

*Lake Michigan Catholic
Elementary School*



*Student & Family
Handbook
2010-2011*

Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School Handbook

MISSION STATEMENT

Nourishing the human spirit – *Mind, Body, and Soul* – through Jesus Christ

PHILOSOPHY

“Christian community is not merely a concept to be taught but a reality to be lived.”

Pope John Paul II

Lake Michigan Catholic Schools recognize parents as the primary educators of their children. It is with the active involvement of our parents that we provide a uniquely Catholic educational experience which encompasses the whole person: spiritual, moral, intellectual, emotional and physical. Together we strive for excellence in order to develop the students’ potential into talents and abilities channeled for the service of God and the betterment of humankind and self, by modeling upon the life of Jesus Christ in His teachings as handed down by the Catholic Church.

Lake Michigan Catholic Schools will:

- emphasize commitment to Church which fosters the spiritual growth of students
- collaborate to meet the individual needs of students
- develop servant leaders
- stress critical thinking skills in the light of moral reasoning
- foster and strengthen self-discipline
- develop a responsibility for peace and justice
- enhance students’ ability to function in a technological world
- challenge students to continue to develop their potential as life-long learners

These hope-filled students, rooted in our Catholic tradition, will be eager to face, in faith and trust, an uncertain future with a critical, reflective, creative and peaceful anticipation.

KALAMAZOO DIOCESAN EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY

Bishop Paul Bradley – Bishop of Kalamazoo Diocese
Very Reverend Fr. William Jacobs, SS John & Bernard Parish
Fr. Jim Morris, St. Joseph Parish
Margaret Erich – Superintendent of Schools
Sally Amman – Assistant Superintendent of Schools

ADMINISTRATION

John Berlin, Executive Director
Jody Maher, Principal

STUDENT & FAMILY SERVICES

Business Office Director – Cindy Payovich, 983-5529
Cafeteria Services Director – Denise Copi, 429-0227
Counseling & Social Work – Kathleen Smart, 429-0227 or 983-2511
Development Coordinator – Chris Glendenning, 429-0227
Librarian & Media Center Director – Janice Mathews, 429-0227
Liturgist – Peggy Gallagher, 429-0227
Maintenance – Dan Gatchell, 983-2511, Ext. 29
SCRIP – 429-0227
Technology Coordinator – Pam Barden, 429-0227 or 983-2511

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School! This handbook provides an effective means to communicate our guidelines and procedures to parents and students. However, there are times when unforeseen circumstances occur that fall outside the scope of the handbook. The Administration reserves the right to handle these circumstances on a situational basis.

HISTORY & INFORMATION STATEMENT

The merger of St. John and St. Joseph Catholic Schools in 1969 marked the new beginning of Lake Michigan Catholic Middle/High School. Since then, LMC has been a K-12 system serving southwestern Michigan with Catholic education tradition. We are grateful to SS. John & Bernard and St. Joseph parishes and the Twin-City Area Catholic School Fund, Inc. for their generous financial support.

LMC schools are a part of the educational system established by the Diocese of Kalamazoo and are subject to the policies of the Diocesan Office of Schools.

LMC is accredited by the Michigan Non-public Schools Accrediting Association.

In accordance with Title IX compliance, LMC does not discriminate on the basis of sex, religious affiliation, race, color, physical challenges, or national origin in admissions or employment opportunities. LMC operates as a drug and weapon free school.

DIOCESAN EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY

Bishop Paul J. Bradley – Bishop of Kalamazoo Diocese
Margaret Erich – Superintendent of Schools
Sally Amman – Assistant Superintendent of Schools

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School offers a full academic program, including religion, math, reading, science, social studies, English, spelling, handwriting, physical education, music, art, Spanish and computers. A band program begins in the 5th grade.

ACCREDITATION

The Michigan Association of Non Public Schools (MANS) accredits Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School.

ADMISSION POLICY

Lake Michigan Catholic Schools is dedicated to an integrated ministry championing the four dimensions of Catholic education: message, community, service, and worship. Our mission has established a holistic education of Catholic students as its priority.

No child shall be denied admission to the school on the basis of religious affiliation, race, color, or national origin or economic status. Students with special needs will be accepted as long as Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary Schools feels it can adequately meet that student's needs.

Registration Priorities

Families who are presently enrolled, and whose accounts are current, shall have first priority in registering for the following year. Contributing members of the Bi-Parish and any Parish subsidizing their members' Catholic education at Lake Michigan Catholic shall be next priority. Open enrollment will be held for other individuals interested in attending Lake Michigan Catholic Schools on a first come first serve basis until enrollment is completed.

Register by completing an application. A conference with principal, parents/guardians and the student will be required. The philosophy, mission, goals, and the applicant's previous academic and social record will be reviewed. If enrollment is acceptable for both parties, the student will be conditionally accepted.

Registration with the Business Office follows the conference. Any admittance to the Lake Michigan Catholic Schools is to be regarded as probationary until the student's previous school permanent record is on file.

Children entering our 2-day three-year-old preschool must reach his/her 3rd birthday prior to September 1, 2010. Children entering our 3 or 5-day four-year-old preschool must reach his/her 4th birthday prior to September 1, 2010. Parents must submit a copy of their child's birth certificate.

Children entering Junior Kindergarten/ Kindergarten must reach his/her 5th birthday prior to December 1, 2010. Every child entering Kindergarten will be administered the Gesell Developmental Assessment or ABC Inventory Extended to determine school readiness. A recommendation will be made to place the child in Kindergarten or Junior Kindergarten. Parents must submit a copy of their child's birth certificate.

Vision and hearing screening must be completed prior to entry into Jr. Kindergarten or Kindergarten. This can be done by the child's pediatrician or through the County Health Department.

Michigan School Law requires that each child be immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis, measles, rubella, mumps, Varicella pneumococcal and Hepatitis B before entering school for the first time. In accordance with this law, Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School requires all students to submit proof of these immunizations prior to admission.

ABSENCE/ATTENDANCE

If a child is absent, the parent should call the school (269-429-0227) to inform us of the absence and the reason. If doctor's appointments cannot be made outside of school hours, advance notification should be given to the school.

Students should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Students who are sent home during the school day with a fever will not be allowed to return to school the next day as this would not allow for the 24 hour protection of the entire school community.

It is recognized that family vacations are sometimes scheduled during school time and that travel is a valuable educational experience. But, it is not fair to expect a teacher to repeat missed lessons, or to prepare work for a week or more in advance. Therefore, students are to collect the work upon their return, unless otherwise agreed upon with the classroom teacher. The work may be given credit only if it is completed and returned to the teacher within the number of school days missed.

Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School has created steps to improve the absenteeism. We believe that there is a direct relationship between regular attendance and a student's academic and job success. The steps are as follows:

1. **After 3 consecutive days of absence**, a note is required from the doctor stating the reason for the absence.
2. **After 3 days of absence per quarter**, we send a note stating our concern.
3. **After 5 days of absence per quarter**, we refer your child to the school Social Worker.
4. **After 10 days of absence per quarter**, we turn the matter over to the Truant Officer at the Berrien RESA.

AFTER-SCHOOL CARE PROGRAM

License No. DC110021928

The following material is presented as an “ongoing handbook” for the LMCES After-School Care Program. We have tried to include all information considered important to your child’s safety and for the basic operation of the program but we realize some things may have to be modified or changed. As the year progresses, you too may have some ideas which should be included. We welcome your suggestions as we all work together to make this a happy and worthwhile place for both child and family.

Sue Zilke, After-School Care Coordinator, 429-1522 or 429-0227

Program Philosophy – Open from 2:50 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. each school day, the After-School Care Program provides professional care, supervision, and recreation and enrichment activities for preschool through grade 5 students. It serves working families who desire both grammar school education and supplementary after-school care in a Catholic environment for children enrolled in Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School.

This professionally operated program allows children to experience a rich diversity of growth activities within a Catholic environment. The activities are planned to complement the philosophy and value systems of the school and family. Arts and crafts projects, science experiments, games and recreation, and snack time are just a few of the activities planned. There is also a time set aside for homework completion with resource materials available. Within a large family environment, the program strives to provide individual attention, security, consistency and fair treatment for children of working parents.

The After-School Care program is staffed by an experienced director and a number of devoted and committed teachers/teacher aides. These people work together to help each child grow in maturity and self-respect as well as to maintain an atmosphere wherein respect and understanding for others is realized.

Important Parental Responsibilities

Emergencies/Safety – With the children’s safety and wellbeing in mind, it is MOST important that the parent fill out an emergency card and then adhere to the following rules:

- Parents or guardians will sign children out on the daily log. (daily control sheet)
- Parents or guardians should not take children from the schoolyard or other areas without notifying the After-School Care staff.
- Parents or guardians should not send persons whose names are not on the emergency card to ask for the release of children.
- Photo identification is required for those on the card other than the parents.

Fees and “Pick-ups” – Fees are to be paid biweekly upon receipt of an invoice. **Please pay all fees by check.** Checks should be made out to “Lake Michigan Catholic Schools.” Checks should be sent to school with your son/daughter and sent to the School Office through the classroom teacher or mailed directly to the school.

<u>Fee Schedule</u>	1 Child	\$ 8.50/day
	2 Children	\$17.00/day
	3 Children	\$25.00/day
<u>Half-Day Fee Schedule</u>	Child until 3:00 p.m.	\$ 8.50/day/child
	Child after 3:00 p.m.	\$15.00/day/child

Late Fee – \$10.00 first offense
Any additional lateness, fees are \$25.00

Staff members are employed until 5:30 p.m. It is only common courtesy to respect the time of closure. A \$10.00 per child fee will be assessed for the first late pick-up. An additional fee of \$25.00 will be charged for further late pickups.

Illness or Accident – In cases which appear to be of minor nature, first aid will be administered on the premises. In cases which appear serious, the Program Director will make an effort to carry out instructions as given on the emergency card.

PARENTS WILL BE EXPECTED TO MAKE PROVISIONS FOR TAKING SICK CHILDREN HOME. The After-School Care program does not have the facilities to care for sick children.

The Lake Michigan Catholic After-School Care program follows the same policy regarding dispensing medication as Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School and the Diocese of Kalamazoo. See **Medication Policy**.

Drop-In After-School Care – Our After-School Care program is available not only on an all week schedule but also on a drop-in or occasional basis. **A request for drop-in care must be made 24 hours in advance.** This allows the staff to know the number of children who will be present, to plan for the appropriate number of staff, and to stay within license parameters.

To request drop-in care, please call the School Office the day before you want to use the service. Please indicate when you will pick your child(ren) up. The Program Director will okay the request, unless the After-School Care enrollment is full.

Schedule of Operation

The program will follow the Lake Michigan Catholic Schools system calendar. A specific calendar will be published per year with days of operation. Please note: if the school closes due to weather conditions After-School Care is also closed.

Admission and Enrollment – Children must be enrolled students at Lake Michigan Catholic Schools. They must have a completed health form and have it on file with the school.

If a parent wishes to withdraw a child, the withdrawal must be discussed with the Director. If the program does not meet the needs of the child, he/she may be withdrawn. It may be possible that a child would need more supervision than we are able to provide.

Typical Activities – 2:50-5:30 p.m.

Attendance	Indoor play
Change clothes	Indoor music/art
Gym or outside play	Clean up
Homework help	

Expectations for Children's Behavior

As members of a Christian and caring community, the children will be expected to respect the staff, each other, and the materials and environment provided. They must never leave the building or grounds without explicit permission of the staff of the After-School Care program. Such permission will only be granted by order of the parent or guardian.

To maintain a professional atmosphere, we ask that all staff members be formally addressed as adults—that is, “Mr. Smith,” “Mrs. Jones,” or “Miss Andrews.” Informal use of staff members’ first names by students is inappropriate in the school setting.

Discipline – Children are expected to accept and follow the rules of the program. We will help children learn how to arbitrate their own disputes. A TIME OUT or separation from the group and activity will be used as needed. We will work with your child(ren) to help each child develop social and group skills. We do reserve the right to drop a child from the program who for reasons of maturity, behavior, etc. is disruptive to the program. This step will only be taken when absolutely necessary.

Electronics – Students attending After-School Care are not allowed to bring or use any hand-held electronics; this includes iPods or MP3 players, PSPs or Gameboys, and cell phones. Our After-School Care provides enough activities that additional devices are not to be brought to school for after-school use.

BAND

The school offers a quality band program under the direction of Mr. Joseph Jarvie for students in the 5th grade. Band is required and instruments will be provided for those with financial constraints. Concerts, which showcase the talents of these students, are held at Christmas and in the spring.

BIRTHDAY TREATS & INVITATIONS

Often students wish to bring a special treat on their birthday. Please work out details for this in advance with the child’s homeroom teacher. If students in your son’s/daughter’s classroom have food allergies, please be conscious of this when preparing a treat. If treats are brought to the school, they are to be provided for everyone in the class.

Invitations to private parties will not be handed out at school unless all children receive one, or all boys or all girls are invited.

