

**2024-2025**

**Parent - Student**

**Handbook**

**Unity Ridge School**

**1004 1st Ave South**

**Suite B**

**Denison, IA 51442**

**712-854-0212**

**Handbook Guide**

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**MISSION STATEMENT**

**Educating in the light of God’s Word;**

**equipping all for a lifetime of Christ-centered**

**learning, leadership, and loving service.**

**HANDBOOK INTRODUCTION**

We send greetings from the Unity Ridge Board of Directors and the faculty/staff of Unity Ridge. We are happy to have you either for the first time or continuing as part of our educational ministry and mission here in Denison, Iowa.

With all groups, there are rules and guidelines to live by that give privileges and responsibilities to help you understand the guidelines that help us live together in a spirit of Christian harmony and cooperation.

Under the Gospel, we will want to do all things to the glory of God. Please become familiar with this handbook so that we may live together in happiness and in a spirit of forgiveness and love.

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

A Christian school provides the best and fullest opportunity for the education of the whole child (physical, mental, social, and spiritual) for his or her whole life. While the child studies the secular subjects, he/she is still God’s child who must learn that all knowledge and life are from God and must be used to glorify God. A Christian school provides the most desirable school situation by having the children under the influence of God’s Word every day throughout the week, in a school in which the Christian spirit is a part of all the relationships and instruction of the child.

**SPIRITUAL LIFE EXPECTATIONS**

It is our belief that Christians live their lives out of love for the Lord. We show our faith and thankfulness to God through our regular worship life. Our chapel service at school is every Wednesday morning at 8:30 a.m. Attendance is required of all students. Parents, family, and friends are welcome to join. Students will sit in their chapel family groups the majority of the time. Daily private devotions are also an important activity in the life of a child of God and are practiced in every classroom. Please contact a teacher or pastor if you need assistance in finding material or a procedure to follow for private devotions.

Pledges of allegiance to the Christian flag and to the American flag will be recited at Unity Ridge Lutheran School.

**CHAPEL FAMILIES**

Chapel families are a mixture of the older students with the younger students. It is our goal to provide a vehicle for the students to feel comfortable with relating to younger and older students as the case may apply. Older students do have a responsibility to be good role models for younger students. Older students also have many talents and abilities which can be a great service for the younger students. It is our goal to use the Chapel families concept where it is suitable for any school activity at Unity Ridge.

**ADMINISTRATION**

Unity Ridge Lutheran School is affiliated with the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. It is considered an independent recognized service organization of the LCMS.

The Board of Directors is the policy-making body for Unity Ridge Lutheran School. They are elected at the annual meeting held the second Wednesday of July. They have the fiduciary responsibilities of the school and have the ability to call and contract the faculty and staff.

The Executive Director/Principal administers and carries out board policy while making the day to day administrative decisions.

**ACCREDITATION**

Unity Ridge Lutheran School is independently accredited with the state of Iowa through National Lutheran School Accreditation. This means that Unity Ridge satisfactorily meets and exceeds the requirements of the Iowa Code, keeping in the purpose and philosophy of the school. A complete list of the standards which Unity Ridge meets for NLSA is available in the school office.

**CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

The curriculum of Unity Ridge keeps with curriculum standards suggested for Lutheran elementary, middle, and highschools. It meets all requirements for schools in the State of Iowa and qualifies its graduates to attend any post secondary program. Religion includes Bible History, Doctrine, Worship and Memory Work. Religion does include “head knowledge,” but the ultimate goal of the Religion instruction is “heart knowledge.” Heart knowledge allows a child of God to live out the Gospel joy in daily life with service to those he or she comes in contact with. Topics covered in the doctrine section include The Ten Commandments, The Lord’s Prayer, Baptism, The Lord’s Supper, The Apostle’s Creed, and Confession/Forgiveness.

The proper distinction of Law and Gospel is used as the framework for spiritual and relational growth at Unity Ridge.

**ADMISSIONS**

Admission to the school is obtained by written application, personal interview by the Principal, and previous records sent to the school. Entrance tests may also be given. The administration reserves the right to place each child in the academic level for which the child is best suited.

Applications for enrollment are accepted according to the following policy:

1. Children who were enrolled during the previous school year.

2. Children whose parents are members of LCMS congregations.

3. Children whose parents are active members of other Christian churches.

4. Children whose parents are members of no church.

Parents and children must agree to support the policies of Unity Ridge Lutheran School as outlined in this handbook and meet financial obligations to Unity Ridge to be considered for admissions.

Pupils to be enrolled in TK or Kindergarten must be at least five (5) years old by September 15. A copy of the student’s birth certificate is needed when they enter Kindergarten. Each child must present a Certificate of Immunization or waiver as required by the State of Iowa.

**NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Unity Ridge Lutheran School admits any student of any race, national and 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 and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policy, scholarship, and loan programs, athletic and other school administered programs.

