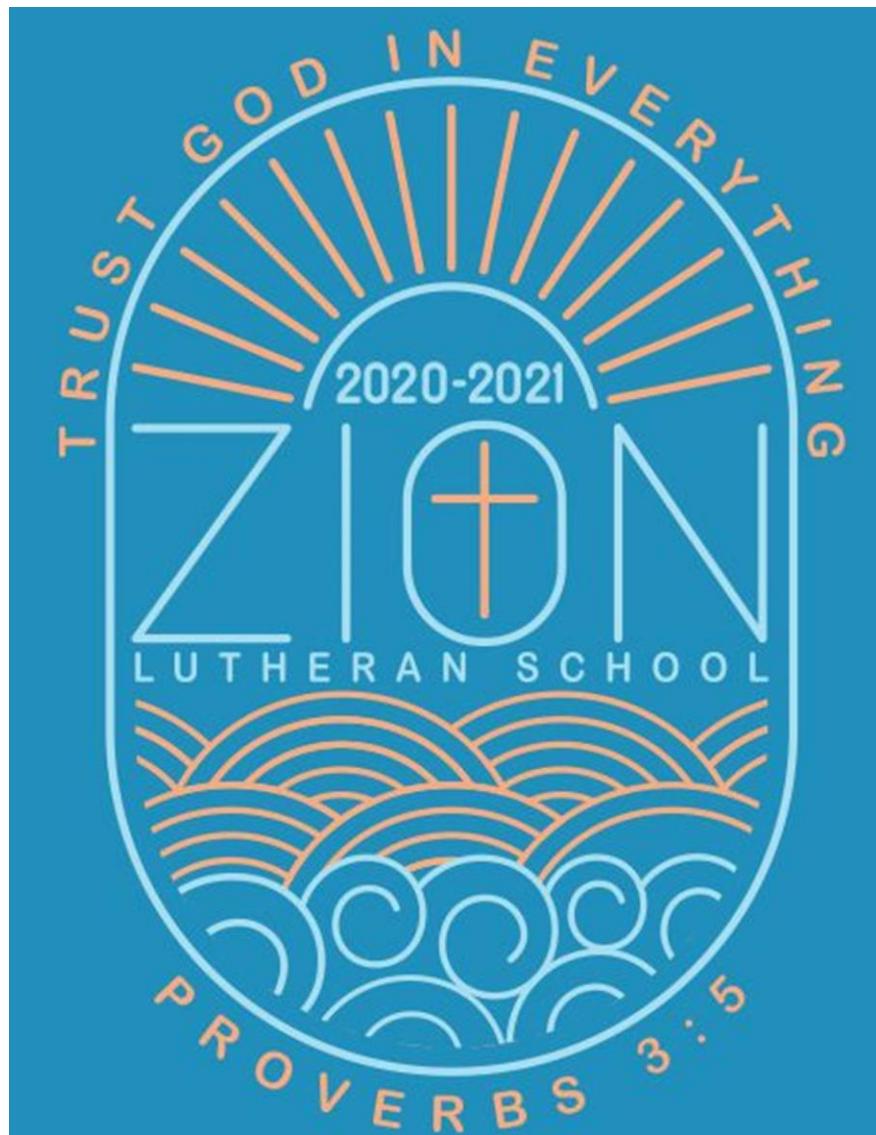


# ECEC PARENT HANDBOOK



**2020-2021**

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## Letter to Parents

Dear Parents:

We believe we share a commission with parents and the church to train children so that they may live the abundant life God has planned for them.

A complete education includes training in all areas - physical, intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual. It is not our purpose, however, to merely add another subject, religion, to the curriculum. In our program, the teaching of all areas is interwoven with Christian instruction to teach a way of life.

We recognize that each child has a unique way of learning and an individual set of needs to be met. We will build on what is already a part of your child's experience. We will guide, launch, steer and stimulate him/her to learn new ways of problem solving and modes of living. It is our desire that your child leaves our program with a real sense of self-worth and an attitude of excitement and enthusiasm for learning.

Your child will learn of God's all-encompassing love and mercy; the beauty and order of His creation, His plan for our salvation through Jesus Christ and that He is a vital force in our lives each day. We believe that through the introduction of God's Word, your child will learn to love, honor, obey and serve God - and then he will be able to claim the power of the Holy Spirit in his life.

The Staff of Zion Lutheran Early Childhood Education Center

## Philosophy

Zion's Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC) bases its educational philosophy on Biblical teachings and Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod doctrine. We believe in God's promise that we are to "train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6)

We strive to recognize and meet each child's emotional, social, spiritual, cognitive, and physical needs. We recognize the uniqueness of each child and believe that children learn best by working with many hands-on experiences. To achieve that goal we provide a positive, creative, and stimulating learning atmosphere where a child's five senses - touch, sight, hearing, smell, and taste - can be stimulated.

