

# Holy Ghost Lutheran School



## Parent/Student Handbook

2025-2026

Presented by the Board of Holy Ghost Lutheran  
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We are charging into a new school year and together this is going to be great. I'm so thankful I get to partner with each of you in the mission: Equipping students for life-long service in God's Kingdom and world. Thank you, each and all, and welcome to the joys and challenges we will face together in the Lord's strength. The 8th Grade Class selected these verses for this year's theme: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart; lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight" Proverbs 3.5-6. They've chosen a portion of Holy Scripture that gives us the very best guidance we could ever hope for. The trust the Bible teaches us is not a "shot-in-the-dark" kind of trust. It isn't trust for its own sake. It is a firm confidence and conviction that blooms from the root of God's promises to us in Jesus. "Lo, I am with you always," Mt. 28. Jesus presences Himself with us His people as we partner together to be Holy Ghost Lutheran School. We're heading into this school year persuaded, convinced, that our Lord is entirely devoted to us and will fulfill His purpose for us (Ps 138.8). Welcome aboard! Let's get to it and watch the Lord fulfill His ministry to us so our children and their families are equipped for a life-style of service as Jesus' reign is taking place in our world, our town, our community. I'm excited and thankful to be in this with you. God's blessings!

Rev. Denton W. White, Pastor

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As we enter together as a school community the 2025-2026 school year, we are reminded of God's gift of change and its transformative effect it has on all of us. This gift allows us to grow, develop, and serve our world in many ways; not only personally but together as a community. I look forward to together upholding the mission and vision of Holy Ghost through a positive and supportive learning environment as we both celebrate our success and acknowledge our challenges. Our strength lies in our uniqueness and commitment to live as disciples of Christ. As we look to God to guide us through the year, we look to do this as a community and embrace the gift of change. So let us join together as disciples of Christ and follow the path that he has led for us.



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## Mission Statement

Holy Ghost Lutheran School exists in partnership with the families of the surrounding communities to provide a strong, Christ-centered educational environment. We strive to help children to achieve the highest levels of spiritual and academic growth by:

- Equipping students for lifelong service in God's kingdom and world.
- Providing services for building and strengthening Christian morals and values in their homes.
- Seeking to exceed the educational requirements of the State of New York.

The School Board of Holy Ghost Lutheran Church is charged with overseeing the direction of the school. In carrying out this responsibility, policies have been developed as guides for the operation of the school. Those that apply to the students and families of Holy Ghost Lutheran School are listed in this booklet.

## Statement of the Philosophy of Holy Ghost Lutheran School

Since its establishment in 1843, the congregation of Holy Ghost Lutheran Church has understood this school and the faculty it calls, to be an important part of its Christian mission. Uppermost in its educational task is providing a clear, definite, and loving witness to Christ and the Gospel. In light of this, Holy Ghost Lutheran School takes as its goal the education and nurturing of the "total child"--spirit, mind, and body. This is done through teaching the Word of God and encouraging students to follow in the ways of Christ pursuing excellence in academics and in other areas such as the fine arts and music, and providing safe and appropriate physical activities such as sports programs, recreational opportunities, and exploration of the world around them.

In order to best accomplish this, Holy Ghost Lutheran School embraces the following goals:

- Students are encouraged to live their faith and to help others, not only in school but also in the community and in the world.
- Teachers are called to recognize each student as an individual and to guide him/her in the discovery and development of God-given abilities.
- Teachers are called to be role models, living and demonstrating a Christian lifestyle.
- Qualified teachers are expected to demonstrate their passion for education by staying current with academic trends and technology, and by continuing their educational growth.

- Holy Ghost Lutheran School as an institution, is dedicated to fostering a partnership between home and school addressing the needs of students and their families.
- Holy Ghost Lutheran School provides a safe and caring environment with a clear understanding of academic expectations through the continued evaluation of the curriculum and student progress/achievement.
- Holy Ghost Lutheran School strives for excellence with students, staff and facility, and encourages all members of the school family to "learn for life".

Finally, and most importantly, this work is undertaken through faith in the saving grace of God, and with prayer, knowing that we are called above all to demonstrate and illustrate God's love in the world.

*The Christian home and the Christian Church have the responsibility to provide for the children's Christian education.*

God speaks directly to the parents when He says:



*"These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."*  
- Deuteronomy 6:7, 7

God speaks directly to the Church, the body of Christians, when He says:



*"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."*  
- Matthew 28:19, 20

## Statement of belief regarding marriage, gender and sexuality for Holy Ghost Lutheran Church and School

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term marriage has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

We believe that to preserve the function and integrity of Holy Ghost Lutheran Church and School as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Holy Ghost community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Holy Ghost Lutheran Church and School in any capacity agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:14-16; 1 Thess. 5:22).

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Rom. 10:9-10; 1 Cor. 6:9-11).

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Holy Ghost Lutheran Church and School.