**PARENT/SCHOOL FAMILY EXPECTATIONS**

This list of expectations is written to inform the parents of the school’s view of their parental responsibilities not only to their children but to the school. It is our goal to solidify the relationship of the parent to the school and vice versa by stating such expectations.

The parents are the first teachers of the child and should develop proper attitudes in the child toward their fellow man and the school.

Parental expectations are:

* To attend church and Sunday School regularly.
* To reinforce the public teaching of the Word of God through family study of the Word, family devotions, and praying together.
* Provide regular study time at home for homework and other out of school preparations for the school day.
* See to it that each child in the family has proper rest and recreation in the family schedule for a healthy balance of activities in his/her life.
* Accept Unity Ridge Lutheran School as an extension of the Christian home, not as an experiment which must prove itself.
* Show respect toward teachers and pastors as servants of God.
* Support the teacher’s judgment in front of the child and the public in regard to discipline matters.
* Support the policies and philosophies of Unity Ridge as written in this handbook or as you have been notified in front of the child and the public.
* Use the guidelines of Matthew 18 if you disagree with a policy or actions taken at the school. For Unity Ridge, this means you should first discuss the matter with the person involved, then the principal, then the executive director, and if the matter needs future attention, the Board of Directors. The executive director will notify the Board of your desire to meet with them.
* Attend activities of your child as much as possible.
* Attend parent-school meetings and social gatherings.
* Work at school and PTL fundraisers.
* Be responsible for regular school attendance of your child.
* Children will be instructed in the teachings of the Lutheran Church, which are taken from the Word of God. Parents who are not members of LCMS congregations are encouraged to take an adult instruction class to be aware of what is being taught to their child at Unity Ridge Lutheran School.
* Do everything possible to support the Christian instruction, which their child is receiving.
* Do what is necessary to see to it that their son/daughter comply with all the rules and regulations of the school.
* Be aware of the child’s participation in the school choir, school programs, and other activities as approved by the Board of Directors.
* Do their best to promote and support Unity Ridge Lutheran School and its Mission Statement.

**STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

**SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

Regular school attendance is expected of all children. Students who are absent more than 10% of the scheduled school days may be in jeopardy of class advancement.

Parents should notify the teacher as soon as possible if they know their son or daughter will be missing school. Parents will be called if the student is absent and the office or teacher has not heard from the parent by 8:30 a.m.

If possible, doctor and dentist appointments should be scheduled after school or on non-school days.

A student will be counted a one-half day absence if they are an hour and a half late, leave an hour and a half early, or miss an hour and a half of school during the day.

A written note or a phone call before 8:30 a.m. of the day missed is the appropriate method of notification for full day absences, early departures, appointments, etc. Unexcused absences are when no phone call, personal contact with the teacher or a written note is received before 8:30 a.m. Also, if a parent states that it is unexcused. Missed class time may be made up in detention or Saturday school. Credit for school work will not be given.

A student must be in attendance for the half day after lunch to participate in practice, athletic games or school activities after school. The principal may make exceptions where appropriate.

Work needs to be made up ahead of time or arrangements made with the teacher when a family trip is planned.

**CHURCH ATTENDANCE**

Students are expected to attend church and Sunday School regularly. A record of church and Sunday School attendance is kept by the teachers. This record is indicated on the report card and the permanent record.

**PUNCTUALITY**

The school day is from 8:10 a.m. to 3:20 p.m. Students need to be in their assigned classroom (and possibly assigned seat if the teacher so indicates) by 8:10 a.m. Failure to be in the appropriate place by 8:10 a.m. will constitute an unexcused tardy.

Three unexcused tardies (as defined by the classroom teacher) for school and/or a class in one quarter for grades 4-12 will result in a detention. A note will be sent home by the teacher or the office for the first three unexcused tardies. The office will contact the home of students if the problem persists. After a second detention for unexcused tardies in a quarter, the student may be subject to suspension from school and/or extra curricular activities.

**BEFORE SCHOOL HOURS**

Students may enter the North door of the school after 7:30. No student will be admitted before that time unless they are signed up for Before Care and are paying. Students must remain in the gym unless they are eating breakfast. Breakfast hours are from 7:30-8:00.

School starts at 8:10 a.m. Teachers are required to be in their respective classroom after faculty devotions. Students are to go quietly and directly to their classroom upon arrival at school. Permission is needed to leave the classroom before school. Students must follow the before school rules as outlined by their teacher.

**BEFORE CARE**

Families may sign up for Before Care to help with morning routine. Parents need to sign up in advance with the Early Childhood Director in order to save a spot. Before Care hours are 6:00-8:00. Breakfast will be available to Before Care students as long as their Breakfast/Lunch Accounts are in good standing. The cost for Before Care is $5 per day per student. Payment will not be taken at the door or when the student arrives. The monthly total and payment will be made through the Brightwheel App.