BOMB-THREAT POLICY

A policy outlining procedures, which will be followed in the event of a bomb-threat at school, is on file in the School Office and published in the school crisis management plan. All necessary personnel are aware of this policy and are trained in its implementation. A copy is available in the School Office for parental review.

BOOKS AND SUPPLIES

As much as possible, all books and supplies are provided by the school. Books are loaned to the student for the duration of the school year. Should a book (or library book) be damaged through misuse or carelessness, a replacement fee will be assessed. This assessment must be paid before report cards are issued.

Classroom teachers will issue a list of supplies that need to be purchased by the parent. Included will be paper, pens, crayon, etc. Every effort is made to keep this list to a minimum.

BUILDING USE

The school building may be used by parish groups with the approval of the principal.

CAFETERIA RULES

Lunch period is designed to provide ample time for students to eat lunch yet minimize restlessness prior to recess. During lunch students should:

1. Respect supervisors, both staff and volunteers.
2. Eat neatly, talk quietly, and remain seated at all times.
3. Raise your hand for assistance or for permission to use the restroom.
4. Clean up your own area: empty trays/waste in garbage can and return to seat.
5. Observe silence when the supervisor claps or rings bell.
6. Remain in the lunchroom until dismissed.
7. Table cleaners are assigned by the classroom teachers. Table cleaners must:
 - A. Pick up badge in classroom prior to lunch.
 - B. Wipe tables and pick up floor as needed.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE

Every change of address or phone number must be reported to the Office immediately. Up-to-date records are essential in handling emergency situations.

CONFERENCES

Conferences are held at the end of the first quarter, and at the request of parent or teacher mid-way through the third quarter. In the event a problem does arise before scheduled conferences, normal procedure is to contact the teacher directly by calling the School Office or sending a note to the teacher expressing your concerns

DETENTION

Detention, or the removal of a student from regular activities (with supervision) for a period of time, is occasionally used as a means of discipline and reflection. Detention could be served during lunchtime, after school, or result in the child being removed from the classroom for one or more days. Severity of the offense determines the type and duration of a detention. Parents are always notified unless the detention is brief and for a minor offense.

DISCIPLINE CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

All members of the Lake Michigan Catholic School community have rights to a healthy and safe environment, respectful treatment by others, freedom from harassment and abuse, and to a positive learning environment. In support of these rights, all students are expected to:

1. Work diligently toward achieving educational and personal goals.
2. Accept responsibility for personal decisions and actions.
3. Be truthful.
4. Exhibit Christian behavior at all times: *respect, kindness, compassion, and consideration.*
5. Maintain self-control, avoid disruptive behavior, harassment and abuse toward others.
6. Treat all members of the school community with respect and dignity.
7. Obey instructions of staff, teachers and administrators.
8. Follow policies and procedures of the school.
9. Respect property of individuals and of the school.

DISCIPLINE RESPONSIBILITIES

Student responsibilities are defined in the Discipline Code of Student Conduct.

Staff, teachers, and administrator will strive to implement the discipline procedures patiently, fairly, constructively, consistently and uniformly. Teachers will review this document with their students at the beginning of the school year and answer any question as needed.

Parents are the first and foremost educators in the family setting. The school assists and supports parents in exercising that responsibility. Parents should read and discuss this document with the child(ren) at the beginning of each school year (additionally as needed), and cooperate with the discipline procedures. Parents will strive to cooperate with staff, teacher and administrator in the explaining and teaching student responsibilities and in the discipline process. Parents will support and reinforce the positions of staff, teachers and administrator.

Minor Offense – A referral slip will not be issued for a minor offense unless it is committed after repeated warnings and other attempts at resolution. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Disruptive behavior of a minor nature
- Uniform or dress code violation
- Conduct unbecoming a Christian

Senior Offense – A referral slip will be issued for serious offenses, after considering any mitigating factors. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Abuse of any form
- Bullying
- Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of dishonesty
- Disrespectful behavior affecting the function of the class
- Fighting
- Harassment in any form
- Intimidation or threat
- Failing to report to class or leaving without permission
- Possession of inappropriate, immoral, or offensive materials
- Inappropriate language or gestures
- Violation of school or playground rules
- Theft
- Vandalism or defacing property

Grievous Offense – A grievous offense is any act that has grievous threat or consequences to the health, safety or wellbeing of oneself or other members of the school community. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Possession of illegal substances
- Possession of weapons
- Violation of laws, ordinances, safety codes, or fire codes

A grievous offense will result in the immediate suspension of a student until the parents (or guardians), teacher(s), Administration and Pastor meet to determine if the student will be allowed to continue his/her enrollment.

Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action will depend on the grade of the student, the nature of the offense, and the number of referral slips accumulated for the school year. In addition to issuing referrals, other disciplinary measures may be applied at any time as deemed necessary or beneficial to motivate change. The loss of a field trip may occur or other privileges may also be suspended.

Incidents on the Playground

The supervising adult will resolve minor offenses on the playground. Any incident more serious than a minor offense will require removal of the student from the playground to the School Office for implementation of the above procedures.

Suspension from School

A student may be suspended anytime the administrator determines that a student's presence threatens the health or safety of others, impairs the normal activities of the school. Before the student is readmitted, a meeting will be held with the student, parent, teacher(s), administrator and pastor to resolve the situation. There will be no student participation in school events while under suspension, including sports.

DISMISSAL

Traffic congestion is a concern. For the safety of all students we ask that the published dismissal procedures be followed.

Regular Daily Dismissal – School dismisses at 2:50 p.m. and at 3:00 p.m. Students are to be picked up by parents immediately after school. Teacher's supervisory obligations end at 3:15 p.m. Students not picked up by that time will be supervised by the After-School Care staff. The fee is \$8.50 per child per visit. Children cannot be left unsupervised.

Half-Day Dismissal – Half-days are published on the school calendar. Regular dismissal procedures are followed starting at 11:15 a.m. with the second group dismissing at 11:25 a.m. to avoid traffic congestion.

Emergency Dismissal – If school is dismissed early due to serious deteriorating weather conditions or other emergencies (such as extended loss of power or water), announcements will be made via local media and by phone. The Lake Michigan Catholic School website, www.lmclakers.org, will also be a means of notification, as well as instructions for school dismissal, emergency evacuation sites, or pertinent information in case of emergency. All children must be accounted for with the classroom teacher or through the Office before leaving the building. During emergency closings, please follow these guidelines:

- **Stay with your car.** Staff will be on hand to identify cars and drivers, check permission, and will call the students over the PA system.
- **Never take a child who is not in your regular carpool without parent’s permission.** LMC accepts phone permission in this circumstance only.
- **Teachers will mark each child as dismissed** upon receiving notice from the Office that the child may leave.