## School Policies

### Admissions Policies:

Children may be enrolled into the **Pre-Kindergarten 4** program if they are four years of age by December 1 of the year entering school. Pre-Kindergarten 3 students must be age three by December 1 of the year entering school. Pupils entering Kindergarten must be age five by December 1 of the year entering school. Pupils entering into the first grade must be age six by December 1 of the year entering school. *All students entering Holy Ghost Lutheran School need to be toilet-trained prior to the beginning of the school year.*

### Acceptance Guidelines:

Guidelines for acceptance will be based on Christian commitment, academic potential, behavioral attitude, and emotional maturity. Upon review of records and other pertinent information the School Board does reserve the right to refuse admission in cases where the school's program is determined to be incompatible with the child's needs, or to grant admission on probationary terms only. Probationary terms will be given in writing at the time of admittance



to the parents and teachers. The School Board approves all applications for enrollment to Holy Ghost Lutheran School through the Principal.

### Application:

An application for enrollment must be made before a child will be considered for enrollment.

### New Students:

All new pupils enrolling in Holy Ghost for the first time must present a birth certificate and immunization record upon application for enrollment. Forms for immunization records are available in the school office and will be kept on file. A physical exam is also required. A series of standardized tests may be required before a student is accepted for admittance. Tests are primarily in the areas of reading and mathematics. A personal interview with the prospective student and his/her parents is required and can be arranged through the office. The records of each student transferring from another school will be reviewed, if areas of concern are found additional information may be required.

### Notice of Non-discriminatory Policy:

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

### Order of Acceptance Policy:

Holy Ghost Lutheran School reserves the right to consider applicants according to the following priorities on a space-available basis:

1. Students presently enrolled in Holy Ghost Lutheran School.
2. Children of members of Holy Ghost Lutheran Church congregation.
3. Younger brothers/sisters of students currently enrolled in the school.
4. Children from the surrounding communities by order of application.

In order to enroll your child at Holy Ghost Lutheran School, please contact the office. The phone number is 716-731-3030.

### Re-Enrollment Policy:

An annual re-enrollment application must be submitted for all students planning to return to Holy Ghost Lutheran School the following school year. The office will share re-enrollment information in January, which will include a deadline for the early enrollment period.

Re-enrollment paperwork received after the early enrollment date will be accepted on a first come, first served basis along with new enrollments. Receiving re-enrollment information in a timely fashion enables the school to adequately plan for the coming school year's program and materials.

Upon review, the principal or Board for Christian Education must approve all re-enrollment applications. Students whose status is not considered that of a "student in good standing" will be treated on an individual basis. Such treatment may include principal or Board consultation with the parents and/or student prior to a final decision.

Guidelines for acceptance will be based on Christian commitment, academic potential, behavioral attitude, and emotional maturity. The School Board does reserve the right to refuse admission, at any time during the year, in cases where the school's program is determined to be incompatible with the child's needs, or to grant admission on probationary terms only. Any applications for enrollment or re-enrollment may be refused for any of the following reasons:

1. Refusal on the part of the student and/or his parents/guardians to comply with the requirements of the total school program.
2. Lack of space, facilities, or staff
3. Inability on the part of the school and/or its facility to adequately meet the special needs of the pupil (physical, mental, academic or emotional).

### Student Transfer:

Students transferring from other schools must present appropriate records and paperwork upon application for enrollment. 504 plans, IEP paperwork, the most recent report card and standardized test scores are expected to be shared for the school to consider accepting the application of a new student. A teacher assessment and parent conference with the principal is standard practice.

### Other Policies:

#### Activities Policy:

Holy Ghost Lutheran School participates in extra-curricular inter-school activities with other Western New York Lutheran and Catholic Schools. These activities include Soccer, Basketball, Cheerleading, Track and Field, Volleyball and others. Participation in these activities requires that a (C) overall grade point average be maintained as well as no failing grades. Any behavioral issues or incomplete assignments may result in a student not being able to participate in an activity. Any student not in school on the day of practice or a game may not participate in that activity that day. See the Athletic Handbook for more information regarding the Sports requirements at Holy Ghost.

### Dress Code for Activities:

HGLS students attending official school events are expected to adhere to the HGLS Dress Code or the uniform policy for the event. We expect students to dress as if they were in school during school events, even when said event does not occur during school hours, unless otherwise communicated by school leadership.

### Attendance Policy:

Punctual and regular attendance cannot be over-emphasized in a child's growth. All absences for grades K-8 are to be explained in a written excuse signed by the parent/guardian. All students are to be at their desks and ready for classes to begin at 8:30 AM. Students who are habitually late, who miss more than 15 consecutive days excused or unexcused (legal or illegal), or who have missed more than 30 nonconsecutive days excused or unexcused will have their attendance record examined by the Board of Education. Appropriate steps will be taken by Holy Ghost Lutheran School, which may include retention at the same grade level. All missed work during an absence is to be completed by the student in a timely manner, as defined by school staff.

Signed written excuses from parents/guardians are required for the following:

1. Tardiness.
2. Absence for the entire school day.
3. Leaving school early or during the school day.

### Awards Policy:

Awards are presented to students in various areas of student life to encourage excellence and recognize achievement. These include, but are not limited to:

- Academic Awards (Grades 5-8)
  - High Honor Roll – maintaining a GPA of 95%+ or higher
  - Honor Roll – maintaining a GPA of 90-94.9%
  - Merit Roll – maintaining a GPA of 85-89.9%
- Athletic Awards
- Other awards as deemed advisable by the faculty

### Bicycles and Roller Blades Policy:

Bicycles are to be kept in the space provided for that purpose. They are not to be ridden during school hours.