**AFTER SCHOOL HOURS**

Students will be dismissed by their respective classroom teacher. Parents are asked to not come in and take their child(ren) before this dismissal unless this has been pre-arranged with the teacher and/or principal.

All children will quietly leave the building after they are dismissed unless they have special permission from the teacher or principal to remain later. Children must leave the school premises immediately after dismissal. .

Children being picked up by the bus will leave from the south gym door. Students riding in personal vehicles will leave from the north door. Those walking will leave from the south gym door. Students must follow the after school rules as outlined by their teachers.

**AFTER CARE**

Families may sign up for After Care to help with their after school routine. Parents need to sign up in advance with the Early Childhood Director in order to save a spot. After Care hours are 3:20-5:30. If After Care students are on the playground, parents may check them out with the outside supervisor. While in the building, After Care students will be located in the cafeteria. The cost of After Care is $5 per day per student. Payment will not be taken at pickup. The monthly total and payment will be made through the Brightwheel App.

**SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR**

Students should:

* Exhibit a positive Christian spirit in his/her everyday life at Unity Ridge.
* Respect themselves and others.
* Meet all their responsibilities and obligations on time.
* Use their God-given abilities and talents to the glory of God.
* Follow the directions of the teacher or adult in charge.
* Not chew gum in the building or on school grounds.
* WALK through the hallways and classrooms quietly.
* Toss, throw or bounce balls only in the gym or outside areas designated by the teacher.
* Not loiter or make noise in the restrooms.
* Not play any of the school pianos without the permission of a teacher.
* Not eat candy and snacks during the school day unless it is part of a classroom celebration where all the children are to be included or approved by the teacher (lunch period is an exception).
* Not leave the school grounds during school hours without written or telephone request from a parent or guardian to the teacher or principal. Parents should pick up their son or daughter in their classroom. Full responsibility rests with the pupil and parent after the child leaves the school grounds.
* Address adults with the proper title: Mrs., Miss, Mr., Pastor, etc.
* Practice common courtesies of saying please, thank you, excuse me and so forth.
* Not throw rocks or snowballs.
* Not hang on the basketball rims or backboards.
* Stay out of the PE storage rooms unless permission has been given by the teacher and/or coach.
* Not be in the other classrooms or library without the permission of that classroom’s teacher. This includes after school hours as well as the academic day.
* Not be in the gym without the supervision of a teacher and/or coach. This includes after school hours as well as the academic day.

**RELATIONSHIPS**

Students are to be respectful and kind to one another. Conflict should be addressed first between the students and involve the respective teacher/teachers when necessary. If no resolution is met, a written statement may be submitted to the principal for further conflict resolution.

**HALLWAY MOVEMENT**

Students are to walk through the hallways without talking during the academic day. Hands are to be kept to oneself. Groups are to walk in a line if the teacher so directs.

**SCHOOL OFFICE**

Students are not to be in the business office area unless permission is granted from the secretary, a teacher, or the principal. Students are to take money and medications to the office before or after school or as directed by their respective teacher.

**APPEARANCE**

It is our desire for students, staff and faculty to reflect their Christian faith in their appearance. Proper dress also enhances the educational climate of Unity Ridge Lutheran School. Modesty in dress, cleanliness, neatness, and cooperation with the guidelines below are our goals. The appearance guidelines apply to students in all grades. These guidelines apply to the academic day as well as school sponsored activities. Exceptions for school activities, such as National Lutheran School Week dress up days, will be so stated when activity information is handed out. These dress code guidelines apply to all students in TK-12 grade.

Parents should be aware of what their children are wearing. Clothing should be appropriate for the weather and activity of that day. Parents should also be aware of PE days for proper footwear. Clothing should appropriately cover the body and fit properly. Clothing should not create health or injury concerns or distract from the learning process.

Pants, shorts and skirts are to be worn at waist level. Jean shorts should be hemmed. Shirts are to cover the midriff area and shoulders. Spaghetti straps are not to be worn. Insignias, symbols, or advertising on clothing should be within the philosophy of living out a Christian lifestyle.

Shoes should be worn at all times. Sandals with backs may be worn. If shoes do not fit properly or are not secured and come off or are kicked off throughout the day, parents will be notified and new shoes will be needed. Tennis shoes are required for physical education class.

Students are expected to keep their hair neat and well-groomed. The style and color of hair should not be distracting to the learning process or call undue attention to the individual. Head coverings are not allowed in the building. Other than ears, no body piercing is acceptable by anyone. Special attention should also be given to appearance when the student athletes travel to play in games or tournaments. This is also true for other public performances of Unity Ridge and field trips. The student is representing not only him or herself, but the entire school. Chapel shirts should be worn when Unity Ridge has a chapel service. Please label all children’s belongings. A lost and found will be kept in the school office.

