



## Family Reference Guide 2024-2025

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2024-2025 Zeeland Christian School Parent Reference Guide - last revision July 2024.  
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# Table Of Contents



|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>BURN BRIGHT</b><br>ZEELAND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL | 2024-2025 Theme & Verse.....            | 2 |
|  | Note From Our Head Of School.....       | 3 |
|  | Mission, Beliefs, & Values:.....        | 4 |
|  | Life Together.....                      | 4 |
|  | General Information and Procedures..... | 9 |

# 2024-2025 Theme & Verse

Every year, our 7th-grade students work with our 8th-grade teachers to select the theme and verse for the next school year.



## 屹立

我的帮助是从造天地的耶和华而来。他必不使你的脚滑倒；保护你的必不打盹。  
Chinese New Version (Simplified)

## ¡Mantente Firme!

Mi ayuda proviene del Señor, que hizo el cielo y la tierra. No permitirá que tu pie resbale; jamás duerme el que te cuida.

Salmo 121:2-3 (NVI)

## Stand Firm!

My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip— he who watches over you will not slumber,

Psalm 121:2-3

# Note From Our Head Of School

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Dear Zeeland Christian Parents and Friends:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the ZCS faculty and staff, my heartiest welcome to you as we prepare to launch the 2024-25 school year! Classrooms are set up, carpets have been cleaned, floors have been spit-polished, and all is ready to welcome our nearly 1,000 eager ZCS children for another year of learning. The beginning of a new school year is truly an exciting time in the life of a family. That is also true for those who have been called to serve, nurture, and teach the children as well. Simply stated, schools truly are an exciting place to be, and we are grateful for this opportunity to serve you and your children well.

Zeeland Christian School's six core values are reflective of how we view children and the tremendous calling that, as Christian educators, we embrace. Often referred to as **IGNITE**, these values are a testament to and deeply rooted in our shared Christian faith: Children are seen as **Image Bearers**, each **Growing** in their learning and deepening their faith and understanding of who God has called them to become. Through **Nurturing relationships** between teachers and students and between school and home, our teachers execute **Innovative** practices while demonstrating their recognition that high levels of learning occur most effectively in **relationship** with one another. And as they grow, children are nurtured in an environment that teaches students how to authentically **Serve others** as Christ serves His church and **Engage** with God's Word and world around them.

Achieving each of these values is an important task - one that we daily embrace! We covet your prayers as our partners in that process.

God's blessings to you and your children as we kick off another school year. May it be a time of joy, and may you and your family be encouraged knowing that your children are a part of a Christian school community here at Zeeland Christian that knows them well and is committed to them flourishing in our classrooms and growing in their knowledge of and love for God.

In service to Him,

Tom DeJonge  
Interim Head of School

# Mission, Beliefs, & Values:

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Click here to view our full [ZCS Mission, Beliefs, & Values Statement](#).

## Life Together

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Zeeland Christian School is a preschool through middle school facility of over 1,000 students. Our curriculum takes the best in recent curriculum studies and adapts it to the needs of this school system. Our program includes physical education, vocal and instrumental music, art, foreign language, and computers. Our Christian beliefs and teachings are at the heart of everything we teach and all our dealings with students.

### Society Members

A society member is "anyone who has children in attendance at our school (including parents, legal guardians, and step-parents) and acknowledges and accepts that education at ZCS is taught in alignment with the principles expressed in the ZCS constitution, and the three forms of unity of the Reformed Churches as embodied in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, and the Canons of the Synod of Dordrecht of 1618-1619."

### Conflict Resolution

Communication between parents and the school system is vital. As a Christian school, we have a model of conflict resolution that is presented to us in Matthew 18:15-20. If you have a concern about something or with someone, go to the person that you have the concern with first, sit down with him or her in Christian love, and discuss the concern.

If the situation needs further resolution, parents may reach out to the employee's supervisor, typically a principal. Please don't ever hesitate to involve the administrator in a situation that you feel has not been resolved to your satisfaction. The next step would be to go to the head of school. Further appeals can be directed to one of the Board committees, most likely the Education Committee. The final step would be to appear before the entire Board with your concern.