### Bus Conduct Rules Policy:

The conduct rules for Holy Ghost Lutheran School students riding the bus are the same as for our students on Holy Ghost premises. Behavioral issues exhibited on the bus may be addressed by school staff and given appropriate discipline.

## Church Attendance Policy:

Family worship, attendance in Sunday School and Bible Classes, and praying together are all important steps in “bringing up the child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” Holy Ghost Lutheran School is concerned with the total development of the child. While the primary responsibility in this development rests with the parents of the child, we serve, with the family, in the development of discipleship in Christ. We use our Church Attendance Policy as a “barometer” of the development of discipleship, and of the commitment of the family to the same Christian principles and ideals that we hold here at Holy Ghost Lutheran School. Families without a church home are cordially invited to worship with us. Sunday School is at 10:15 A.M. and Sunday worship is at either 9:00 A.M. or 11:15 A.M.

## Discipline Policy:

The term discipline means “following” (discipleship). All students are expected to follow in the footsteps (teachings and example) of our Lord Jesus Christ. A major emphasis of the School’s program is to lead each student toward a positive attitude in a Christ-like way of life.

God has placed both parents and teachers in a position of opportunity and responsibility over the children He has entrusted to their care. In order to maintain order in the school, parents must allow for teachers to exercise a certain amount of authority, tempered with love, over the disciplinary area of the child’s school day. When exercised in accordance with God’s will, a position such as the teacher’s demands and commands respect, and obedience from the students.

Parents, teachers, and children are expected by God to live with the common bond of love that Christ gives to His people. It is this love that should motivate all relationships.

When such motivation and response lapses and the relationship breaks down, it is the duty of both parents and teachers to assist the child in recognizing this lapse and lead him/her into corrective measures. All this must be done in a spirit of Christian love, concern, and forgiveness. The goal is to re-establish the proper relationships of the child with God and all others involved.

Staff members employ their Christian and professional expertise in meeting the situations related to normal classroom control. In a spirit of Christian love, they may employ those means necessary to remedy the given situation. As a matter of information to parents, the principal/teacher may notify them if their child is in need of disciplinary action. If the student refuses to conform to acceptable standards, or if the matter is related to student body safety and is decided serious enough, it will be brought to the attention of the Principal. The principal is empowered to take whatever steps are necessary to remedy the situation. These steps may include, but are not limited to parental conference, detention, in-school suspension, and out-of-school suspension. In extreme cases, this may include remedying the situation by bringing in outside staffing/ guidance resources including those accessible through

the public school district, Holy Ghost Lutheran Church, LCMS Eastern District, law-enforcement agencies or any other resources deemed necessary by school leadership.

### Student Conduct Policy:

1. As the Bible says, *"Do to others as you would have them do to you."* Luke 6:31
2. Walk in the halls and in the classrooms; no running is permitted.
3. Toys and other items which would distract students from schoolwork are to remain at home.
4. Items that could pose a threat to the student, classmates or the staff are not permitted; parents will be notified if such a situation occurs.
5. All coats, lunches and book-bags are to be kept in the area designated by the teachers in a neat and orderly fashion.
6. Students are not to arrive at school before 8:10 AM or remain after school later than 3:10 PM, unless they ride a bus, are enrolled in the latchkey program, or have school business involving a teacher or the principal.
7. A written excuse signed by parent/guardian must be presented to the teacher in order for a student to leave the school grounds after arrival or before dismissal.
8. A written excuse signed by parent/guardian must be presented to the teacher after an absence (no more than 3 days) or it will be considered unexcused (illegal).
9. All students will attend Chapel services on Wednesday wearing appropriate uniform attire (red embroidered shirts and uniform pants). Parents are always welcome to join the school for worship at Chapel. Chapel service day and time and announced weekly in DoveTales.
10. Bikes, scooters, and roller blades are only to be used to come to and to leave school, not during school hours. They are to be kept in designated areas during the day.
11. Students arriving or being picked up by car will be dropped off and picked up via the Luther Street entrance. Students waiting for their rides are to follow teacher instructions and cell phone rules while they wait for their rides.
12. Lunch is to be eaten at lunchtime only and should include a nutritionally balanced meal appropriate for the school setting. .
13. Respect is expected from every student at Holy Ghost. Respect means courtesy at all times, speaking well of others, and being helpful. Respect is also expected toward books and other school property/items.
14. *"As I have loved you, so you must love one another"* John 13:34. Physical or verbal aggression with the intent of hurting others will not be tolerated. Acts such as social exclusion, taunting, threatening, teasing in a mean way, starting rumors, name-calling, belittling, pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, biting or any other act of bullying or violence is strictly forbidden.

### Student Phone Calls and Cell Phone Policy:

Pupils may use the school telephone only with the permission of a teacher. Teachers are not to give permission except in cases of emergency. Students must make arrangements for social activities outside of the school day. All students bringing a cell phone to school must turn it off

and store it in the school office during the school day. Upon dismissal, cell phones are not to be turned on or used until the student is in the vehicle, leaving the school premise. .

### Dangerous Items Policy:

All items that are inappropriate for the school setting as deemed by school staff or pose a danger to the student or others will be confiscated. Parent conferences will be held for any student bringing this type of item into the school. These items include: alcohol, drugs, tobacco, vaping pens, flammable materials or an item considered to be a weapon.

### Grading System Policy:

The following Grading Scale applies to academic subjects for Grades 1-8.