Please check with the principal beforehand if you have a question in regards to dress and/or appearance. The school reserves the right to make final decisions on what is and is not acceptable to be worn at school.

**DAMAGES**

Students who lose or damage textbooks or school property will be required to reimburse the school for the loss. Students will be held responsible for school facilities which are deliberately or carelessly defaced, damaged or marred. Classes or groups of students may be charged on a per capita basis if the situation allows for such. Registration and school attendance for the next academic year will occur when previous financial obligations have been met.

**RECESS/PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

If a student has been ill or injured and needs to remain in the room during recess or sit out of Physical Education class, a note from the parent or doctor should request such. Otherwise, students will be expected to go outside for recess with the class or to participate in Physical Education class.

Christian sportsmanship and fair play must prevail at all times on the playground. No fighting or friendly wrestling will be allowed.

Students may only be in areas designated by the teacher or playground supervisor.

Playthings should not be brought to school for recess. Water guns, balloons, and other items for water fights will not be allowed on school grounds. Baseballs may not be used. No use of bicycles, skateboards, etc. may be used at recess.

The list of what one can or can not have on the school grounds could go on and on, therefore, the teacher or principal will use judgment as to the items not listed above and whether they are appropriate or not for recess play.

**LUNCH ROOM DECORUM**

Children will eat in the area designated by their teacher. Classes will come together as a group and sit as such. Care should be given so food is not wasted. Students should return the tray, silverware, etc. properly to the designated area when directed to do so by the teacher. The area where the students sit should be cleaned up before leaving the area. Classes will return to the classroom or out to recess as a group.

No pop or other carbonated beverages are allowed during the lunch period. Students who are allergic to milk need to have a doctor’s note stating such for the student to receive an alternative beverage in place of milk with hot lunch. Water is always available at lunch.

Students may visit quietly during lunchtime. Students are to remain in their original seat and not get up without permission. Classroom discipline sanctions will be applied during the lunch period. Failure to function cooperatively in the lunch room will result in the student eating by him or herself in an area designated by the teacher or principal.

**BICYCLES, MOPEDS, & VEHICLES**

Bicycles, mopeds, & vehicles are to be used only as transportation to and from the school. They should be parked and locked at the designated area on the south side of the school. Parents should instruct their children regarding the “rules of the road.” Students who persist in disregarding safety regulations or show reckless tendencies may lose the privilege of riding or driving to school.

**PHONE USE**

Children may use the phone in the office for important matters and with the permission of their teacher or coach. Forgetting PE clothes, instruments, and/or homework are NOT considered matters which warrant a phone call home. Cell phones will not be tolerated during school hours. All phones must be turned off and put in the student’s backpack or cubby. If the student has a phone, it will be confiscated and returned after school. The parents will be notified. After the second abuse, the student will receive a detention. If the problem continues, the consequences will escalate to ISS, OSS, and expulsion.

**MONEY**

Students should only bring money when necessary. Students bringing money to school for any payment or purchases should give the money immediately to their respective teacher in the morning.

**INAPPROPRIATE ITEMS AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Toys and novelty items are considered inappropriate during the academic day. The teacher or principal will use judgment as to items which may be considered appropriate or inappropriate. This includes in the classroom and during recess. Items considered inappropriate will be taken away and the parents may pick up such items. Please check with the principal beforehand if you have a question about whether an item is appropriate or not.

Electronic devices such as iPads, iPods, etc. may only be used for instructional purposes when designated and allowed by the teacher.

Cell phones are to be turned off and kept in book bags or cubbies from 8:10 a.m. - 3:20 p.m. Special rules regarding cell phones and field trips will be announced by the respective teacher. A cell phone will be confiscated if it appears to be disruptive to the academic environment.

Primary grades (TK-3) will designate special days and times when children may bring “show and tell” items.

Knives, matches and lighters, guns, gun look-alikes, alcohol, tobacco products and drugs are not to be in possession of students at any time.

**MEDICINE**

Any medication to be taken by a student during school day should be brought in the original container with instructions concerning the dosage and time at which the medicine should be taken. THIS INCLUDES TYLENOL, IBUPROFEN AND ASPIRIN. Staff may only administer medication as prescribed by the doctor as stated on the prescription bottle. Students are not to have any medicine at their desks with the exception of cough drops and/or inhalers. All medicine must be given to the school office and a form filled out at the office. There is NO Tylenol, ibuprofen or aspirin on hand for general use. Each parent should make arrangements to have over-the-counter medication available if their child uses it on a fairly regular basis. All medication will be kept in the office in a designated and locked location. Medications must be picked up at the end of the last school day of the year. If medications are not taken they will be discarded.

**ACADEMICS**

**GRADING SCALE (GRADES 2-12)**

A: 92% or better

B: 83% - 91%

C: 74% - 82%

D: 65% - 73%

**HOMEWORK**

The academic program at Unity Ridge Lutheran School requires that some study be done at home. Amounts will vary according to the grade level of the child and the ability and study habits of the child in school. Each teacher will announce his or her classroom management plan in dealing with unexcused missing and/or unacceptable homework.