DRESS CODE

Lake Michigan Catholic has had a dress code since the school’s inception. The purpose of the code is twofold. First, a pleasing appearance in school and particularly at Mass will reflect a considerate attitude toward others and toward God. Second, the dress code is meant to minimize fashion as a focus of attention: students will find countless other positive opportunities throughout the school day to express their individuality. Toward these ends attire is expected to be neat and clean and meet the specifications listed.

All Students’ Summer Uniform – First Day of School-October 15 and May 1-Last Day of School

- Long or short sleeved PLAIN white dress shirt
- Long or short sleeved PLAIN white polo shirt
- Navy blue DRESS short (**girls or boys**)
- Navy blue DRESS skort (**girls only**)
- White crew socks
- Tennis shoes, or dress shoes (NO boots, sandals, flip flops, clogs or Crocs)

All Students’ Regular Uniform – October 15-April 30

- Long or short sleeved PLAIN white dress shirt
- Long or short sleeved PLAIN white polo shirt
- White turtleneck/mock turtleneck
- Lands’ End Hunter/Classic navy plaid jumper (**girls, Grades K-3**)
- Lands’ End Hunter/Classic navy plaid **pleated** skirt or skort (**girls, Grades 4 & 5**)
- Navy blue DRESS slacks (corduroys may be worn in colder months)
- Dark or white crew socks (**boys**)
- White, navy or hunter green socks or tights (**girls**)
- Navy or white cardigan or sweater vest
- Laker crested sweatshirt
- Tennis shoes or dress shoes (No boots, sandals, flip flops, clogs, or Crocs)

Dress Uniform – Required for ALL mass days and other occasions as requested by the teacher/school.

Boys

- Navy dress slacks
- Long or short sleeved white DRESS shirt ONLY
- Navy or white cardigan or sweater vest
- Dark or white crew socks
- Tennis or dress shoes.
- Plain navy blue or Lands’ End Hunter/Class navy plaid tie **ONLY** (Grades 2-5)

Girls

- Lands’ End Hunter/Classic navy plaid jumper (Grades K-3)
- Lands’ End Hunter/Classic navy plaid skirt or skort (Grades 4 & 5)
- Long or short sleeved PLAIN white DRESS blouse
- Navy or white cardigan or sweater vest
- PLAIN white, navy or hunter green socks or tights
- Tennis shoes or dress shoes (No sandals, flip flops, clogs, or Crocks)

Non-Uniform Days – first Friday of every Month

The first Friday of every month will be a non-uniform day. Occasionally, other special days will be designated a non-uniform day. On these days, students are to wear clean clothes that are in good condition and in good taste. Items such as crop tops or others which expose body parts not meant to be seen in school, shirts with reference to drugs, tobacco, sex or alcohol and other articles of clothing which interfere with any student’s ability to concentrate or study, shall be considered in violation of this policy. Only uniform shorts may be worn on non-uniform days during shorts season. **NO** sweatpants or nylon running pants may be worn. Pants must be worn around the waist, not hanging low.

****NOTES****

- The regular uniform may also be worn during the summer months.
- A separate pair of gym shoes is required for physical education class. They are to be kept in the student's classroom.
- Scout uniforms may be worn to school on Scout meeting days even if the meeting day is a Mass day.
- **NO** hats or scarves are to be worn during the school day.
- Dress shorts and dress slacks should not have rivets, patch pockets or be jean-style. **NO** short shorts are permitted.
- Hair should be out of eyes at all times and for boys, off the collar as they look at their shoes as a guide for the appropriate length.
- **NO** colored hair dye and **NO** temporary tattoos are permitted.
- **NO** boots worn in place of shoes is permitted.
- All students' hair should be out of their eyes.

DRUG PREVENTION PROGRAM

An age-appropriate, developmentally-based drug and alcohol education and prevention curriculum has been implemented at Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School. The curriculum addresses the legal, social, moral, and health consequences of drug and alcohol use or possession. This curriculum also provides information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to engage in the illicit use of drugs and alcohol. This curriculum piece is provided by Kathleen Smart, our social worker.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM

Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School offers early childhood programs that include a preschool program for 3-year olds, 4-year-olds, Junior Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and Kindergarten Enrichment.

Little Laker Preschool

Three-Year-Old Programs: Age requirement: 3 by September 1, 2010.
Meeting Monday & Wednesday from 8:00-10:30 a.m. OR
Meeting Monday-Wednesday-Friday from 8:00-10:30 a.m.

Four-Year-Old Programs: Age requirement: 4 by September 1, 2010.
Meeting Monday-Friday from 8:00-10:30 a.m. OR
Meeting Monday-Friday from 12:15-2:50 p.m.

Little Laker Preschools allow youngsters to ease into one of the most exciting chapters of their lives in an environment that celebrates our Catholic faith and reinforces the values established in the home. Loving our neighbors, doing what Jesus would do, and finding God in one another are at the core of what is taught every day. We develop in the children a positive self-image, independence, self-control, along with a sense of responsibility, respect, cooperation, and trust.

Learning activities include: large group learning, play, snack time, and small group learning. The five major areas of early childhood growth and development covered throughout the year are: gross-motor coordination, visual motor, language skills, reasoning abilities, and auditory learning.

Uniforms are not required for preschool.

Junior Kindergarten Age requirement: 5 by December 1, 2010.

Junior Kindergarten is a half-day program that meets Monday-Friday from 8:00-11:15 a.m. It emphasizes social and emotional growth and maturity. At the end of the junior kindergarten year, parents will see more readiness for kindergarten. Their children will have achieved longer attention spans, improvement in fine motor skills, social, emotional, and spiritual growth, and gain an overall maturity for reading and writing in Kindergarten.

Uniforms are not required for Junior Kindergarten.

Kindergarten Age requirement: 5 by December 1, 2010.

Kindergarten meets Monday-Friday from 8:00-11:15. Kindergartners wear the school uniform. Kindergarten can best be described as a place where children *can learn, do learn and like to learn*. It is just a beginning! It ascribes to the "whole child" philosophy. It exists to develop the personal readiness of children and to help them take the first steps in the total educational process. Within its carefully planned framework, children easily go from task to task, laying a foundation for future growth. In such a flexible and supportive structure, children learn to love and support themselves and show concern for others and all created things.

Kindergarten Enrichment

Enrichment is an optional but highly recommended program in that it continues our philosophy to educate the "whole child." Our academic Kindergarten leaves little time for the fine arts. To help solve this situation, we added a few hours to our day, and devoted these hours to fine arts instruction.

Uniforms are not required for Kindergarten.