<b>%</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>
100	A+	80-82	C+
96-99	A	76-79	C
92-95	A-	73-75	C-
89-91	B+	70-72	D+
86-88	B	67-69	D
83-85	B-	65-66	D-
		BELOW 65	F

### I: INCOMPLETE

Two weeks are usually given to make-up for an incomplete grade. When an incomplete grade is not made-up, the grade becomes an F.

Kindergarten is partially graded on a Pass/Fail System using these letter designations:

- O: Outstanding
- S: Satisfactory
- N: Needs Practice

## Honor Code

Academic Honor is the moral foundation upon which quality education is built. The rules concerning HGLS students' behavior derive from the school's academic Honor Code.

The Honor Code includes all aspects of honor in a school setting, particularly lying, plagiarism (whether from a print or electronic source), and cheating (including the copying of another's work, even if a student freely "lends" his/her work, in which case the "lender" is also cheating).

### Artificial Intelligence Usage Guidelines

Holy Ghost Lutheran School recognizes that Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a powerful tool that is becoming integrated into the modern world. Our goal is to teach students how to use this technology responsibly, ethically, and effectively to enhance their learning, not to replace their own critical thinking and effort.

#### **Prohibited Uses (Academic Dishonesty):**

The use of AI to complete assigned work without explicit permission violates the Honor Code. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Using AI chatbots (e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot, Gemini) to generate written responses, essays, code, or creative work and submitting it as your own.
- Using AI to solve math, science, or logic problems and presenting the solutions as your own work.
- Using AI to paraphrase or "spin" existing sources to evade plagiarism detection.
- Using AI to generate ideas without critically engaging with, understanding, and synthesizing them yourself.

#### **Permitted and Encouraged Uses:**

Students are encouraged to use AI as a tool to support their learning when given explicit permission by a teacher. Acceptable uses may include:

- **Brainstorming:** Generating ideas for a project or paper to overcome writer's block.
- **Research Assistance:** Asking for summaries of complex topics or suggestions for sources to investigate further (which must then be verified).
- **Editing and Feedback:** Using AI to check grammar, spelling, punctuation, and sentence clarity on a completed draft. It may also be used to suggest improvements to tone and style.
- **Studying:** Creating practice quiz questions or flashcards from your own notes to study for a test.
- **Understanding:** Asking an AI to explain a difficult concept in simpler terms or from a different angle.

The first step for understanding the Honor Code is to specify for all students what is expected in terms of procedures for homework, quizzes, tests, and papers, and to state the consequences

for honor violations. Each teacher will ensure students receive a thorough orientation during the first week of classes.

The Honor Pledge expresses one aspect of the Honor Code but does not cover every part.

The Honor Pledge and Honor Code apply to everyone, regardless of subject matter or accommodations made for a student or an assignment, and are in effect for all academic work. The Honor Code encourages each student to do his/her best to uphold the values, dignity, pride, and integrity appropriate for an HGLS student.

Consequences for Honor violations will be as follows:

**FIRST OFFENSE:**

1. The student receives a zero on the assignment.
2. The parents are notified.
3. The student meets with the principal and is assigned before-school detention.

**SECOND OFFENSE:**

1. The student receives a zero on the assignment.
2. The parents, student, teacher and principal have a conference.
3. The student serves an in-school suspension for one day.

**THIRD OFFENSE:**

1. The student receives a zero on the assignment.
2. The parents, student, teacher, and principal have a conference to discuss the student's future at HGLS.
3. The student serves an in-school suspension for two days.

Actions can hurt or heal, whether in person or online. Therefore, students should be cautious and respectful in all online communication. Electronic transactions are persistent and replicable and can be forwarded, copied, or traced. A piece of gossip, an insult, or an unflattering video can last forever on the internet.

**National Honor Association-**

Holy Ghost Lutheran School is registered as an official chapter of the Lutheran Junior Honor Association. Students seeking inclusion in this honor must serve as examples to their peers in the areas of academic excellence, servanthood, leadership, and discipleship. Students in grades 7 and 8 are eligible for consideration and must follow the guidelines for nomination, as published annually.

**Home-to-School Communication Policy:**

Using the guidelines offered in Matthew 18 by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Board of Education has established the following procedures for effective communication between school and home:



1. Ideas, concerns, and suggestions should be taken directly to your child's teacher.
2. If desired, the Principal can become involved after the first step has been taken.
3. The Chairman of the School Board may be contacted after steps one and two have been taken if the situation has not been resolved to the parent's satisfaction.
4. In the case of a parent who is unsure what steps to take in a particular situation, the parent may contact the principal or Chairman of the Board of Education for guidance if he/she feels the need. A severe situation may require the immediate attention of the Board.

### Medications Policy:

By law Holy Ghost may not administer medicines including non-prescription items. Should your child require medications, a doctor's note is required. This note should include directions for administration of the medication and the reason for such. All medications, prescription or nonprescription (including cough drops and vitamin C drops), will be locked in the school office. Students will be excused from their classroom to go to the office and take their medicine. If your child should need nonprescription items such as cough drops during the school day, the items must be given to the teacher with a signed note from the parent/guardian as to the use of such items. Parents are strongly encouraged not to send these items to school with their child.