There will be times when a student honestly will not understand how to do his or her assignment. Family emergencies and sometimes scheduled activities may arise which interfere with your son or daughter completing an assignment. Please be aware of the respective teacher’s classroom management plan in regards to homework and the above possible situations. Please contact the respective teacher if you have concerns.

**MAKE-UP WORK**

When a student is absent from school, there are two options for make-up work:

**Option 1: Parent requests make-up work.** Assignment sheet along with material will be available in the office by 3:45 p.m. of the day requested for parent pick-up. Homework will be expected to be completed when the student returns to school.

**Option 2: No make-up work is requested.** Students are allowed one day to make up work for each day absent.

For students who have an extended illness; special arrangements will be made with the individual teacher. For students going on an extended vacation/trip; homework should be completed before leaving. It will be up to the individual teacher if he/she finds it necessary for tests to be taken when the student returns.

**PROGRESS REPORTS**

Report cards will be issued each quarter of the school year. Teachers (grades 4-12) will submit a progress report for students earning a D or F in any subject at the midterm of each quarter. Other midterm grades may be obtained upon request to the teacher. Parent-teacher conferences will normally be held in October and March. Parents should login to Gradelink often to check their student’s grades. If you have a concern, please do not wait for these scheduled times to contact the teacher or principal.

**ELIGIBILITY FOR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

The student needs to meet the following expectations to participate in school activities which are not part of a class or school requirement. Participation includes practices and public performances. Eligibility will be allowed between the official grading periods which are midterm and quarter or quarter and midterm..

* Be a student in good standing.
* Maintain a C average with no F grades.
* Served all assigned detentions.

**GRADUATION POLICY**

To receive a diploma from Unity Ridge Lutheran HIgh School, the student must meet the following criteria:

* Be a student in good standing.
* Attend worship services regularly (at least 50% of school calendar Sundays).
* Be in attendance 90% or more of the calendar school days.
* Perform an established number of service hours to Unity Ridge Lutheran School.
* Perform in the academic areas to one’s God-given abilities (an average student would be passing all courses while maintaining a C average).
* Fulfill all financial obligations to Unity Ridge Lutheran School.
* Earn the prescribed number of credits to graduate

Students with special academic needs may meet individual graduation requirements as stated in their individual education plans. The principal and Board of Directors shall have complete discretion to determine extraordinary circumstances.

The faculty will recommend to the Board of Directors those students who have met the requirements and should earn a diploma. Students not meeting the requirements will receive a certificate of attendance.

**GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

A student must earn 27 credits. One full semester of a class is equal to .5 credit.

Specifically, a student must earn 4 credits in English, 4 credits in Religion, 3 in Math, 3 in Science, 3 in Social Studies, .5 in Health, .5 personal finance, 2 Foreign Language and 1 in Fine Arts. A student should be involved in athletics or physical education. American History and Government need to be a part of the Social Study credits.

**CHROMEBOOKS, LAPTOPS AND IPADS**

Students may use the school-owned technology with the permission of their teacher during the academic day (8:10 a.m. - 3:20 p.m.). Internet use may only be used under the direct supervision of a teacher.

Damage to the assigned Chromebook will be the responsibility of the person the book was assigned to, unless evidence reveals otherwise. The student will be obligated to pay for the repair of the computer/computer system if damage is intentional or in some cases unintentional to the hardware or system.

Each student must read and sign the Technology Policy and User Agreement before they are allowed to use or check out any devices in school.

**TRANSFERS/FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**

When a student is going to transfer to another school, the principal is to be notified in advance. Parents need to request the records to be sent to the school in which the student is transferring to.

School records will only be released if all financial responsibilities to Unity Ridge Lutheran School have been met. All school-owned and/or faculty-owned material is to be returned or financial compensation made to the appropriate owner before records will be sent.

Registration and class attendance can take place for returning students for the next academic year when previous financial obligations have been met.

**GRADE RETENTION**

Unity Ridge Lutheran School reserves the right to place students in the TK-12 academic level for which the student is best suited. Input and discussion with parents and guardians will be part of this decision.

**DISCIPLINE AND SUPERVISION**

As Christian teachers, we are disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ and our task is to “disciple” others, particularly the children of Unity Ridge Lutheran School. A disciple is a disciplined person. As disciples of Christ, we speak about “Christian Discipline” in our school. Christian discipline is a learning process, and its objective is first to train the child and lead him or her to be a more Christ-like person and second to maintain an atmosphere in the school which will serve as a pattern for the learning process.