We believe that play is to be respected as a vehicle for learning. Children use this mode to model, create, explore, solve problems, interact socially, pretend, and dream. It is our hope that by focusing on the whole child, with a strong emphasis on self-esteem, our children will enjoy continued success in the world.

In accordance with God's command to parents to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4), we acknowledge that parents have the primary influence upon a child's development. Therefore, we dedicate ourselves to cooperate with parents in the shared responsibility of educating their child.

## Mission and Ministry

Zion ECEC is an extension of the mission and ministry of Zion Lutheran Church, a member congregation of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. Our church's mission statement is "Sharing Christ, Changing Lives". In addition, the ECEC mission statement is "Loving Hands, Teaching Faith".

## Worship Opportunities

Sunday morning:      8:30 am Traditional Service  
                            10:00 am Contemporary Service

## Accreditation

Zion Lutheran Preschool is an Accredited Center with National Lutheran Schools Accreditation. Our accreditation shows that we are dedicated to young children, spread the message of Christ's love, work with our congregation in mission & ministry, provide developmentally appropriate experiences, provide a curriculum that promotes growth & development, provide a quality environment, and are staffed with committed Christians serving young children.

## 1. Zion ECEC Administrative Organization

### Administration

Lori Knapp	ECEC Director
Elizabeth Lyles	Elementary School Principal
Louie Villanueva	Schools Board Chairman

### Staff

Our teachers are the main strength of the school. Their Christian instruction and guidance is a ministry to children and parents. They teach and evaluate, plan and prepare, relate and counsel, pray and care. Their communications with parents are keys to effective education. We pray for them, support their decisions and give them our respect, love and encouragement.

All Zion ECEC teachers are required to meet the state standards found in Title 22. Our teachers are also certified in first aid and CPR. They strive to continue their knowledge of early childhood education through workshops, seminars, and other hands-on training.

All staff members are Christian by confession, cleared by the State for criminal and health purposes and are outstanding citizens within the community.

### Parent Teacher Service League (PTSL)

Zion's parent organization is open to all parents, grandparents, and guardians that have children enrolled in the ECEC. The objectives of the PTSL are:

- To promote mutual home-school understanding and interest
- To further home-school cooperation and unity
- To raise funds to purchase items which enhance curriculum and support school wide activities and organization programs

The PTSL consists of willing parents who volunteer their time and efforts to promote the objectives of the league. For more information, please contact the ECEC office.

### Schools Board

The Zion Schools Board meets once a month. The Schools Board is responsible for policy matters involving Zion's Elementary School, ECEC and School-Age Care.

## 2. Admission and Financial

### Admission Policy

We are licensed for children ages 2 through 6. Children in the ECEC program must be at least 2 years of age. We will assist in potty-training with the understanding that it is also taking place at home.

The director will interview each parent and child together before acceptance for enrollment. There is a three (3) week probationary period before final acceptance into the program.

All medical and personal forms must be completed and returned to the Director for the child's personal file. This includes immunization and physical forms.



### Registration Fee

The registration fee is charged upon enrollment and annually thereafter. The registration fee is used for instructional supplies and student insurance. This fee is NON-REFUNDABLE.

### Withdrawal from program

If you choose to discontinue your child's attendance, you must give a two-week written notice and you are financially responsible for the two weeks.



### Tuition

Monthly tuition is due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. Tuition paid after the 10<sup>th</sup> will be charged a \$30.00 late fee. If arrangements are not made by the 3<sup>rd</sup> week, your child(ren) may be administratively withdrawn from the school. Your tuition account must be current in order for your child/children to start any new summer or fall session. Tuition payments will be billed and collected using FACTS Management.

Tuition remains the same for all holidays, sick days and vacations. Your tuition is like your rent/mortgage, it remains the same whether you are home or not. Tuition is based upon a yearly program.

## Late Pick-up Fee

If you arrive after 6:00 pm (which is our closing time) to pick-up your child, you will be charged an additional \$1 per minute per child after 6:00 pm. Sometimes being late is unavoidable and we can sympathize, but also understand our teachers may have college classes, family responsibilities, or other obligations to attend right after work.

Half day late fee: 12:00 p.m. - 12:15 p.m. will be \$1.00 per minute per child; after 12:16 p.m. the half day extra hours fee begins.

## Programs Offered

We offer several programs at Zion: Full day programs (6:30 am to 6:00 pm) and Half day programs (8:00 am to 12:00 pm).