### Parent Reports Policy:

For students in kindergarten through grade 8, the progress of student learning will be charted on report cards and will be issued quarterly. Parents are welcome at any time to contact teachers regarding their child's progress. At the end of the first grading period, parents are expected to meet personally with the teacher to discuss progress. Schedules and information on these progress conferences are sent home to all parents/guardians. Ordinarily, it is not possible for parents to meet with teachers during the school day. It is preferred that you call and make an appointment for a mutually convenient time.

Preschool students will be assessed throughout the year and progress will be communicated with parents during conferences, as determined by the teachers.

### Personal Items Policy:

Students are asked to keep non-school-related possessions at home. This includes items such as toys, dolls, stuffed items, radios, inappropriate magazines, electronic items, portable mobile devices, and any other items a staff member has specifically told a child not to bring to school. If for any reason electronic devices are brought to school, they should remain off and stored in the student's backpack. Failure to comply with this may result in the confiscation of such items. Confiscated items may or may not be given back at the teacher's discretion. Note: When specific "Show and Tell" or other activities are scheduled, such items may be brought to school and you will be notified of such activities.

## School Closing Policy:

School closing because of bad weather will be announced on popular media outlets: Radio: WBEN (930 AM), TV: WGRZ (2), WIVB (4) and WKBW (7). In addition to these outlets, teachers will send Remind messages to families to inform them as soon as possible of a school closure. If Niagara Wheatfield public schools are closed due to inclement weather, or other problems, Holy Ghost Lutheran School will also be closed.

## School Hours Policy:

The school day begins at 8:30 AM and ends at 3:00 PM for students in grades K - 8. The school doors will be open at 8:10 AM to receive students. No students other than bus riders, students registered in the Latch Key program or those with special permission are allowed in the buildings before 8:10 AM. Since loitering after school can create discipline problems, children will be expected to leave school by 3:10 PM, with the exception of those waiting for a bus, in conference with a teacher or those using the Latch Key program. Those students remaining on the school grounds after 3:10 will be sent to the Latch Key program. Parents will pay the fee for the use of the program. Teachers will be available until 3:30 PM. If you need to speak to a teacher, please arrange a time with the teacher. The teachers are in devotions from 7:40 AM until 8:00 AM. The secretary operates office hours between 8:00a and 4:00p, each school day. Modified office hours will be implemented during holiday breaks and during summer vacation.

## School-to-Home Communication Policy:

Each school week on the first school day of that week (usually Monday) a newsletter, DoveTales, will be emailed to school families. Email addresses for this purpose are collected from registration paperwork. Please notify the office of any updates or additional email addresses desired to receive DoveTales.

The guidelines of Matthew 18 will be used for communication in matters between teachers and parents/guardians. The following procedures will be used by teachers:

1. Ideas, concerns, and suggestions should be taken directly to the parent/guardian of your student.
2. If desired, the principal should become involved after the first step has been taken.
3. The Chair of the Board of Education may be contacted after steps one and two have been taken.
4. In the case of a teacher who is unsure what steps to take in a particular situation, the teacher may contact the principal or the Chair of the Board of Education for guidance if he/she feels the need. A severe situation may require the immediate attention of the Board.

## Special Needs Policy:

Holy Ghost Lutheran School is not equipped to meet the special needs of some children (academic, emotional, physical). In the event it is needed, diagnostic testing is available through the Niagara Wheatfield Public School and may be recommended by school staff if appropriate. Referrals for Special Education Services may be made by the classroom teacher

after consultation with the student's parents. Parents may also advocate for their child to receive diagnostic testing for special services by writing a letter to Niagara Wheatfield's Director of Special Services. In some cases, a child may need to leave Holy Ghost to enter into a special program in the public school district which is better able to meet his/her needs.

### Tuition Policy:

Members of Holy Ghost Church who enroll their children at Holy Ghost Lutheran School support the school through their regular church contributions and therefore receive a tuition discount in comparison to non-members. In addition, members may be eligible for the stewardship discount program. See the school secretary for details.

Tuition is set each year by the School Board and is payable according to the following schedule:

1. In full on or by August 1
2. Half on or by August 1 and half on or before December 1
3. Three payments: August 1, December 1, and March 1
4. Monthly on the SIMPLY GIVING program. For more information on the SIMPLY GIVING program, call the office.

Payments submitted late are subject to a 2% late fee per month.

### Reimbursement:

School fees that are non-refundable will not be reimbursed. If a child is removed from Holy Ghost School during the school year, reimbursement of tuition is at the discretion of the Board of Education. Written requests will be considered if the student left in good standing and the request is made within 30 days of withdrawal.

### Failure to Pay:

Accounts are considered overdue if not paid by the due date. After 10 days, a remittance statement and a Simply Giving program application will be mailed to the parent/guardian to act upon immediately. A 2% late fee per month will be charged to the account.

Report cards will be held for all students when financial obligations have not been met. Grades and transcripts will not be forwarded to any other educational institution until account balances have been paid in full. If an 8th grader's balance is outstanding by 30 days prior to graduation he/she will not be permitted to participate in graduation or receive a diploma. Upon payment of balance, the diploma will be given to the student.

### These Policies:

These policies are intended to assist parents and students, as well as teachers in being prepared and understanding what is expected from them during the school day. The Board of Education of Holy Ghost Lutheran Church reserves the right to amend or change these policies as may become necessary. Should such changes occur notice will be sent to families.