Discipline in a Christian school is a triangular responsibility and process. It involves the home, teacher/principal, and the student. Responsibilities and expectations of home and the student have been stated elsewhere in the handbook. School personnel are expected to discipline to the extent that control of emotions is always maintained, and all children are dealt with because of the love and concern we have for them and for the learning atmosphere for which we are striving. Love is not confused with softness or firmness or with harshness. Discipline is part of the learning process. An individual’s success is vital in being able to discipline him or herself. Children are respected as redeemed members of the Body of Christ.

Discipline is a timely thing. It may be best to take action immediately when other situations allow you to wait. It is the assumption of the school that parents are putting their trust in the teachers/principal to work with the child in the most appropriate way and in a timely fashion. Parents should be aware that the sanctions listed below may be imposed with or without their permission.

Misconduct or lack of discipline on the part of all three sides of the triangle should be expected and we should be prepared to deal with it. The process of Matthew 18 should be followed in regards to the home and teacher/principal (refer to School Family Expectations regarding Matthew 18).

**CLASSROOM DISCIPLINARY MEASURES**

It is our goal at Unity Ridge to keep the majority of the disciplinary action between the student and his/her teacher. Each teacher will let the class know his or her expectations and sanctions at the beginning of the school year. Extreme or inappropriate repetitive behaviors may result in an office referral.

**SANCTIONS FOR AN OFFICE REFERRAL**

The teacher will write an office referral. The principal will discuss the matter with the student and contact parents. Depending on the situation, a behavior plan will be put in place and consequences for actions given by the principal.

**AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION (ASD)**

Students assigned detention through the office will serve their detention time as assigned by the principal. Regular weekly detention will be held on Wednesday afternoons from 3:20 p.m - 4:00 p.m. Parents will receive a notice of an assigned detention.

During detention, students will be assigned a discipline packet, copy a behavior/attitude essay, perform dictionary pages or perform some work service to the church or school. Doing homework and free reading is not allowed. An unexcused absence for an ASD or misbehavior during detention will result in a Saturday school.

**SATURDAY SCHOOL**

Saturday school will meet from 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. on Saturday morning. During Saturday school, the student will be assigned a work packet and/or a work service project for the school will be performed.

**SUSPENSION FROM SCHOOL**

The principal may suspend a student for a period of time not to exceed five (5) days. There are two types of suspension: in-school and out-of school.

IN-SCHOOL: ISS will be held when and where the principal designates. Students are to report to the office at 8:10 a.m. or immediately upon arrival. Students are not to leave the assigned area without the permission of the principal. Lunch will be taken alone. Meaningful classwork and homework will be performed by the student as well as other assignments from the principal. Students on ISS will leave immediately at the end of the day when their bus or ride arrives. Credit for school work will not be given.

If the school needs to hire a supervisor for ISS, the family of the student will be responsible for paying for the services of the supervisor. Students who are not permitted to go on field trips because of behavioral issues will be considered the same as ISS in regards to hiring a supervisor.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL: OSS means the student is not to be on school grounds. The student is not the responsibility of the school during OSS. Credit for school work will not be given.

Work for both ISS and OSS must be turned in and acceptable before the student will be allowed back in class. ISS and OSS should both be considered very serious consequences.

**DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE**

When deemed necessary, the principal will take the appropriate action as outlined below.

Students who, because of their attitude or inappropriate actions, could be suspended more than five days, removed as a student from Unity Ridge Lutheran School, or have their behavior reviewed for future guidance. They will appear before the disciplinary committee. The committee is made up of the principal, the student’s main teacher, and the president of the Board of Directors. The committee is chaired by the principal. Only parents, or a legal guardian may be in attendance with the student.

The principal shall call the committee into session and present all pertinent facts. The student and his/her parents will have an opportunity to speak at the session. The student and his/her parents will leave the meeting while the recommendation or vote is taken. The principal will notify the student and his/her parents of the committee’s decision.

If the student feels that he/she was dealt with unfairly by the committee, he/she may appeal this decision to the Board of Directors. Appeals must be in writing to the principal within 3 days of being informed of the committee’s decision. All documents of the meeting, the appeal letter and the committee’s decision will be presented at the Board meeting. No further appeal may be made after the Board hears the appeal and passes on the decision

**PROBATION**

Probation is a period of time set aside for the student to show that he/she is capable of modifying the type of behaviors which resulted in the probationary status. Probation is designed to correct an existing problem. Special guidelines to assist the student may be imposed in terms of the probation.

**APPEAL PROCESS**

If a student feels that he/she was unfairly treated, they may share such a concern with the next person in line. For a student, this would be a teacher, then principal, then executive director, then the Board of Directors. The concern should be in writing and submitted to the next in line within 3 days of the incident. A reply to the appeal will be given within 3 days of the receipt of the written concern.