This conflict resolution process is also the process to use for appeals of disciplinary or academic decisions.

As a staff at Zeeland Christian, we dedicate ourselves to educating children to the honor and glory of God. We do that in partnership with the parents and value their comments and concerns. Good communication helps us work together in Christian love.

## **ZCS Life Together Covenant**

Zeeland Christian School believes that expectations for living in a community are important as we seek to fulfill our mission. Certain responsibilities and expectations are important to assure God-honoring community life. By choosing to be a part of the Zeeland Christian community, we expect that each person will take upon themselves the responsibilities and expectations outlined in this covenant.

### **Biblical Responsibilities:**

#### **Responsibilities For Loving God, Others, and Self**

Zeeland Christian School believes we glorify God by loving and obeying Him. Because we are commanded to love one another, relationships and behaviors which reflect such love confirm our commitment to glorifying Him. (Matthew 22:36-40; John 15:11-14; Romans 15:5-6) Galatians 5:13-14 reminds us that while we were called to be free, our freedom is best used when we serve one another in love. (Romans 14:1-23; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13, 10:23-33)

Living in community with other Christians is a privilege and an expression of God's will and grace. Great value is placed on the quality of relationships in our community. We acknowledge that we are living in a community and are accountable to one another.

All people are created in the image of God with the ability to love God with heart, soul, mind, and strength. The commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves reminds us to serve others while at the same time recognizing our own need for care and support. (Psalm 139:13-14; Mark 12:29-31; 1 Corinthians 6:19)

#### **Responsibilities For The Community**

Scripture gives us guidance on how to live in community with those around us in a God-honoring way. This guidance is established on the basis that since God first loved us, we ought to demonstrate love toward one another (1 John 3:11, 16, 18; 4:7-21). The fruits of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control) are specific attributes that the Holy Spirit makes available to us as we live in community with each other (Galatians 5:22-24).

We have identified the following practices as ways to continue to grow together as a school community.

- **Building Up One Another:** We expect each member of the community to strive to maintain relationships that support, encourage and build up one another. (Romans 15:1-2)
- **Making Allowance for One Another:** Difficulties in relationships do occur. In such cases we are to respond with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, making allowance for each other and forgiving one another. (Colossians 3:12-13)
- **Caring for One Another:** We are responsible to come alongside those experiencing grief, discouragement, illness, tragedy, or other personal trials. (Galatians 6:2)
- **Respecting One Another:** Because of our God-given value, each member of the community is expected to be sensitive to the image of God created in every person. Therefore, discrimination against others on the basis of race, national origin, age, gender or disability is not acceptable. (Colossians 3:11-14; 1 John 3:14-18)
- **Speaking the Truth in Love:** Our community can be strengthened by speaking the truth to each other with love. Problems in relationships and behavior can be resolved by approaching one another with an appropriate spirit. (Ephesians 4:11-15)

## **Working Towards A Healthy Community With Forgiveness and Love**

Difficulties in relationships do occur. The role of the school will be to work towards healthy community reconciliation in all situations. Our ministry is to both the offended and offender. Healing broken relationships is necessary for a healthy community. When relationships have been harmed, regardless of the reason, individuals are expected to seek forgiveness, forgive one another, and, when appropriate, restore relationships. (Matthew 5:23-24; 18:15-17)

We have identified the following practices as ways to seek reconciliation between individuals in the Zeeland Christian community:

- **Clear/Open/Direct Communication:** We will communicate directly with the person with whom there has been a conflict. This commitment will lead to a strong partnership between students, families, and staff based on working directly with people. (Matthew 18; Ephesians 4:11-15)
- **Accountability:** We will encourage and support each other to pursue reconciliation in a way that honors the uniqueness of each person and each situation.
- **Seeking Help:** We will involve Zeeland Christian support staff or community resources to work towards health and/or reconciliation for all involved in each unique situation.