Students enrolled in the Kindergarten Enrichment program will have lunch in the cafeteria at 11:15 a.m. and after a ½ hour recess the children go back to their classroom. Enrichment includes: social studies and science units, health, physical education, music, drama, computers, art and field trips.

Early Childhood Screening

If parents desire to place their child in the Junior Kindergarten program, the School will NOT do a placement screening.

Children meeting the Kindergarten age requirement will automatically be screened. Based upon on birthdate, either the ABC Inventory or Gesell Developmental Assessment will be administered. After the screening, parents will be notified of the results, and a Junior Kindergarten or Kindergarten recommendation will be made. Our experience has been that these test recommendations are highly reliable, and we are confident that whatever recommendation is made, your son/daughter would best thrive in that environment.

Further information regarding our Early Childhood Programs is available in our Elementary School Office.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Once the school day has begun, no student may leave without authorization from the Office. When a family emergency requires an early dismissal, parents are asked to contact the Office so arrangements can be made. When parents pick up their children early, they are requested to report to the Office. Parents are to notify the teacher if there is a change in the children's after-school routine. Refer to ABSENCE/ATTENDANCE for homework policy for missed assignments due an early dismissal.

EDUCATION COMMISSION

The Catholic Community Education Commission is the policy-making advisory body for Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School. Meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. at either the Rose Center or St. Bernard's Parish Center on the fourth Thursday of every other month with the exception of July.

ELECTRONICS

Students attending Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School are not allowed to bring or use any hand-held electronics; this includes iPods or MP3 players, PSPs or Gameboys, and cell phones.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Snow and bad weather closings will be announced on area radio stations beginning at 6:30 a.m. Please listen to local radio stations, Channel 16-WNDU TV, Channel 22-WSBT TV, or refer to www.wsjm.com. School closings will also be posted on our school's website, www.lmclakers.org.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School sponsors many extra-curricular activities such as Mini-Laker basketball for boys and girls, Trekking Club, Girls on the Run, pompons, safety patrol, Boy and Girl Scouting and drama.

FIELD TRIPS

All classes take at least one school-sponsored field trip during the year. All trips have been designed for their educational value. Transportation for field trips is usually by Lake Michigan Catholic bus. ALL STUDENTS MUST HAVE A SIGNED PARENTAL PERMISSION SLIP ON FILE BEFORE THEY ARE ALLOWED TO GO ON FIELD TRIPS. Permission slips signed by parent or guardian must be in the Office 24 hours before the date of the trip. Telephone calls cannot be accepted to give permission for field trip participation. For the school's own protection, no exception can be made to this rule. A faxed permission slip will be accepted in cases of extenuating circumstances, such as an absence on the day the slips were distributed.

Field trips with outdoor activities will be cancelled due to inclement weather, unless a make-up date can be scheduled within calendar restraints.

Since field trips are a privilege, any child who does not complete school work or who displays improper behavior will not be allowed to participate on the field trip. Those who may not attend a field trip due to these reasons are expected to attend school, and will remain in the school building under supervision doing appropriate academic activities.

Parents are often invited to accompany students as chaperones. Parents who want to chaperone **must** complete the *Protecting God's Children Program*, and submit to a background check. The number of parent chaperones is sometimes limited if space at the trip destination is insufficient. Chaperones are not always admitted free at events, and if this is the case, the chaperones are asked to pay the price of their admission. We ask that parents not bring younger siblings on field trips because they often distract from chaperoning duties.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

LMC is financially supported by student tuition and fees, Bi-Parish contributions, the Twin-City Area Catholic School Fund, Inc., and special fund-raising projects. Except for limited auxiliary services and Title funding, LMC does not utilize state aid.

The Twin-City Area Catholic School Fund (TCACSF) is an organization that has established a base of financial support, a self-perpetuating endowment fund for the Lake Michigan Catholic School System.

Support of LMC goes beyond finances. It involves parents and students working on projects and programs. People giving time and talent help assure a quality educational system.

FIRE/TORNADO/SHELTER IN PLACE DRILLS

There will be 6 fire drills, 2 tornado drills and 2 shelter-in-place drills conducted each year. This is in compliance with state and diocesan guidelines.

FUND-RAISERS

QSP Magazine Sale – The QSP magazine Sale has been part of Laker fund-raising for 15 years and is held in September. The proceeds are used throughout the year to pay for various school projects, including almost all our field trips, etc. The magazine sale is a perfect opportunity for Laker families to renew magazines that are already received in the home, order a new subscription or give subscriptions as Christmas gifts.

Innisbrook Gift Wrap Sale – Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School has participated in the Gift Wrap Sale which has become a system wide success. Innisbrook's line of high-quality paper and gift products are offered in the fall so that Christmas items are received in time for the holidays. Proceeds supplement the school's general operating fund. Year-round orders may be placed at www.innisbrook.com using the LMC code 101970

Burger King Coupon Books – The sale is held beginning Catholic Schools Week, in January and February each year. The coupon books cost \$3 apiece and are worth over \$80 in Burger King and affiliated restaurants' menu items. The proceeds from the Burger King Coupon Sale supplement the school's general operating fund.

Market Day – Market Day is a monthly fund-raiser where parents are able to order restaurant quality food items, which are delivered frozen. Orders can be placed by filling out an order form and dropping it off in the School Office, or by going online to www.marketday.com and using Lake Michigan Catholic School's ordering code #19457. Market Day has been in business for over 30 years and the quality of service and product are exceptional. The money earned will go toward focused program needs at the elementary school.

SCENE AUCTION – The SCENE (Strong Catholic Education Needs Everyone) Auction is THE major fund-raiser for the Lake Michigan Catholic School system. This event is held in the spring each year. It is through the time, effort and hard work of hundreds of people (work that begins shortly after the school year begins!) that the SCENE Auction has been so successful. You will be given an opportunity to offer your help and services with this year's Auction, and we hope you will welcome the opportunity to meet other Laker families through your support of this fund-raiser. NEW faces and new ideas are always welcome. Proceeds from the SCENE Auction supplement the general operating budget of the school.

SCRIP – The Lake Michigan Catholic Scrip Program has become a solid foundation of income for our school's families. This is a fund-raising program that does not ask for any more money than you would normally spend on gas, groceries, gifts, etc. Place an order with LMC for scrip (gift certificates) which you use in place of money at participating stores. LMC purchases scrip at a discount, and sells it to you at face value. The parents receive 100% of the profits, which can be used toward next year's tuition, contributed to the parish, other school families, or the general operating fund. The discounts range from 2% to 20%. Order forms are available from all the School Offices.

