an Emergency Health Card in their student records.

Soft Drinks: Soft drinks will only be allowed in special circumstances for parties or meals purchased and eaten with a parent present. In these circumstances, the teacher or administrator must grant

special permission.

Tardies: Students arriving late to school not only cause an interruption to the school, but the student misses out on valuable learning experiences. They begin the day with confusion. Students are expected to be seated and ready to begin at the start of the school day. Elementary students are not typically the responsible party for a tardy, and these early habits often carry over into patterns of late behavior that can cause unsuccessful behavior throughout a child's life. The principal may require a special meeting with parents for chronic tardiness.

Tardies related to weather, driving conditions, or unforeseen events may be excused at the discretion of the Administrator. In cases of severe weather conditions the Administrator may suspend tardies. Participation in a carpool is not a cause for excuse unless the above conditions are a factor.

Technology Fees & Use: The school may from time to time, determine that technology fees are necessary. The school board adopted an annual technology fee beginning with the 2020-21 school year of \$75/year.

All parents and students must sign a technology use agreement before being allowed to use technology at Westside. All students are expected to use the devices as specified by their teachers. Though the school has safeguards and filters to protect students against inappropriate material, the school will not be held responsible for student misuse of a device. If a student is found to be misusing their device either through inappropriate searches, mistreatment of a device, or any other inappropriate manner, there will be a determination by the teacher and principal for consequence or terms of loss.

Visitors, Safety & Security:

SAFETY of our students and teachers are our first and highest priority. All visitors coming during the school day, should go to the single door closest to the school office. Visitors will need to:

1. **CALL: 605-221-4220** upon arrival or **knock at the single door nearest the school office** to gain access into the building.
2. **Report to the school office, get temperature screened, sign the Visitor's Log, and wear a mask before entering the school.**

This year, we are encouraging parents who wish to have lunch with their student(s) to make arrangements ahead of time and take their child out to lunch. If you want to have lunch with your child at school, you will not be permitted to enter the lunch room, but will be asked to come to the cafe area and meet your child there after following the visitor protocol.

For the safety and security of our students we have cameras installed at the front door and in the hallways where students are regularly present. To protect the health of our students and staff during Pandemic, we will require all guests to sign in, mask, and get their temperature checked in the school office before allowing access to the building.

Our Building Rules

We are guests in our facility and will in all ways be respectful of the rules and regulations of our

facility. The facility, its property, the property of the school, and individuals should be treated with respect. Borrowing someone's possessions or supplies without their permission is stealing. Defacement or destruction of any property is vandalism.

1. We are also not permitted to prepare food in the kitchen for school lunches. This includes warming up meals for students. Please send meals that are fully prepared and do not need warming.
2. Students are expected to walk throughout the building. Running is not allowed. They should remember the school is also a church building and should be treated respectfully.
3. When going to lunch, gym, music, recess, etc., students will walk in an orderly line led by the teacher.
4. Students are expected to move quietly from place to place.
5. Personal items must be removed from the halls at the end of each school day.
7. Gum chewing is not allowed.
8. Wheelies, roller blades, skates, skateboards, and other similar devices will not be allowed.
9. Electronic devices, toys, and other items from home will not be allowed in school. All toys with the exception of those brought in for "Show and Tell" or special days determined by the school should be left at home.
10. Pet visits will not be allowed for the 2020-21 school year due to COVID-19 potential exposure.

Our Lunchroom Expectations

We know that lunch is one of the most important social times in a student's day. We also know that it can also be the most challenging, because sometimes there is so much going on during lunch that students can actually forget to eat. At Westside, we want to respect the needs of students both to be social and also to be sure they have time to actually eat.

1. Students are allowed to visit quietly for several minutes.
2. After the first several minutes of lunch, students will be asked and expected to quiet down and enjoy their lunch.
3. Directions of the lunch supervisors are to be followed before, during, and after lunch.

