

Grace Lutheran PreK & Kindergarten



Parent/Student Handbook 2025-2026

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Purpose, Philosophy, and Goals

The purpose of Grace Lutheran School is to offer its children a quality, Christ-centered education that prepares them for this life and the life to come. Our school ministers to the entire child, with concern for his/her salvation in Christ as its core purpose. Its secondary important focus is to educate and train the child in academics from a solidly Christian perspective. God and his Word are the common foundation of our work together as families and as a school.

Our philosophy is that our children are a precious gift given to us by God. Along with this gift, parents are given the important responsibility to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 4:6). Parents are to teach their children to use their time, talents, and treasures to the glorify God in a life of faithful service. Grace Lutheran School has been established to assist parents in this endeavor.

Our objectives include supporting the preaching mission of the Grace Lutheran Church, supporting the Christian home and family, helping students to discover, appreciate, and develop the gifts given to them by God, and to use these gifts in service to him.

Our goals can be summed up under the following points.

1. Proclaim the Gospel so that the entire family might personally know Jesus as their Savior and be nurtured in that faith.
2. Provide students with a solid foundation in God's Word.
3. Study all subjects from a Christian point of view and carry out all activities with Christian character.
4. Strive for academic excellence while helping each student develop according to the gifts given to him/her by God.
5. Provide students with guidance and knowledge needed to grow spiritually, academically, socially, and physically all to the glory of God.
6. Maintain Washington State approval for our school program while continuing a high scholastic standard.

A Tradition of Excellence

Grace Lutheran School is part of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) School System. The WELS has a rich tradition of academic excellence in its PreK through Grade 12 school system. The WELS has operated highly regarded schools across the United States, the Caribbean, and elsewhere in the world for over 150 years. Currently, WELS churches and associations operate 369 early childhood centers, 281 elementary schools, 28 high schools, and 2 colleges. Grace Lutheran School of Yakima is part of this heritage, i.e. the fourth largest private school system in America.

The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod has provided excellent instructors to its schools by training its own teachers since 1884. It is gratifying to report that, on average, students attending WELS schools typically outperform their peers by a considerable margin on national achievement tests. We humbly thank God for his blessings upon our schools. Grace Lutheran School is proud to continue this rich tradition of academic excellence in the Yakima Valley for over 60 years.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Grace Lutheran School admits students of any race, color, national, or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions, and other school-administered programs.

Management and Supervision

Grace Lutheran School is part of the ministry of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church and is at all times under the control of this congregation. Our school is under the direct supervision of the Grace Ev. Lutheran Church Leadership Team, which acts by the authority of the voters of the Grace congregation and in accordance with its constitution.

Curriculum and Faculty

The curriculum of our school meets the requirements of the State of Washington and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Our school receives yearly approval from the Washington Superintendent of Public Instruction. The members of the teaching staff are spiritually and academically qualified to serve as teachers in our school. The school year calendar conforms to the requirements of the Washington Administration Code (WAC 180-90-150).

Learning Environment

The learning atmosphere at Grace is designed to be compassionate, relaxed and orderly – a place where instruction can take place and the joy of academic accomplishment can be experienced. In maintaining structured, disciplined classrooms, our teachers provide an educational setting where children can focus more readily, apply themselves better, and realize greater success in their quest to learn.

Enrollment

Grace Lutheran School is maintained for families who desire a sound Christian education in the Lutheran tradition, and who are willing to cooperate with the school in this endeavor. It is also necessary that we are truly able to help the students. For this reason we do not normally accept students with severe learning disabilities, discipline issues, or severe physical deficiencies. The Grace Church Leadership Team has the ultimate responsibility of determining the acceptance of students into the school. In addition, the Leadership Team may at any time determine that the enrollment of a student is no longer in the best interest of the school.

Discipline

In keeping with Grace Lutheran School's mission, staff members strive to clearly communicate classroom structure and guidelines to parents at the start of the school year. The staff assumes the role of parent when the children are left under their care each day. The teachers use their discretion whenever discipline is deemed necessary. Parents can rest assured that all discipline is carried out in the spirit of Christian love by teachers who genuinely care about each child. Discipline comes from the word "disciple" – to teach. Discipline is our way of leading children to maturity in making proper choices. Discipline, then, is viewed not as punishment, but loving correction. No form of physical, corporal, or emotionally abusive disciplinary measures are used at any time.