We also offer assistance in potty training; parents of children needing this service add an additional fee depending upon how many days your child attends and their program. Parents will supply all the diapers and wipes for their child.

In order to be sure that your child is ready for kindergarten entrance; all Pre-K children who plan to attend kindergarten at Zion Lutheran School will have a professional evaluation with input from the teacher and parent. The cost for the evaluation will be paid to the company at the time of the evaluation.

## Change of Program/Days

If you need to make a change in your child's program i.e. Full time to Part time; or need to add/subtract days, please fill out form in ECEC office for approval. There will be a \$25.00 processing fee for this service.

## Attendance

Preschool curriculum starts precisely at 8:00 a.m. each day. To better serve your child's social and academic needs we desire all students arrive by 8:30 a.m. After 9:00 a.m., they are considered late. Habitual lateness develops poor habits and attitudes in your child. He also misses important instruction time and disturbs the class when coming in late. Please be punctual.

State Licensing (Title 22) requires ALL children to be checked in with a staff member each morning for health reasons. No child will be permitted to stay who shows

obvious signs of infection, fever, rash, running nose, cough, etc. If these symptoms develop after acceptance that day, you will be called and required to pick up your child within 30 minutes.

Students attending specified days MUST have completed pre-approval form and given to Director for approval before changing their contracted hours. Make-up days for absences and holidays will not be allowed.

### Non-discrimination Policy

Zion ECEC admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded to or made to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color or national and ethnic origin in the administration of its education and admission policies.

“The work will wait while you show the child a rainbow, but the rainbow won’t wait while you do the work.”

Patricia Clafford

### 3. Educational Environment

#### Arrival and Departure



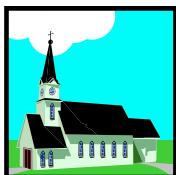
Parents will use iPads in the entry when they arrive with their child and when they pick them up. Anyone other than the parent must be listed on the Identification and Emergency Form. If person is listed on the form, the staff will verify the person with a picture ID.

Do not leave your child unattended; make sure the child is delivered to a staff person for wellness check before leaving.



#### Nutrition

All children will receive a nutritious morning snack. Those who stay will also receive a nutritious afternoon snack. Snack will consist of 2 of the 4 major food groups. Examples of snacks are carrots, crackers, cereal, cheese, fruit, salad, etc. Water, milk or juice will be served. We ask that you send nutritious lunches with limited sugar treats. You may choose to purchase lunch as offered by the school. Absolutely no candy or sodas will be allowed to be consumed. **Note: we are a peanut-free facility.**



#### Chapel

A weekly worship service is alternate Tuesday & Wednesday mornings in the church sanctuary. The pastor, director or teachers lead the service. Occasionally we celebrate chapel with the elementary children. Parents are always welcome and encouraged to attend.

These worship periods include a gathering of mission offerings and the children are encouraged to bring money for these offerings as an act of love for their Savior. These funds will be applied to special ministries voted by our staff.

These services do not, however, take the place of Sunday morning worship. We encourage our children to be faithful in their church and Sunday school attendance.



## Dress Code



Each child should be properly dressed according to the weather. They should wear play clothes, because they will play outside and do activities that may cause them to get their clothes dirty. We require them to wear closed toe shoes. Please make sure your child has a change of clothes in their cubby at all times for any type of accidents that may occur. **LABEL all clothing!**

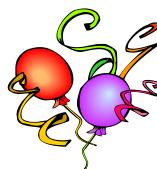
## Preschool Needs and Supplies

**Napping:** Each child will need to bring a crib-size sheet and a small blanket in a backpack. Backpacks will be brought to school on the first day of each week that your child attends school and taken home the last day of that week to be washed and returned the next week. Backpacks are not needed for  $\frac{1}{2}$  day children. Please label all bedding and backpacks.

**Clothes:** An extra pair of marked underwear, socks, outside clothing (appropriate for season) and shoes (if possible). These are to be your child's emergency clothing to be used in case of toileting accident or playtime mishap. All clothing worn or brought to school including coats or sweaters should be marked with permanent ink.

Each teacher has a specific supply list that will be given to the families at the start of the school year and upon enrollment.

## Birthday and Baptism Birthdays



Many families enjoy celebrating a child's birthday or baptism anniversary. We encourage allowing these special days to be celebrated with his or her classmates. Birthdays are celebrated during morning snack time and are very special days to your child. Please check with the teachers before these special days to inform him/her of your plans. We encourage you to select your treats with consideration to health (as much as possible), giving leeway to this traditional celebration. We ask to not bring anything with nuts as we are a peanut-free facility. Please do not distribute private party invitations at school unless the entire class is invited, as some children's feelings may be hurt. You can place the invitations in the child's cubby.