A complete list of these and subsequently adopted fund-raising programs is available at www.lmclakers.org under "Information > Fund-Raising."

HARASSMENT

Lake Michigan Catholic students are directed not to be party to any form of racial, ethnic, sexual, and/or emotional conflict or to any harassment. **Encounters of this nature should immediately be brought to the attention of the administrator.**

HOMEWORK

Homework is given regularly in all grades. It is assigned as a means to help students review, strengthen, and enrich subject matter taught in the class that day. Written homework is not the only type of work given; oral and study assignments are also assigned. The student needs to realize that homework is a responsibility, with an emphasis on completeness, accuracy and neatness.

The amount of homework varies from grade to grade. It is important to find out from the teacher(s) what is expected with regard to homework. Homework policies are established by grade level teachers and are explained at Back to School night. It is each student's responsibility to abide by the teacher's policy and turn in quality work on a timely basis.

HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

Hot lunches and/or milk may be purchased monthly. Menus and cost are published on a monthly calendar and sent home with the students. Money is presented to the homeroom teacher for lunch/milk and then forwarded to the Office. If a student forgets his/her money or sack lunch, they are never allowed to go hungry. We provide a hot lunch, and send a note home asking parents to reimburse us for the lunch.

HOURS

Office hours 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

School hours 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

After School Care 2:50 p.m.-5:30 p.m.

Messages may be left on our answering machine after hours.

IMMUNIZATIONS

ALL students entering Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School for the first time must be immunized in accordance with state law. Immunization records signed by a doctor or a signed waiver must be submitted to the School Office before a child may start school.

INSURANCE

Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School carries liability insurance through Gallagher/Bassett in Lansing. The diocese also provides student accident/medical coverage for all students. Specific details and claims forms are available in the School Office.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO TELL THE SCHOOL WHEN

- Your child is on any kind of medication.
- A separation or divorce is pending and could affect your child's behavior or performance.
- Any change in custodial rights, or names.
- A family member is seriously ill.
- Your phone number or address changes.
- Any event that seriously upsets your child.
- Your child has allergies, especially to bee stings or food products.
- YOU think it is important.

LAKER FAMILY UNITY NETWORK (Laker F.U.N)

The purpose of Laker F.U.N. is to promote and enhance the family atmosphere within our school community, support student involvement in school activities, provide additional opportunities to interact with school staff, and raise money to support school projects. Laker F.U.N. is open to everyone interested in LMC and LMC's students. Watch monthly calendars for meetings dates and times.

LINE OF AUTHORITY

If you have a school related concern that you wish to address openly, you are asked to follow this line of authority: Teacher, Principal, Executive Director, Catholic Community Education Commission, Pastors and the Diocesan Office of Schools. Parents who call the school with concerns will be asked to follow this policy strictly!

LOCKDOWN/SHELTER-IN-PLACE DRILLS

There will be 2 school lockdown/shelter-in-place drills conducted each year. This is in compliance with state and diocesan regulations. Communication regarding these drills will take place after the drills are conducted.

LOCKED DOOR POLICY

To ensure your children's safety, all doors to the School are kept locked during the school day. All doors can always be used to exit the building. The cafeteria and Office entrance doors are opened from 7:30-8:00 a.m. and then locked, with a camera/buzzer system in place to allow entrance into the school at the Office entrance. All visitors are required to sign in at the Office.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found articles are kept in a basket outside the Cafeteria. All clothing or other articles bearing a child's name are returned to him/her. Unmarked articles are kept for a period of four weeks and then given to a charitable organization.

MEDICATION POLICY

I. Policies and Procedures for Administering Medications

The following definition of “medication” is adopted for use in the Diocese of Kalamazoo schools: medication includes prescription, non-prescription, and herbal medications, and includes those taken by mouth, by inhaler, those that are injectable, and those applied as drops to eyes, nose, or medication applied to skin.

A. Policies

1. The pupil’s parent/guardian will give the school written permission and request to administer medications to their child.
2. Written instructions from a physician, which includes the pupil’s name, name of medication, dosage of medication, route of administration, and time the medication is to be administered to the pupil shall accompany the request and be kept on record by the school.
3. Parental or guardian request/permission and a physician’s instructions for administration shall be renewed every school year.
4. The building administrator will designate the individual(s) responsible for administering medications to pupils at that school.
5. Medications must be administered by one adult in the presence of another, except where the person administering the medications is a licensed nurse or when emergency threatens the life or health of the pupil.
6. Each building shall have a plan for handling medical emergencies.
7. Students with disabilities should be included under the policy and procedures that govern administration of medications.

B. Procedures

1. A building administrator may set a reasonable designated time for the administration of medications. The parent/guardian shall be informed of this time and communicate such to the child’s physician. The school may request that the physician send a written explanation if an exception to the school’s designated time is necessary.
2. A building administrator shall request that the pharmacy supply the oral medication in the exact dosage prescribed so the person administering the medications is not responsible for dividing or splitting pills.
3. Any adverse reaction to medication, as described on the physician’s written instructions, shall be reported to the pupil’s parent immediately.
4. Any errors made in the administration of medications shall be reported to the building administrator immediately, and a written report completed and entered into the students’ school record. The school administrator is responsible for reporting the medication error to the pupil’s parent immediately.
5. When it is necessary for a pupil to have medication administered while on a school-sponsored field trip, the individual designated to administer medication must carry the medication in the original container and record the necessary information on the medication log upon return from the trip.

II. Policies for Self-Administration/Self-Possession of Medications

The following definition of “self-administration/self-possession” is adopted for use in diocesan schools. Self-administration means that the pupil is able to consume or apply medication in the manner directed by the physician without additional assistance or direction. Self-possession means that the pupil may carry medication on his/her person to allow for immediate and self-determined administration.

1. A pupil whose parent/guardian and physician provide written permission will be able to self-administer and self-possess his or her own medication. Each of the student’s teachers will be notified of the student’s self-possession/self-medication permission by the building administrator.
2. A medication that a pupil possesses must be labeled and prepared by a pharmacy or pharmaceutical company and include the dosage and frequency of administration.
3. A pupil’s use cannot be denied if the conditions of written permission and physician direction are met. A building administrator may discontinue a pupil’s right to self-administer and self-possession if there is misuse by the pupil. The denial shall follow a consultation with the parent and/or guardian.

III. Policies and Procedures for School Staff Training

A. Policy

All individuals designated to administer medication are encouraged to receive in-service training on all district policies and procedures related to this responsibility. School staff must be trained by a licensed registered professional nurse, physician, or physician assistant who has knowledge of local school medication policies and procedures.