## **Extreme Behavior and Safety Response**

There are certain situations that place self or others in a severe safety risk, create enough harm, or violate laws that ZCS is required to take immediate action on, which may include disciplinary action even up to an expulsion if the school board deems it necessary. Examples of this may include, but are not limited to, possession of a dangerous weapon, committing arson or a violent crime, substance abuse, and harassment or bullying as described in the next section.

## **Harassment And Other Extreme Behavior In Community**

One of the tasks of a Christian school is to assist students in understanding who they are as image bearers of Christ and how this understanding impacts all of life's relationships. Zeeland Christian School is committed to an environment of respect and dignity for its students and employees, an environment that is free from all forms of harassment and any other improper communication or action that implies that one person is less valued than another (Ephesians 4:29; Proverbs 17:9). ZCS strictly prohibits harassment, including sexual harassment and bullying, both in school and out of school.

For purposes of this policy, harassment is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a person's educational, physical or emotional well-being. Harassment also includes activities such as stalking, name-calling, taunting, and other disruptive behaviors.

Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to, making submission to sexual advances or requests for sexual favors a condition for student status, student progress, or social reputation; sexual talk or gossip; or unwanted and unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature that interferes with the right to receive an equal educational opportunity. Here are a few examples of sexual harassment as defined by the state of Michigan: pulling or touching someone's clothes in a sexual manner (pulling a bra strap or pulling someone's pants down), making sexual jokes about

someone (in person or on an electronic device), unwanted touching over someone's clothes inappropriately, making jokes about someone's femininity or masculinity.

Bullying is also a form of harassment. For purposes of this policy, bullying is defined as the repeated intimidation or emotional abuse of others by the infliction of harm to the person (or the person's property), whether the harm is real or threatened, as transmitted verbally, in writing, or electronically (i.e., cyberbullying), either inside or outside of school.

## **Reporting And Investigating Harassing Behavior**

### **Reporting Conduct by a Student:**

- A person who believes he or she has witnessed or been subject to harassment or bullying by a student should report the allegations to a teacher, counselor, or principal/director.
- If the person reports the matter to a staff member other than the principal/director, the staff member must notify the appropriate principal/director within twenty-four hours after receiving the report.
- The principal/director will conduct a prompt and appropriate investigation. If deemed necessary for the health of the individuals, there may be a period of time when those involved need to be separated in the process of resolution. This may even include time off of school, or learning done in a different area of the building.
- Any student whom the principal/director determines violated this policy will be subject to corrective action and discipline.
- The principal/director will notify the involved parents or guardians of the incident and any discipline applied to the student(s) involved.
- A written summary of the complaint and subsequent action will be completed and kept on file.

### **Reporting Conduct by a Faculty or Staff Member:**

- A person who believes he or she has witnessed or been subject to harassment or bullying by a faculty or staff member should report the allegations to a teacher, counselor, principal, director, or head of school.
- If the person reports the matter to a faculty or staff member other than the head of school, the faculty or staff member must notify the head of school within twenty-four hours after receiving the report.
- The head of school will conduct a prompt and appropriate investigation. The board president will conduct the investigation if the allegation involves the head of school.
- If the head of school determines that the staff member is in violation of this policy, the matter will be brought to the attention of the executive committee of the board. The faculty or staff member may be subject to corrective action and discipline.
- A written summary of the complaint and subsequent action will be completed and kept on file.

### **Reporting Conduct by the Head of School:**

- A person who believes he or she has been subject to harassment or bullying by the head of school should report the allegations to his or her immediate supervisor who, in turn, must report the alleged activity directly to the president of the ZCS Board of Trustees.
- The president or designee will conduct a prompt and appropriate investigation into the alleged harassment or bullying and will report the investigation's conclusions to the Executive Committee of the Board.
- Recommendations for any disciplinary action against the head of school will be made by the Executive Committee subject to review and approval by the Board of Trustees.
- A written summary of the complaint and subsequent action will be completed by the board president and kept on file.



**Reporting to Law Enforcement:**

If required by law, ZCS shall notify law enforcement officials of incidents of bullying and harassment.