## Field trips

Our Pre-K & TK classes may occasionally go on a field trip and we will use a certified school bus. On certain field trips there may be a charge to help defray the cost. Permission slips will always go home prior to field trip to be signed and returned. Parents are welcome to attend providing their immunizations are on file in the office (see page 13).

## Holidays

Zion ECEC will be closed during major holidays. Check the yearly calendar for specific dates.

## Vacation

Should you wish to take a month or more off, a \$100.00 fee per month will be charged in order to hold your child's spot. Tuition will not be charged during the absence.

Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them. Luke 17:16

## 4. Health and Safety

### Sick Policy

We are responsible for the children of your families. YOU are the one we must count on to assist us in the well-being of all involved. If you bring an infected child to the center, you will be endangering the health and safety of EVERYONE.



If notified, while at our center, that your child is ill, please pick him/her up within 30 minutes. Such notification is only given if illness would put others health at risk or your child needs medical attention. An ill child shall be isolated and given appropriate care until called for by a parent, guardian or a designated representative. Therefore, it is necessary that you keep a current number on file where you can be reached. In event that you cannot be reached, you must have current numbers of friends or relatives on file.

For your convenience we have outlined below our long standing policy regarding the "ill" child-

- ❖ A fever of 100.4 degrees or over.
- ❖ Cold symptoms, i.e. green, runny nose: watery or crusty, itchy eyes.
- ❖ "Odd" rashes of ANY TYPE
- ❖ Vomiting, diarrhea, etc
- ❖ Persistent cough
- ❖ COVID-19 symptoms

**Children must be free of these symptoms for 72 hours or more before returning to the center.** YOU, the parent, should notify us if your child has been ill in the home during the evening, morning or weekend before returning to the center. Please do not bring children with communicable diseases.

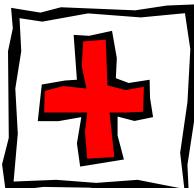


### Accidents

Zion Lutheran School provides accident insurance to all students. This is paid in part with the annual registration fee you pay each August. If your child should be injured at school, we will call you; and if needed call 911. Please be sure to sign and return the necessary "Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment" form.

Parents will be notified of minor scrapes, bumps and scratches by way of an "Ouch Report" left in the parent cubbies. This will inform you of what happened and what was done for your child

## Emergency / Disaster Plan



Zion Lutheran School always has a staff member on premises that is First-Aid/CPR qualified. We have a detailed disaster plan in place and conduct monthly fire and earthquake drills.

It is our prayer that this plan will never be put to action. However we have a 72 hour supply of food, water & 1<sup>st</sup> Aid supplies available for emergencies. You may send a note of reassurance along with a picture for comfort.

Please do not attempt to pick up your child for at least two hours after a major earthquake. This will allow the various teams to set up their operation.

## Child Abuse Reporting Obligations

In accordance with California State Law, our school staff is obligated, under penalty of fine or jail term, to report the reasonable suspicion of physical abuse, emotional abuse, physical neglect, inadequate supervision, sexual abuse, or exploitation. In this very serious and legally narrow area, the school will not contact the parents in advance of making a report to legal authorities. The clear intent of the law, based on the seriousness of the crimes listed above, is to mandate that a report be made when there is a reasonable suspicion of abuse. Each staff member is required to take the Child Abuse Mandated Reporter Training through California Community Care Licensing.

## Plan of Operation for Incidental Medical Services

According to California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Section 101173(d), which is our state licensing, we are required to have a plan of operation for incidental medical services which include inhaled medication, nebulizers and epi-pens. These are the only incidental medical service our center will cover.

Our plan of operation will require all students that need the above medical services to fill out a special form from the doctor that includes: specific instructions for administering medication; potential side effects and expected response; dose-form and amount to be administered; actions taken in the event of side effects or incomplete treatment; instructions for proper storage; telephone and address of child's physician; and the telephone and address of parent/guardian. This form must be updated annually.

In addition for the Epi-pen we are required to use in accordance with the directions and as prescribed, keep ready at all times, protect from exposure to light and extreme heat, note the expiration date and replace prior to that date. We will call 911 and the child's parent/guardian after using the Epi-Pen.

## Immunizations

In accordance with the State of California-Department of Public Health, no child will be admitted to the ECEC without documentation of the following immunizations: 3 Polio, 4 DTaP/DTP, 1 MMR, 1 HIB on or after 1<sup>st</sup> birthday, 3 Hep B, 1 Varicella.