B. Procedures

1. In-service training is recommended to be four hours in length and actual “hands-on” practice in identifying and dispensing medications.
2. Individuals, with the exception of a licensed registered professional nurse, who are responsible for administering any medications that must be given by injection, by nebulizer, or administered rectally, vaginally, or into the bladder, must receive one-to-one training by a licensed health-care professional.
3. Documentation that school personnel have completed such in-service training shall be maintained by the school and made available, upon request, to a pupil’s parent/guardian, physician, licensed registered professional nurse, or by a school district official.

IV. Polices and Procedures for Storage and Access to Medications in Schools

A. Policies

1. All medication shall be kept in a labeled container as prepared by a pharmacy, physician, or pharmaceutical company with the pupil's name, the name of the medication, dosage, and frequency of administration.
2. Medications shall be stored in a school location that is kept locked.
3. Emergency medications may be stored in an area readily accessible to the individual designated to administer them.
4. All controlled-substance medications will be counted and recorded upon receipt from the parent/guardian. The medication shall be recounted on a regular basis (monthly or bi-weekly) and this count reconciled with the medication administration log.

B. Procedures

1. It is recommended that medications be brought to the school by the pupil's parent or guardian.
2. No changes to medication dosage or time of administration will be made except by instruction from a physician.
3. Parent or guardian request/permission and physicians' instructions for administration of medications shall be renewed every school year.
4. Expiration dates on prescription medication, epi-pens, and inhalers shall be checked at least twice each school year and results recorded.
5. Medication left at the end of the school year, or after a student has left the school, shall be picked up by the parent or guardian. If this is not done, the individual who administers the medication will dispose of the medication and record this disposal on the medication log. This procedure shall be witnessed and initialed in by a second adult.

V. Policies and Procedures for Record-Keeping Related to Medications at School

A. Policies

1. A log of medication administration shall be kept in a School Office and filed in a pupil's permanent record at the end of each school year.
2. The individual pupil log shall be kept until one year after the student's graduation from high school.

B. Procedures

1. The medication log shall include the pupil's name and the name and dosage of the medication. The individual giving the medication shall record the date and time of administration of the medication. The log shall be signed and witnessed by another adult.
2. If an error is made in recording, the individual who administered the medication shall cross out, initial the error, and make the correction in the log.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT

Lake Michigan Catholic Schools abide by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and other school-related information regarding the student. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given to the non-custodial parent, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of said court order.

OSHA STANDARDS FOR BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS

Lake Michigan Catholic Schools adhere to the standards set by OSHA for the handling of blood-borne pathogens and all other bodily fluids. All staff has been appropriately trained in these standards. The school plan of action is available in the School Office should you wish to review it.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

As partners in the educational process at Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School, we ask parents to:

1. Set rules, times, and limits so that your child:
 - gets to bed early on school nights;
 - arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day;
 - is dressed according to the school dress code;
 - completes assignments on time; and
 - has lunch money or nutritional sack lunch every day.
2. Actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences;
3. See that the student pays for any damage to school books or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student;
4. Notify the school with a written note when the student has been absent or tardy;
5. Notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers;
6. Meet all financial obligations to the school;
7. Inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health;
8. Complete and return to school any requested information promptly;
9. Read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education;
10. Support the religious and educational goals of the school;
11. Attend Mass and teach the Catholic faith by word and example;
12. Support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school;
13. Treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems.

PARENTS' ROLE IN EDUCATION

We, at Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School, consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life--physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Your choice of LMCES involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

Good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God, with each other, and with the Church community will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless these are nurtured by the example of good Catholic/Christian morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life.

Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with us at LMCES, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (Pre-K to 5), your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest of challenging, yet nourishing, the student to reach his/her potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority. If there is an incident at school, you as parents must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs both understanding and discipline. At times, your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. However, it is boundaries and limits which provide a young person with both guidance and security.

It is essential that a child take responsibility for grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and all other assignments. This responsibility also extends to times of absence.

Together, let us begin this year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to become the best person he/she is capable of becoming.

PARTIES

Students may share a treat with classmates to celebrate their birthdays. In addition, parties are usually planned for Fall Festival, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. Volunteer sheets will be available at parents' Back to School night.

PESTICIDE USE – NOTIFICATION POLICY

Annually, schools must advise parents of their rights to be informed when any pesticide application is made to the school grounds or building. If you want this information, you must request so in writing to the school. This letter requests the school to inform you when pesticides will be used in the school. Every effort will be made to give prior notice, although in certain instances pesticides may be applied without prior notice. In those instances, you will be notified as soon as possible after the application.

PICTURES

School pictures are taken during the fall and spring. Pictures of the second grade are also taken in First Communion clothes on May Crowning Day.

PLAYGROUND RULES

1. All students go out for recess unless in Study Hall or with a *written doctor's excuse*.
2. Students are to observe playground boundaries.
3. Students are not permitted to return to the building during lunch recess unless an emergency has occurred.
4. Respect for **all** is expected; no offensive language, name-calling, inappropriate physical contact or other signs of disrespect are tolerated.
5. Space and equipment are to be shared.
6. No food, drink or gum is allowed on the playground during recess.
7. Activities which, because of their nature, have potential to cause injury to oneself or others are prohibited; this includes throwing of objects, such as snowballs or rocks, and any other activity deemed unsafe by the playground supervisors.
8. Pushing, shoving, kick karate or latching onto another student's clothing is not allowed.
9. If play is deemed too rough privileges will be withdrawn from those students.
10. Hardballs are not to be brought to school.
11. No one may play on the tree lawn area due to proximity to moving traffic.
12. At the end of recess, students will clean up equipment and line up immediately by grade level in straight, quiet lines.
13. Enter the building silently to avoid disturbing classes in progress.

Indoor Recess: Gym shoes must be worn. Appropriate indoor equipment will be provided.

Winter: Proper winter attire, including boots, snow pants, hats and gloves, must be worn or the children will be required to stay on the blacktop.

PROMOTIONS AND RETENTIONS

Promotions and retentions are based on an evaluation of academic, physical, social, and emotional growth. The primary reasons for considering retention are: a) academic, b) physical or social immaturity, and c) frequent or long absences.

RECESS – NOON

All students K-5 go out to the supervised playground daily unless the weather is severe. Please see that your child(ren) is/are dressed appropriately for the weather. Students who wish to stay in must have a doctor's excuse. If your child is too sick to go outside, then he/she is too sick to come to school.