**Confidentiality**

- Student communicable disease-related information is protected health information. Even if a family/student acknowledges and publicly discloses a positive test or other health information, school staff and officials must not participate in discussions or acknowledge a positive test or knowledge of the subject matter.

*Portions of the ZCS Life Together Covenant were inspired by Taylor University's Life Together Covenant.*

# General Information and Procedures

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## **Absentee Reporting (vacation/illness/tardy/appointment)**

Whenever your student is going to be absent or late to school, please notify the school office immediately. To notify the office, you may email [attendance@zcs.org](mailto:attendance@zcs.org) or leave a message on the attendance line at **616-741-0051**. When reporting your absence, please list your student's name, grade, and teacher.

All students arriving late or leaving early must sign in/out through the main office.

Students are most successful with learning and in their emotional regulation/mood when they have routines and school rhythms going; it provides a sense of 'known' and structure that is predictable to help establish healthy habits and stay focused. We understand circumstances exist where a family might need to be out of town or absent from school for various other reasons during the year. We do not expect teachers to send work along with students on vacation when school is in session as lesson plans change at times as learning progression happens, and teachers have many other responsibilities in the course of their week. It is often a better practice for us to work with your child upon return to determine what is most essential for catching back up. We know family vacations are important and encourage those to happen whenever possible during the normally scheduled school breaks.

Should a student be absent from school for what accumulates to 10% of the school days or more, the school will notify parents/guardians and work with parents to address attendance issues promptly in order to best support the students' learning and growth.

## **Academic Opportunities Outside of ZCS**

Opportunities that interfere with the academic school day must be approved by the school principal of the grade the child is entering. The principal or his/her designee will determine recommendations in opportunities that require approval from the school. (Example: PATH program through Hope College)

## **Central Ave. Monthly All-School Chapel**

All-School Chapel is a monthly event for Preschool through 8th grade. Parents, guardians, grandparents, and families are invited to attend as we gather to worship our Lord and Savior. Elementary students also have grade-level worship times frequently along with Elementary Worship held once a month. Middle school students have weekly chapel or small groups.

## **Arrivals & Dismissals**

Please see our [Drop-Off and Pick-Up Plan](#) for maps and details.

Please see the details in [School Day Arrival & Dismissal Protocols - Specifics For Parents.](#)

For specific car line assignments, please see your student's teacher.

## **Athletics**

The Zeeland Christian School Middle School Athletic program is an extension of our overall middle school philosophy. The focus of athletics centers on the needs and development of our middle school students spiritually, relationally, and physically. The athletic program allows for a maximum level of student participation in seventh

grade, and works as a springboard into high school in eighth grade providing the opportunity for development of basic athletic skills. Both boys and girls have the opportunity to participate in cross-country, tennis, swimming and diving, track, basketball, and soccer. Baseball, football, and lacrosse are offered for boys and softball, volleyball, and competitive cheer for girls. Some sports are offered directly by ZCS and some sports are offered through a co-op with Holland Christian.

ZCS requires a \$75 "Pay to Play" fee for each sport your child participates in at Zeeland Christian. If you are participating in a co-op sport there is already a "Pay to Play" fee payable to Holland Christian, so an additional \$75 is not required to be paid to ZCS. Please send payments to the Zeeland Christian office along with your questionnaire or sports physical.

Other sports-related information including physical forms and a calendar of events can be found on the [Athletics Page](#) on our website.

## **Audio/Video Surveillance Camera Policy**

In order to protect the health, welfare, and safety of students, staff, visitors and Zeeland Christian School property, electronic audio/video surveillance systems may be used to monitor activity on some or all Zeeland Christian School property including school buses, as determined by the Head of School or his/her designee. The primary purpose of audio/video surveillance is to improve student safety by enabling the school to review alleged disciplinary incidents and/or vandalism/theft that may occur, with the goal of minimizing such events.

You can view the full document here: [Zeeland Christian School Audio/Video Surveillance Camera Policy](#).