## Other School Procedures

### Calendar:

The school calendar is established by the Board of Education each year. If there are any changes throughout the school year, parents will be notified in writing. The calendar is published each year. It includes important dates and school closing dates. As the school year calendar is published in advance, families are asked to plan vacation and travel on non-school days.

### Chapel Services:

In addition to the formal study of religion, the children participate in daily devotions and Chapel Services once per week. At these services the children are given the opportunity to worship as a congregation and are given the privilege to support missions and other charities with their free-will contribution envelopes. Parents are welcome to attend these services. Chapel service day and times are published in DoveTales each week.

### Chapel Offerings:

Offerings are collected at Chapel Service each Wednesday. These are used to support other ministries in the church-at-large. Mission projects are published under a separate cover each year.

### Damage to Property:

In case of breakage or damage to school property caused by a student, the parent/guardian is responsible for paying the cost of repair/ replacement or the insurance deductible or co-payment in full for said damage.

### Uniform Policy:

The students of Holy Ghost Lutheran School have a unique responsibility to reflect Christian beliefs in their behavior, attitude, and appearance. Therefore, we believe that good grooming and a neat appearance are essential to support our philosophy of educating the whole child. Uniforms provide this neat appearance, and have the added benefit of creating unity within the student body. The cooperation of students, parents, and teachers is necessary in maintaining the standards of our dress code. It is especially important to be mindful of this when school clothes are purchased. Enforcing the uniform policy is not the sole responsibility of the school. In fact, the better the parents monitor and help choose clothing for the school day, the fewer issues we will have at Holy Ghost Lutheran School. Parents are asked to partner with the school in monitoring their child's daily attire and grooming. All uniform items will be purchased through the French Toast school uniform website. All items must be ordered using the Holy Ghost Lutheran School Source Code at [www.frenchtoast.com](http://www.frenchtoast.com). The included items accessed by our unique School Source Code are approved clothing for boys and girls and may be worn in any combination.

Holy Ghost Lutheran School Source Code: **QS5DUUB**

**HOLY GHOST UNIFORM DRESS STANDARD SCHOOL DRESS APPEARANCE:**

All school uniform pieces must be proper fitting, worn as intended, and maintained in good repair - to be clean and neat with no stains or tears in fabric.

**SHOES:**

Athletic shoes (Velcro or laced), closed-toed shoes, boots, and heels under 2" are acceptable. Shoes should be neat and clean. Shoes must be correctly laced and tied, including a back heel or heel strap. Athletic shoes must be worn for recess and Physical Education activities.

**SOCKS/ TIGHTS:**

Socks of solid color must be worn and visible. Boys may wear ankle or crew socks. Girls may wear tights or leggings of matching uniform color in addition to all sock sizes including knee and trouser. Leggings are not allowed to be worn by themselves as part of the HGLS school dress code under any circumstances for both in-school and out-of-school events.

**SHIRTS:**

If a shirt is worn under a polo or oxford shirt, it must be a solid white tee shirt or a white turtleneck shirt.

**SWEATERS:**

Sweaters must be worn with a uniform shirt underneath.

**HOLY GHOST SPIRIT WEAR:**

The school office will periodically offer school-logoed spirit wear for sale. Holy Ghost Lutheran School Spirit Wear may be worn indoors or outdoors and must be worn with a uniform shirt underneath. Shirts that are purchased for school sports, events, or clubs can only be worn on designated days.

**OUTERWEAR:**

Outer-wear (i.e. coats, jackets, pullovers, etc.) may not be worn indoors during the school day.

**PANTS:**

Must be worn at the natural waistline. Belts are optional.

**HEMLINES:**

Shorts, skirts, and jumpers should be at least fingertip length when standing.

#### JEWELRY:

Jewelry is allowed in moderation, but must be safe for recess and PE and not present a distraction. No body piercings besides earrings are allowed, and only girls may wear earrings.

#### HAIR:

Hair must be a natural hair color.

#### ACCESSORIES:

Makeup and nail polish must be age-appropriate and may be worn by girls only. Note – The administration may clarify, interpret, alter, or add to Uniform Dress Standard Policy during the year if deemed necessary.

#### SPECIAL DRESS DAYS:

Special dress days will be announced in advance with guidelines.

The guiding principles for Dress Down Days will include the following:

- neat appearance - clothing worn will not have stains or rips
- modesty standards must be applied
- no tank tops or bare midriff
- clothing worn will follow the hemline rule
- form-fitting clothing is not permitted (leggings, tight shirts or pants, etc.)
- themes - clothing worn may be defined with a certain theme for Dress Down Days. Students not participating with special themed dress are to follow the Uniform Dress Standard.

#### SPIRIT DRESS DAYS:

Each Friday of the school year will be a Spirit Dress Day. Dress for this day may include Holy Ghost logo'd red PTL t-shirts or any other logo'd apparel. Items in this category may only be worn on Spirit Dress Days and may not be worn any other time unless specifically permitted.

#### UNIFORM DRESS STANDARD ENFORCEMENT:

Holy Ghost faculty, staff, and parents constitute a community, which God has placed here to guide and educate our children. He desires that all of us work together and support one another as we train up our children to be His servants. We hope and pray that children and parents will read Holy Ghost's Uniform Dress Standard thoroughly, that they will ask questions to ensure they understand its contents, and that they respect and adhere to this uniform dress standard. If a violation occurs, please know that it is not the intention or desire to embarrass any child. Faculty and staff will do everything within their power to handle violations in a discreet, respectful, and Christ-like manner.