In addition any volunteer who engages with the children must have the following immunizations documented: 1 MMR, 1 Pertussis, TB screening, 1 current influenza. One may opt out of influenza with written notification.

## 5. Curriculum



### Bible

Due to limited understanding by children of preschool age, we strive basically to teach three Christian Principles:

1. The creation by God of our world and all that is in it, including us, whom He made in His image.
2. God's love for us and the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ, Our Savior.
3. The death of our Savior to save us from our sin and return us to Heaven in the end.

Instruction in grace and morning prayers will be offered daily. The curriculum used is called One in Christ® and it is a developmental Bible curriculum that ties the themes to the Bible stories.

### Academic

Academic instruction is based upon developmental hands-on experiences that encompasses all domains (spiritual, social, emotional, cognitive, and physical). PLAY is the avenue of all learning.

We follow the One in Christ ® curriculum for faith development. To enhance literacy and handwriting, our 3 year old classes through TK use Handwriting without Tears®. In addition, our Pre/K and TK classes utilize Houghton-Mifflin ® Big Day for PreK.

STEM/STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) is an important part of our curriculum as we prepare 21<sup>st</sup> century learners!

### Parent-Teacher Conferences

In order to keep the lines of communication open and get a chance to meet parents, we will offer parent-teacher conferences once a year. The school will be closed on a Friday (see master calendar for exact date) and parents are encouraged to meet with the teacher at this time.

You are however, invited to meet with the teacher any time during the year. Please refrain from approaching the teacher during class time.

Children shall be assessed monthly using Learning Stories that will be shared through Educa©. You may download the app or receive the assessments online.

“Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood.”

Fred Rogers

## 6. Discipline

### Behavior Guidance

By providing a child-centered program that meets the children's needs and consistently demonstrates respect for all people, Zion ECEC hopes to develop an atmosphere in which children do not usually need to act out their feelings in unacceptable ways. It is normal, however, for children to need specific guidelines for behavior and occasional demonstrations of the limits. Most of the time, verbal reminders of appropriate behavior are accepted by the children or by redirecting the child to another activity. Sometimes we need to clarify our message through temporarily restricting a child's activity (sometimes referred to as "time out"). At no time is a child verbally or physically disrespected or abused. It is essential that parents refrain from using threats, name-calling or physical disciplinary methods while at the ECEC so as not to upset others who might be nearby.

The philosophy of discipline used at Zion ECEC is "Natural and Logical Consequences". This philosophy requires that children are responsible for their behavior and for making the decision regarding that behavior. This helps children build self-respect and develop responsibility.

### Teacher-Child Interaction

Teachers respond quickly and directly to children's needs, desires and messages. They adapt their responses to children's differing styles and abilities. The response should be warm and soothing. Teachers facilitate a child's successful completing of tasks by providing support, focused attention, physical proximity, and verbal encouragement. They are aware, alert for signs of undue stress in children's behavior, and aware of appropriate stress-reducing activities and techniques. Teachers facilitate the development of self-esteem by respecting, accepting and comforting children, regardless of the child's behavior.

### Safe and Secure Environment

All children and staff of Zion ECEC shall be accorded the right to a safe and secure environment. Aggressive and disruptive behavior infringes on this environment. Aggressive

and disruptive behaviors include but are not limited to: biting, hitting, spitting, kicking, unnecessary screaming and bullying.

Teachers and staff members watch to prevent fighting or aggressive behavior at school. Children are instructed to report problems and the teachers will mediate disagreements (occasionally this system fails and incidents do occur). When a student purposely hurts another child or staff member (bites, hits, pinches, scratches, kicks, etc.), leaving a mark, drawing blood or bruising, an "Incident Report" will be sent home via the child's cubby. Obtaining "Incident Reports" may be grounds for dismissal. Continued aggressive behavior may lead to suspension or disenrollment. The age and maturity of the child will always be considered.

## Discipline Cycle

It is our goal to work with families and to help raise their children in the faith and love of God. We have the following steps in place for discipline:

1. Teacher talks with child
2. Teacher sends home note requesting co-operation and assistance from parents
3. Teacher refers child to Director
4. Director conducts discussion with child
5. Director requests conference with parents

NOTE: All steps may occur in one day

We cannot allow a child to remain in school if lack of self-control makes a child dangerous to him/her or others. After all discipline techniques have been tried and the behavior continues to have a negative effect on the emotional or physical well-being of others, expulsion may occur by review and action of the Schools Board by the recommendation by the Director and/or Principal.

"Children need love, especially when they do not deserve it"

Harold Hubert.