**EXPULSION**

The Disciplinary Committee may, by a majority vote, expel any student from school. Reasons for which a student may be expelled:

* When the behavior of the student is such that there is a reason to believe that the health and welfare of the student and/or others is in danger.
* When the behavior of the student is such that there is reason to believe that the physical property of individuals or of the school is in danger of being damaged or destroyed.
* When the student, in word or deed, has displayed an attitude that is viewed as being uncooperative in regards to living out the Christian lifestyle.
* When the parents, in word or deed, are not in active support of the school and its policies, or are a detriment to the unity of the school families.

**THE SCHOOL RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DISCIPLINE, SUSPEND, OR EXPEL A STUDENT FOR BEHAVIOR UNBECOMING A STUDENT AT UNITY RIDGE LUTHERAN SCHOOL.**

**SPECIAL SCHOOL CONSIDERATIONS**

**BIRTHDAY PARTIES**

We welcome birthday treats being brought to the classroom. When hosting an after-school party, we ask that parents help their children to consider the feelings of others. If all boys/girls in the class are not included, please do not send invitations to school and/or pick up a select group after school.

**LOST AND FOUND**

All students are expected to be responsible for their personal belongings. Labeling is helpful in finding lost items. A tub in the northwest lobby is designated for lost and found items. Periodically, unclaimed items are donated to charity.

**ATHLETICS**

Grades 4-8 may participate in the following sports at Unity Ridge: Volleyball, Basketball, Soccer, and Track.

Shared sports with ArWeVa Schools for grades 7-12. These sports are part of the IHSAA and IGHSAU. Students need a physical, and proof of insurance and concussion clearance. 7-8 participation at both schools is at the discretion of the Unity Ridge coaches and athletic directors.

Each student athlete will be charged a $20 athletic fee per year / per sport (with a student cap of $50) to participate in school sports. This helps to pay for referees, field times, athletic equipment, etc.

**FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are an important component of the curriculum. Permission to go on a field trip is granted by the parent permission checklist. Information regarding each specific field trip will go home closer to the date of the trip. Cost of the field trip will be covered by the student, come from the activity fund, or a combination of the two resources.

Chaperones should not bring younger siblings on the field trip unless approved by the lead teacher of the field trip.

Parents driving must have proof of liability car insurance coverage. This and a copy of a current driver’s license needs to be on file in the school office.

**FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**

Parents must fill out a financial payment agreement form before the first day of each school year as to how they will meet their tuition obligations.

Payments can be made via cash, check, or automatic payments through the Brightwheel app.

Students are not allowed to attend class if payment is not made and late fees will be applied.

**FINE ARTS**

During the school year, the children will be involved in the Christmas Service and the Spring Musical.

The public singing experience is part of the classroom expectations for choirs. Children are expected to be present to sing at all worship services when their choir is assigned to sing. The choir director will share with the students their policy on excused and unexcused absences from this obligation.

**GRADELINK**

Gradelink is our school management system. You can find grades, teacher schedules, class information, and communication on this platform. If at any time a parent has questions or trouble accessing Gradelink, please reach out to the office.

**Brightwheel**

Brightwheel is the Early Childhood management system. It is also used for communication between parents and teachers, financial information, and payments. If at any time a parent has questions or trouble accessing Brightwheel, please reach out to the office.

**INJURY AND ILLNESS**

Parents are asked to complete a health information form at the time of registration. This form will include information such as the name of the family physician, emergency phone numbers, and permission for medical treatment in cases of emergency. Students who become ill or are injured at school will be given first aid. If necessary, parents will be notified by phone.

In the case of an emergency, the student shall be transported to a hospital or doctor’s office by ambulance or other convenient types of transportation. If possible, the family physician listed on the office records will be contacted.

**LEGAL FORMS AND OTHER OFFICIAL DOCUMENTATION**

Legal guardians, custodial parents, etc. who have needs regarding sanctions and restrictions for the safety of their son/daughter must communicate this need with the principal. Written documentation must be on file in the office for intervention to take place.

**LIBRARY**

Students will have the opportunity to visit the Norelius Community Library with their class throughout the year. Students need to have a Norelius Library Card before being allowed to check out books.

**LUNCH/MILK**

Unity Ridge Lutheran School participates in the Federal School Lunch Program. Nutritious meals are served each day in accordance with Federal Lunch Guidelines. Children may order a hot lunch or they may bring a lunch from home. Each hot lunch includes a half pint of milk. Both white and chocolate milk are available. Water is available at every meal.

Money collected for the hot lunch program will be sent to the office daily by teachers and will be credited to the student or family lunch account. The office will also send out lunch notices when additional money is needed in the student’s account. The lunch aide or teacher will take an exact count daily of all those having hot lunch as well as those taking an extra milk. After lunch, the office will post the lunches to the student’s individual lunch accounts. You can monitor this on Gradelink. If the balance reaches $15 in the negative, your child will need to bring a lunch until the balance is in the positive.

**OFFICE HOURS**

School office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. during the school year. The school office is closed during all major holidays.