Our Playground Expectations

Recess is also one of the most important parts of a student's day. We have so much room to play at Westside, that we encourage a wide variety of games, sports, and activities. We also look for a balance in play of organized versus free-play. We want to encourage students to incorporate what we are learning during our PE into recess in order to encourage students to practice and engage in new activities. Morning and afternoon recesses will be taken directly outside the classrooms to the west of the building. Lunch recess will be taken to the south of the building where the playground equipment is. In the winter we will have sledding directly to the north of the building.

1. Directions of the playground supervisor are to be followed.
2. Parents and grandparents are always welcome to come for recess. This year, social distancing will be an important part of joining us for recess.
3. Games or use of equipment deemed dangerous by the supervisor are prohibited.
4. Throwing of snowballs, rocks, sticks, etc. is prohibited.
5. Harmful physical contact (wrestling, kicking, hitting, fighting, and king of the mountain) are prohibited.
6. Play around muddy or wet areas is prohibited.

7. Please be sure students remember appropriate clothing for wet days, cold days, and especially snowy days. Appropriate clothing is necessary, including boots and snow pants for play in the snow. If a student does not have boots or snow pants when there is snow on the ground, they will have to stay on the concrete pad.
9. If students are arguing about a game, the game will be discontinued until determined by the playground supervisor(s).

Our Restroom Rules

1. Student privacy is important. Students should respect one another's privacy while using the restroom.
2. During class, only one student at a time will be allowed to go to the restroom and shall use the facility closest to their class unless occupied.
3. Students shall strive to maintain cleanliness by placing paper in the proper containers, using care while using the restroom and flushing the toilet or urinal after use.
4. Students are required to wash their hands with soap and water following use of the bathrooms.
5. Graffiti and other inappropriate use of the restroom is a major offense.
6. Loud or rowdy behavior is not allowed in the restroom.

Our Discipline Philosophy

Loving discipline is essential for all children to feel secure in the learning environment. It is important that children know and understand what behavior is expected in school. At Westside Christian, we look to the Bible for principles of discipline. Prayer is always included with each step:

- The voice of instruction. Training that develops self-control and character. The child must know the rules and why they are important.
- Correction. Strong admonition. Rebuke. Strong advice. Prayer. The child is corrected more than once before punishment.
- Consequence. Consequences fit the offense and are fair. Punishment is always due when there is rebellion. The goal is always to bring correction to the heart.

Our Discipline Process

- All students have a right to feel safe and secure and to learn.
- All students must be held responsible for their own behavior.
- No student has the right to deprive another student of feeling safe or of learning.

Westside Christian's discipline plan is designed to provide students with an opportunity to learn from their behavior, reflect on how it affected others, to restore relationships and to make restitution for those affected by their behavior. Students will be held accountable for their behavior at school and parents will be expected to support the school if it determines a student is in need of consequences.

Minor offenses: The teacher or other adult in charge will handle minor offenses. Minor offenses usually involve instruction and correction. When a minor offense is repeated it becomes a major offense. Discipline is the responsibility of all staff, not just the classroom teacher and the student is expected to obey instructions promptly. If a parent observes a need for discipline, they should bring it to the attention of the teacher in charge at the time of the incident.

Major offenses: The teacher will report the following offenses to the Principal. The Principal will conference with the student to work toward restoration and restitution for those affected by the offense. Parents will be informed either in writing, by phone, or email either by the Classroom Teacher or Principal. A Stop and Think Report may be sent to parents to review with the student. Parents are encouraged to discuss and pray with the student about the incident, and sign and return the Report to the school.

The Principal will determine the severity and consequence according to the severity and scope of the offense. The following will be considered major offenses:

- fighting, hitting, kicking or other physical abuse
- disrespect or arguing with an adult
- name calling, profanity or inappropriate language
- throwing rocks, sticks, snowballs
- other dangerous behavior
- continued disruptive behavior
- continued failure to follow classroom rules
- destruction of property
- inappropriate cell phone use
- bullying
- fire alarm

Serious offenses: Any inappropriate sexual behavior, intimidation, or threat on a person's life or wellbeing may result in an immediate suspension as deemed appropriate by the Principal. Police, Mental Health, and Child Welfare referrals may be required to address the needs of the student as deemed necessary by the Principal.