REGISTRATION PRIORITIES

1. Students enrolled the previous year and whose accounts are current
2. Contributing parishioners' children
3. Open enrollment for those interested in attending Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary

RELIGION

The freedom to teach and practice our religion is the reason for the existence of our school. We are a Catholic school, and all students receive instruction in the Catholic faith. Catholic students have many opportunities to receive the sacraments, and all students regularly take part in liturgical and para-liturgical services. Our parish priests are available to the students, and visit school as time permits.

Mass is celebrated every Tuesday and Thursday at 9:30 for grades K-5, and the public is always welcome. Two penance services are celebrated each year, one prior to Christmas vacation and one prior to Easter break. The Rosary is recited school-wide every morning in the months of October and May. Stations of the Cross are celebrated during Lent. Our students also have the opportunity for Eucharistic Adoration twice yearly followed by Benediction.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued four times a year in grades K-5. Junior Kindergartners and preschoolers receive a report card at the end of the second and fourth quarters. Dates on which you can expect your child to bring home his/her report card are published on the monthly calendar.

REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

School staff and Administration are obligated by law to report the reasonable suspicion of physical abuse and/or neglect. The school cannot contact parents in advance of making a report to the Family Independence Agency.

SAFETY CALL-IN SYSTEM

Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary uses a safety call-in system in which we ask all parents to notify the school before 8:15 a.m. on the day(s) your child will be absent. Messages may be left on the school answering machine any time the School Office is not open. If your child is absent and the Office has not heard from you, you will be called at home or work to check on the whereabouts of your child.

SCOUTING

Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary has several active Scout troops, including Daisies, Brownies, and Junior Scouts for girls; Cub, Webelo, and Boy Scout packs for boys. Names of troop leaders and contact people are available in the School Office.

SICK CHILDREN

When a child becomes ill at school, the parent is called and the child is sent home. We ask that the parents be prompt in picking up a sick child. Often, parents request homework for a sick child, and this can be done with the morning phone call. Homework may be sent home with a sibling if so requested.

SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT

Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School is a smoke-free environment.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary administers the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills to students in 2nd grade, along with administering the MEAP test in grades 3-5 in October. These tests allow teachers to identify students' academic strengths and weaknesses, as well as evaluate our curriculum. The students will become skillful, confident test-takers. Parents will receive results of both tests.

STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs of students may appear on the school website or in other publications. Parents who do not wish their children's photographs to be placed in public media must notify the principal in writing immediately.

From time to time, photos will be taken of students, student activities, etc. The School reserves the right to use these photos for news releases, the School's website, the yearbook, school-related video and slide presentations, marketing purposes, etc.

The School will allow members of the media to take pictures of students, athletic events, and other school activities for publication. At times, photographers will take photos for resale and make them available to students and parents. The School feels that these are legitimate opportunities for students to be in the "limelight" and also promote the School.

STUDENT RECORDS

Student records are kept locked in the Guidance Office. Parents may view these upon written or phone request. After the request, the records will be made available within 24 hours, and a school employee may be present while the records are viewed.

SUSPENSION

In-School Suspension can occur in response to a disciplinary violation. These suspensions will take place in the principal's office and a parent will be notified.

Out-of-School Suspension is an extreme measure and is enforced when serious misbehavior takes place. A conference among the student, parents, teacher and pastor must take place before the student may return to school.

For any severe disruption, possession and/or use of drugs/alcohol, students will be removed immediately to the principal's office, after which parents and/or law enforcement officials will be called, and suspension will take place.

The teachers will provide work for classes missed. A contractual agreement will be determined by the proper authorities before the student returns.

TARDINESS

Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School opens daily at 7:30 a.m. Students are to be in their classroom, seated and ready for opening prayer at 8:00 a.m. Anyone not in attendance for this will be considered tardy. Tardy students are to report to the office for an admission slip. Excessive tardiness will be handled using the following procedure:

1. After 3 tardies in a quarter, Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School will send a note stating our concern.
2. After 5 tardies in a quarter, Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School will refer your child to the school social worker.
3. After 10 tardies in a quarter, Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School will turn the matter over to the Truant Officer of the Berrien RESA.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is provided by the St. Joseph Public School district for students living within their district. Because of safety factors, it is imperative that students observe regulations regarding conduct set down by the transportation department. Those who do not observe proper conduct will be denied the privilege of riding the bus. No pupil may leave school grounds while waiting for a bus.

TUITION/FEES

School tuition rates are set annually by the Catholic Community Education Commission and published in the spring for the upcoming year. Tuition rates vary for parishioners and non-parishioners.

Tuition assistance is available to families who demonstrate financial need. Forms for this purpose are available in the Business Office. All inquiries and grants for tuition are kept strictly confidential.

VANDALISM

Vandalism is defined as any deliberate misuse, damage, or destruction of school property which results in clean up, repair or replacement costs. This includes the misuse of any of the school's computer equipment, software, website and network. These costs will be assessed to the perpetrator and parents will be notified. Further action may be taken, based on the severity of the incident.

Although parents are ultimately responsible for the vandalism costs perpetrated by their child(ren), every effort will be made to help the student assume the financial responsibility incurred because of his/her actions.

VISITS TO SCHOOL

Parents are always welcome to observe a classroom. We do ask that you call in advance to make an appointment for this visit. This is done in fairness to you as a parent, the teacher and the student. It also allows time to gather any information or documentation possibly needed to enhance the visit.

We ask that all visitors to the school stop and sign in at the School Office first.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers help with many aspects of the school program and are crucial to the overall success of Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School. Volunteers are asked to fill out the "Family Volunteer Sheet" at the beginning of the school year. Volunteers will be contacted by the School and assigned tasks. All volunteers have to have successfully completed the *Protecting God's Children Program* offered through the Diocese of Kalamazoo, as well as submitted to a background check.

During volunteering, sensitive issues may arise and it is paramount that these be kept confidential. If at any time the Administration feels that a student or his/her family's situation is being compromised or not being kept in the strictest confidence, a volunteer may be asked by the Administration to no longer volunteer.

WEAPONS FREE POLICY

Unauthorized possession of any form of weapon or look-alike weapon in school, on school property or at a school-related event may result in immediate suspension or expulsion. Professional counseling at parental expense may be mandated.

The Diocese of Kalamazoo has a weapons policy regarding suspension and expulsion that the school will follow if the need arises. The policy book is available in the School Office.

WELLNESS POLICY

Lake Michigan Catholic Elementary School is committed to creating a healthy school environment that enhances the development of lifelong practices to promote healthy eating and physical activities that support student achievement.

*All contents of this handbook are informational not contractual. The principal or other administrator may amend the handbook at any time. Parents will receive amended items in writing as soon after changes are made as is possible.



Nourishing the human spirit ~ Mind, Body, and Soul ~ through Jesus Christ