Grievance Procedure

Grace Lutheran School teachers and school staff work very hard to maintain an environment that nurtures excellence in our students. Differences of opinions need not create a divisive relationship between school and home. For the sake of the children, there is a mutual benefit if these differences can be resolved through communication and understanding. To work towards this common goal, the following procedure is recommended:

1. Maintaining a calm and respectful attitude that will set a tone where real listening can occur and understanding can emerge.
2. Parents or families with grievances or concerns regarding general school policies or procedures should set up a meeting with the principal (pastor) to discuss these items of concern. The principal (pastor) will then decide on the proper course of action; often through scheduling a meeting with a teacher. Concerns regarding your child's treatment or performance should be brought to his/her classroom teacher through a scheduled appointment.
3. If satisfaction is not accomplished through the aforementioned venues, then the matter may then be referred to the Grace Leadership Team.

Home to School Communication

GLS desires to build a culture where parents and teachers join hands as partners in providing the finest education possible for the young people entrusted to their care. To that end, the staff of GLS is truly committed to maintaining open channels of communication with the parents and or guardians of our students. The following items outline some of the important avenues designed to promote efficient and effective home-school communication:

Parent Orientation Night

In late August, parents are expected to meet with the principal (pastor) and teachers at a parent orientation night to discuss the school's philosophy, policies, and procedures. Classroom visitation and a question-and-answer session provide parents with helpful insights and information they will need for a successful school year. Inability to attend this meeting may require a separate visit with the staff.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Following the 1st grading period, parents are scheduled to meet with the teacher in a 20-minute conference. Discussion items include the child's progress, school disposition, and interaction with teacher and classmates. A teacher may schedule additional conferences at their discretion.

Teacher Availability

If at any time during the school year parents have questions concerning their child's progress or behavior, they are encouraged to call the teacher and arrange a mutually convenient time to meet. This may be accomplished by stopping by or calling the school or e-mailing the teacher. The teachers will

make every effort to return your call or respond to your e-mail no later than the following day.

Classroom Visitation

As part of Grace's open-door policy, parents are welcome to visit their child's classroom and see education in action. Parents may participate in the classroom activities or just come and observe. Prior to the visit, arrangements should be made with the teacher for the best time to visit so that the teacher may prepare ways to involve the parent during the visit.

Volunteering

Parents are welcome to volunteer at Grace Lutheran School. Opportunities are plentiful. Whether it's one day a month or one day a year, please consider reading a story, assisting with a small group, helping with a project, singing a song, manning the computer, or just being an extra pair of hands. Your presence enhances your life, your child's life, and our educational program as well. If interested, please contact your child's teacher. At all times we keep the safety of our students at the forefront of our minds. Therefore, volunteers must pass a background check through the Washington State Patrol WATCH program.

Periodic Teacher News

Each teacher sends home a periodic update that may include curriculum units being introduced, projects students are working on, areas of school work where parents can assist their children, or upcoming events. Additionally, student work is saved and sent home at the time specified by your child's teacher, so that parents are aware of their child's overall performance. Parent comments or questions are always welcomed.

Field Trips

Field trips are occasionally planned during the school year to enrich experiences for the children and expand their educational horizons. Careful thought goes into planning each activity to ensure its educational value and the safety of the children. Examples may include trips to theaters, farms, museums, the local library and other special events. These educational trips are planned as a supplement to our curriculum; therefore, all pupils are expected to attend such trips as part of the regular school day. Attendance is taken for field trips and recorded accordingly.

Parent volunteers are needed to assist with student supervision; consequently, all volunteers must adhere to all school policies and are under

the direct authority of the classroom teacher. Trip information and permission slip are sent home to the parents prior to each trip.

Admissions Guidelines

All new students are subject to a six-week probationary period. At the end of the six weeks the child will be evaluated by the faculty and principal in order to determine the permanent status of the child. If we cannot meet the child's behavioral, academic or spiritual needs, the parents may be advised to transfer their child to another school.

A student entering kindergarten must be 5 years old by August 31st of the current school year. A student entering 4-year-old preschool must be 4 years old by August 31st of the current school year. A student entering 3-year-old preschool must be 3 years old by August 31st of the current school year.

Exceptions to this policy may be made by the principal (pastor) in consultation with the classroom teacher and Grace Leadership Team president.