#### STUDENT UNIFORM DRESS VIOLATIONS:

If clothing, attire, or any other part of a student's appearance is in clear violation of the dress code, the student will be sent to the school office to call home for proper attire. The student will

wait in the school office until proper attire is delivered. Subsequent infractions will be handled with increasing disciplinary measures, at the discretion of school administration.

### Field Trips:

Teachers are encouraged to take students on field trips. These trips must be designed to supplement the subject matter of the curriculum. Teachers must keep in mind that the cost of the field trips and frequency of trips should not become a burden for parents. Parents must sign a permission slip for students to participate in field trips. Teachers will notify parents of field trips by written note.

Students will be transported to and from off campus destinations by school bus. Parents participating in field trips must arrange their own transportation.

### Health:

A school nurse, supplied by the Niagara Wheatfield school system, visits Holy Ghost Lutheran School on a regular basis. Vision and hearing tests are administered for all children annually. The nurse usually visits Holy Ghost one day per week. If you need to speak with the nurse you may call when he/she is at our school.

If a serious illness or accident occurs, parents will be notified immediately. Parents are to pick up a sick child or arrange for alternative transportation immediately upon being notified of such occurrence.

### Library:

School library materials are found within each classroom. Students are to take careful care when using these items in school or outside of school. Parents may be charged replacement costs for materials that are damaged due to misuse or abuse.

### Lunches:

Proper diet is important for young children. It is important that your child bring a nutritionally well-balanced lunch, or purchase a lunch from our in-school Hot Lunch program. Excessive sweets are strongly discouraged. Students will be allowed lunchtime as scheduled by their teacher. Most classes also have a mid-morning nutrition break. There is to be no eating at other times during the school day unless a special activity has been planned. Sugary drinks and soda are prohibited to brought to school by students(unless a teacher is planning a special day), and there is to be no gum chewing. Students may purchase water or Gatorade from the Pepsi machine any day of the week. Pepsi products may be purchased by students in grades 5-8 on Fridays- during lunch time only.

## Parent Teacher League:

The PTL of Holy Ghost Lutheran School is an organization dedicated to fostering closer relationships between the home and the school. Under the direction of the Holy Ghost Board of Education, the PTL sponsors programs and activities that are of benefit to parents and teachers in the training and instruction of students. Each parent is encouraged to support this organization of which they become a member when their child is enrolled in Holy Ghost Lutheran School. Several meetings are held during the school year. Weekly updates about meetings and activities are announced in DoveTales. PTL operates under the by-laws of the PTL Handbook.

### PTL Events:

Throughout the year, the PTL puts on several events which are vital to our school culture and parent involvement. These events are intended for families of Holy Ghost Lutheran only, unless otherwise dictated by the PTL and school leadership. HGSL families are welcome to attend, and we expect students to be supervised by their parents during all events. Depending on the event, it may be necessary to verify active attendance prior to being allowed admittance. The two types of events are **open** and **closed**. Attendance at PTL events is a privilege, and those who attend are expected to adhere to the behavior expected during any other school event.

#### Open:

These events are intended for families of Holy Ghost, as well as friends and neighbors. During these events, all are welcome to attend and enjoy the fellowship offered by our school community.

#### Closed:

These events are intended for families and students of Holy Ghost only. These closed events are intended to increase the bonds of fellowship between our school families and are therefore not offered to friends and neighbors of our Holy Ghost Community.

## Pick-Up Procedure:

Parents will be asked to indicate what is to be the normal, everyday, mode of transportation to and from school. No student may leave school in other than the indicated procedure without WRITTEN permission (given by the parent or guardian).

#### Bus:

Students who normally take the bus to and/or from school will line up as assigned and will be dismissed to the bus upon its arrival. Students may ride only the bus to which they are assigned. Normally, the drivers cannot take additional students or take a student to other than the designated "home" location.



## Car:

- Arrival:
  - Students are to arrive not earlier than 8:10 AM unless they are enrolled in the Latch Key program. Upon arrival, students should complete tasks to prepare for a day of learning..
- Departure:
  - Students will prepare for school departure as assigned by the teacher. Students are dismissed by name, when their ride (designated person) arrives in the “car line” and is announced by the teacher. Students will be loaded in their parent’s, or guardian’s, car. Students will not be dismissed to any other than the designated pick-up person(s) without WRITTEN permission of the parent or guardian.

## Walking:

Students who walk home will be dismissed from the Car Line Door after Car Line Dismissal is completed. Any change in these arrangements by the family must be made in writing and submitted to the office and teacher.

## School Insurance:

The fee for school accident insurance is included in the registration fee.

## Special Milk Program:

Holy Ghost Lutheran School serves milk (both 1% white milk and chocolate milk) daily to students at lunchtime. The school receives reimbursement for each carton of milk served. In the operation of the Special Milk Program, as in all Child Nutrition Programs, no child shall be discriminated against because of race, sex, color or national origin, age or handicap. If you believe you have been discriminated against, write immediately to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250

## Testing Program:

Holy Ghost Lutheran School evaluates its programs and the academic growth of the students using various standardized tests. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Achievement Testing: Stanford or equivalent given in the spring
- New York State testing: in the areas of Science, Math, & English Language Arts
- Local Diagnostic testing: teacher established assessment to chart student progress

## Transportation:

Many school districts offer bus services to families to help transport students to and from school. These arrangements must be made by the parents of the student with the school district they reside in.