**OFF-CAMPUS BEHAVIOR**

When it is brought to the attention of the school that a student has engaged in inappropriate conduct off-campus, the principal shall conduct such investigation as felt necessary and proper under the circumstances and may initiate disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion. In conducting such investigation, the principal or his/her representative may cooperate with law enforcement authorities. This policy is not limited to school-sponsored or school-related events.

**OUT-OF-DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION REIMBURSEMENT**

If you live out of the Denison Public School District and you transport your child(ren) to school, you are eligible for a reimbursement from your local school district. Forms are available at registration as well as online. Deadlines to turn these forms in are December 1 for first semester and May 1 for second semester. Turn them in to the business office of your local school district.

**PARENT DROP-OFF & PICK-UP**

Grade school parents dropping their students off in the AM hours should use the south gym door only. Bus pick up will use the south gym door. Drop off can be any time after 7:30. Students will not be permitted in the door before 7:30, unless they are signed up for Before-Care.

After school vehicle pick up will use the north parking lot. Cars must enter through the alleyway directly behind the school (entrance is to the northeast). Cars will proceed down the alleyway just North of the building and turn right in order to enter the North parking lot. Cars will form a single file line in front of the playground. Follow the cones. Students will be escorted to the vehicle in family groups. If parents do not want to go through the car line, they may park on the street and enter the school through the north door to meet their children after school. There will be absolutely no parking by parents in the North parking lot after school in order to keep our students safe.

**PARENT-TEACHER LEAGUE**

The purpose of this group is a means to bring the home and school into a closer relationship. It provides fellowship, an opportunity for educational growth, and support for parents and teachers of Unity Ridge. Projects and fundraisers assist the school to obtain items which are needed or desired at Unity Ridge Lutheran School.

**SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

All school closings due to weather will be announced over the radio station KDSN (104.9 FM or 1530 AM), TV channel 13 (digital 121.1), and Gradelinks text alerts. Due to the bus transportation operated by the public school system, the closing of Unity Ridge Lutheran School is dependent upon the decision of the public school. If Denison public school has a late start or cancels school due to weather, Unity Ridge will do the same.

**DROP-IN DAYS**

Should Unity Ridge have a late start or early dismissal for inclement weather, families may take advantage of the Part Day Drop-In Program. This allows UR students to come to school, even when school is not in session. Students must enter via the north door, if participating. For Late Start and early dismissal days, parents must contact the Early Childhood Director through Brightwheel to save a spot for their student. Part Day drop-ins will be charged $10 per student. Payments will not be taken the day of but will be paid each month via the Brightwheel App.

In the event of full school closure due to inclement weather, families may also take advantage of the Full Day Drop-In Program. UR students must be approved by the Early Childhood director in advance in order to attend. Students enter through the North door of the school and must bring a sack lunch. The kitchen will NOT be open. Full day closure drop-ins will be charged $50 per student. Payments will not be taken the day of but will be paid each month via the Brightwheel App.

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT**

Students in grades 4-8 will elect student body officers. Activities for the year will be discussed and arranged through this group. Activities include service projects as well as social activities. Leadership opportunities are available for the elected officers.

**TUITION/FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Unity Ridge Lutheran School’s financial model is tuition based.

Donations are accepted to support the Unity Ridge Scholarship program.

Additional financial assistance for the tuition cost is the Educational Saving Account Program, ILSTO, and the Buena Vista PreSchool Grant.

Outstanding debt must be paid in full for a student to attend class for the upcoming school year. Report cards will be held at the end of the school year and records if you leave Unity Ridge, until all financial obligations are paid in full.

**VISITORS**

Anyone not employed by Unity Ridge Lutheran School is a guest, including parents. All guests must first report to the school office to sign in and out. We extend an open invitation to all parents to visit our school. As a courtesy, parents wishing to visit the classroom should let the teacher know in advance, if possible.

**VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

Parents or other interested persons of the congregations and community are encouraged and invited to serve as volunteers. Volunteer workers will receive the necessary background information and assistance in learning how to carry out their work.

Persons interested in doing volunteer work should inform the principal or respective teacher.

Volunteers that have direct contact with students will be subject to a background check.

**CLASSROOM AND SCHOOL NEWS**

There will be a Weekly Snapshot sent home to each family. This document will list upcoming events, important information, and items that need to be addressed. Please look for this to come home on the last day of the school week.

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**2023-2024 Parent - Student Handbook Signature Page**

Parents/Guardians, please take time to review and discuss the information in the Unity Ridge Lutheran School Parent - Student Handbook with your son or daughter. Included in the handbook is important information regarding school policies and procedures. Once you have read the handbook, please sign and return this form to the main office.

**I acknowledge that I have read and understand the policies and procedures outlined in the Unity Ridge Lutheran School Parent - Student Handbook.**

**Unity Ridge Family Name**

 **Parent Signature Date**

**Parent Signature Date**