Tuition and Fees

1. Application fees are submitted with all student applications. No student will be considered for enrollment until the application form and fees are received. Application fees are non-refundable. Discounts are available for early payment.
2. Tuition is due by the 15th of each month and becomes delinquent by the 20th. A \$20 late fee may be applied to the account if no contact with the appropriate person has been made or if no payment has been processed by the 20th of the month.
3. If an academic quarter ends while an account is delinquent, the student(s) may not be accepted for the next quarter until payment or payment arrangements have been made.
4. Money received will be applied in the following order:
 - A. Prior year obligations.
 - B. Current year application fees.
 - C. Current year tuition fees.
5. Tuition fees may be paid annually or monthly over the course of ten months (August 15th to May 15th).
6. Grace Lutheran School will not enroll any student who owes tuition from

the previous year unless arrangements have been made with the Grace Leadership Team.

Attendance

We expect regular and punctual attendance of our students. Parents are required to contact the school if their child is going to be absent. In the case of kindergarteners, if the school is not contacted within 24 hours of the start of a school day then the absence will be unexcused. If a student is absent for seven consecutive days without communication from a parent or guardian, the student may be dismissed from school and the matter may be reported to the appropriate state officials.

Our school day begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at noon for preschool and kindergarten. Preschool and kindergarten students are expected to arrive at school by 8:30 a.m. Parents must arrive no later than noon (12p) to pick-up their preschool and kindergarten student(s). Before and after school care *is not* available for our students. If care is needed during non-school hours, parents must make arrangements outside of school.

Health and Safety

First Aid and CPR Certification

No one can know when CPR will be needed, but it's a skill that can be the difference between life and death. All GLS faculty and staff are CPR and first aid certified and meet American Red Cross and American Heart Association recommendations. Knowledge obtained through these courses permits GLS faculty and staff to be ready to handle emergencies due to sudden illness or injury to students.

Immunizations and Health Forms

Washington law requires that all students have the necessary forms on file by the first day of class. Students cannot begin classes at Grace without proper documentation of up-to-date immunizations. Forms are available from your doctor. An emergency card, filled out with the registration paperwork, is also required of each student.

Emergencies

Medical emergencies may, on occasion, occur at school. In the event of a life-threatening situation (i.e., unconsciousness), the school may need to contact the appropriate emergency medical service first, before calling the parents. In case of an accident or illness where immediate emergency care is not

deemed necessary, but where a child is unable to remain at school, the school will contact the parents to arrange transportation home. Likewise, if a child shows symptoms of illness during the day, the child will be isolated and the parents will be called. Parents, please remember that the school must be able to reach you at all times. If neither parent can be reached at home, work, or cell, the emergency contacts listed on the child's emergency card will be phoned and asked to pick up the child.

Serious Injury

If your child suffers a serious injury, the school will call 911, followed by the parents; provide first aid until help arrives; and determine who will accompany the injured student to the hospital. An accident report form will be completed describing the nature and extent of the injury. All head injuries that may occur will be reported to parents.

Medication

Medication which is prescribed by a physician may be administered to the student if failure to take such medication during the school day jeopardizes a student's health.

An authorization to administer oral medication shall be completed by the parent or legal guardian before any prescription medication is administered by an authorized person. Any change in dosage or directions will require completion of a new authorization by the parent. A physician's signature will be required if the prescription date is more than 12 days old.

Illness

Students with any of the following symptoms are asked to stay home from school:

- Fever of 100 °F or higher (students should be kept at home for at least twelve hours **after** the fever breaks.)
- Vomiting on two or more occasions
- Diarrhea
- Pinkeye or eye discharge
- Excessive coughing

Open sores are to be covered/bandaged.

The courtesy of a phone call to the school is expected when a student is ill and staying home from school.

Severe Weather

A severe weather warning is made when the weather service announces a severe weather watch for the area. Unless otherwise notified by the classroom teacher or principal (pastor), Grace Lutheran School will follow the Yakima Schools' announcement regarding school closure and openings.

Emergency Evacuation Drills and Reporting

In compliance with state regulations, emergency drills are performed once a month. For the safety of all, detailed drill procedures are shared and periodically reviewed in each classroom.

Snack Break

At the start of each morning recess, the children will have a short snack break. Parents are encouraged to send along nutritious, low-sugar light snacks. Soda is not allowed.

Parties

Many of the parents like to bring refreshments on their child's birthday. This may be done with prior approval from the classroom teacher. Because of time constraints, birthday celebrations at school should be kept short and simple and cannot be spontaneous. A good time to do this is right after the lunch period, if possible, or when suggested by the teacher.