Transportation requests must be submitted to the transportation department of the school district of residence by April 1 for the coming school year.

If a child is not a resident on April 1, a written request must be submitted within 30 days after establishing residency. Later requests will be submitted to the District Superintendent and will be considered by the district Board of Education of residence upon his/her recommendation.

Public school districts create and implement rules for conduct that apply to all students riding the bus. Parents are reminded that children riding the bus are expected to behave in a Christian manner. Discipline problems are reported by the bus driver to Holy Ghost Lutheran School and action is taken. Parents will be notified when students are referred to the office by the bus driver

## Volunteers:

Most schools could not function without the assistance of volunteer services. Volunteer services include; room mothers, field trip parents, lunch helpers, fundraising helpers, coaches and assistants, etc. Those wishing to volunteer in the school must meet with the principal, pass a background check, and sign in with the school office whenever in the school building during school hours. Volunteers may only be present in the school building during active volunteering times and will work under the supervision of school staff at all times.

## Social Media Policy:

Holy Ghost makes a reasonable effort to ensure students' safety and security online. Parents and teachers are expected to follow the same rules for good behavior and respectful conduct online as offline. Misuse of social media can result in disciplinary action. We've created these social networking/media guidelines for you to follow when representing the school in the virtual world.

Please do the following:

- Use good judgment and be constructive. (i.e., talk about the school, student life, and teaching staff in a positive manner.)
- You must know and follow the school's Parent/Student handbook guidelines for acceptable behavior.
- Regardless of your privacy settings, assume that all of the information you have shared on your social network is public information.
- Always treat others in a respectful, positive and considerate manner.

- Be responsible and ethical.
- Be open about your affiliation with the school and the role/position you hold.

Do not:

- Give out or transmit personal and/ or confidential information of students, parents, or co-workers.
- Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others - staff or students.
- Post negative comments or ideas about students, parents, teachers, or the school.
- Use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom.

Please be cautious with respect to:

- Images.
- Brand, trademark, copyright information and/or images of the school.
- other sites - A significant part of the interaction on blogs, Twitter/X, Facebook and other social networks involves passing on interesting content or linking to helpful resources. However, the school is ultimately responsible for any content that is shared. Do not blindly repost a link without looking at the content first.

And if you don't get it right:

Be sure to immediately correct any mistake and make it clear what you've done to fix it.

Apologize for the mistake if the situation warrants it.

If it's a MAJOR mistake (e.g., exposing private information or reporting confidential information), please let someone know immediately so the school can take the proper steps to help minimize the impact

I would like to add the following statements in the handbook:

Each classroom is a safe and nurturing environment, and children feel valued as individuals and empowered to try new things.

Most importantly, your child will be known and loved.

At Holy Ghost Lutheran School, we have expectations for our students regarding their academic performance and behavior. Our philosophy is that making good choices is a skill that develops

with age and practice. While no person makes good choices 100% of the time, we encourage students to focus their attention and efforts on the behaviors described below. Respect teachers, parents, and peers. Evidence of this choice is seen through the student's actions and words.

- Represent our school in a positive way, whether on our campus or away from school.
- Come to school prepared to learn. Adequate sleep, completed homework assignments, and a positive attitude are examples of preparedness.
- Manage his/her behavior in ways that enhance his/her own learning and the learning of others. Examples of effective behavior management are following class rules, staying focused, paying attention, keeping hands and feet to selves, and speaking when appropriate.
- Choose to demonstrate a kind and caring attitude toward others.
- Choose to respect individual differences.
- Choose to honor personal safety and the safety of others when at work and play.
- Choose to give each task his/her best each day.
- Choose to take responsibility for his/her actions, behaviors, and decisions.
- Choose to accept responsibility for his/her learning.
- Choose to share with others.
- Choose to speak truthfully about self and others.
- Children are always to show reverence for the house of God when entering and leaving Church.

### **HGLS Technology Guidelines**

The following Guidelines are to promote responsible and acceptable use of technology at HGLS.

#### **Technology Use Guidelines:**

1. Student behavior in the digital world is to hold to the same HGLS behavior guidelines as if they are in a classroom or school hallway.
2. The digital network and media lab are provided for students to use for school purposes only. Students must have an educational goal when using any school internet access points.
3. Digital social communication outside the HGLS.org educational domain is prohibited at school. This includes but is not limited to texting, chatting, video conferencing, blogging, emailing, gaming, and purchasing applications.
4. Physical or electronic tampering with computer resources is not permitted. Any damage resulting will be charged to the parents for reimbursements to the school.
5. The use of the students' personal technology is prohibited unless specifically requested by HGLSteachers for educational purposes. Personal technology is included but is not limited to laptops, e-book readers, tablets, etc.

#### After School Clubs-

Holy Ghost Lutheran School offers various after school club opportunities. School clubs promote fellowship and can offer rewarding learning experiences that enhance the school curricular program. Participation in clubs may require fees and special arrangements of after school rides. Ideas to establish new clubs must have principal approval and a teacher sponsor, who will oversee and be present during club activities.