## **Batons**

Each student receives a baton in preschool. These are batons of spiritual growth and encouragement passed to each student from their teacher every school year. Teachers write comments to the student on the baton each school year, passing back the batons to their students at year end. Parents are invited to add a note of their own over the summer each year. Students then pass their batons to their new teachers the following school year. At the end of 8th grade, students receive their baton one last time as a journal and keepsake of their spiritual journey at ZCS.

## **Behavior Management Strategies & Expectations**

Each person at ZCS deserves to feel safe and included within our school community. By clearly defining, teaching, and reteaching behavior expectations, our goal is to help students receive clear and consistent messaging regarding behavior expectations. Our core behavioral expectations revolve around helping every person at ZCS focus on Safety, Responsibility, and Respect, which includes people as well as use of property.

We strive to equip our students to *Burn Bright* and let their lights shine in order to glorify God (Matthew 5:16) and reflect the love of Christ in our daily lives. We proactively teach students to choose respect, responsibility and safety through our PBIS framework which incorporates "Burn Bright Behavior Expectations", [Love and Logic](#), and Restorative Practices. We love all of our students at ZCS and we want to be vigilant in acknowledging the positive behaviors that are happening all the time, thus focusing our efforts on the behavior that we expect from students because the behaviors we're most attentive to are the behaviors we'll see more of in the future. As problem behaviors arise, we respond appropriately per our behavior response matrix ([Elementary Response Matrix](#)) // ([Middle School Response Matrix](#)) and meet regularly to identify and respond to any trends that might not match our expectations.

## Blue Note

The Blue Note is our weekly school newsletter, sent by email on Wednesdays as our way of keeping you up to date with what's going on at ZCS. Before the days of electronic sharing, this newsletter was printed on blue paper--hence its name! Fun fact: Print versions are still printed on blue paper.

## Building Security

During school hours, all doors are locked. To enter school, please enter through the main doors (Door C by the front canopy). All visitors must sign in through our electronic visitor management system.

If you are dropping off forgotten lunches, books, etc., the office staff will make sure your student receives the item. If you are picking up a child for an appointment, the office staff will call down to the child's room to have them meet you in the office.

No visitors should enter the school during school hours unless through the school office.

## Bus Transportation

Busing is provided for students living in the Zeeland Public School system ([General Information](#)). Students need to submit a new transportation form every year, even if they do not plan to utilize busing. The online busing form may be found [HERE](#).

The bus tracking app that ZPS uses to post your child's schedule and bus information is **NEW THIS YEAR**. For information on how to download the app and set your new account, follow these [My Ride K-12 App Instructions](#).

"No Busing" dates can be found on the [school calendar](#).

## Calendars and Schedules

The ZCS Calendar is a google calendar which will be used as our primary school calendar for sharing important school dates, events, and activities. You can view the calendar on our website as well as add the calendar to your personal Google calendar by visiting the webpage linked below.

[ZCS Google Calendar](#)

Daily School Day Schedule (arrival, start, recess, lunch, dismissal times):

[Daily Schedule For Elementary and Middle School](#)

## Car Line Protocols for Drop-Off and Pick-Up

With only minimal exceptions, all students not riding the bus should be dropped off or picked up at their assigned location. If, occasionally, you need to enter the building at drop-off, please come through the main office to sign in.

Please see our [Drop-Off and Pick-Up Plan](#) for maps and details.

Please see the details in [School Day Arrival & Dismissal Protocols - Specifics For Parents](#).

For elementary car line assignments, please ask your child's teacher.

## **Cell Phones/Personal Communication Devices**

**Students should not have phones or other similar electronic devices out or on at any time during the school day or during Extended Care.** We do this to minimize distractions and reduce potential situations where there is technology that we do not control on our school network and filters that may cause unwanted impacts on our students. If a staff member notices a device, they will take it and bring it to the administrator who will ask the office staff to call parents to pick it up at the parent's or guardian's convenience.

Students are permitted to wear smartwatches (or similar devices) during the school day so long as they are on school or airplane mode. Students are not to use smartwatches for entertainment, sending messages, making phone calls, or communicating in any other form during the school day or during Extended Care.

For time-sensitive needs, students may ask a teacher at any time in the day to use a classroom or office phone to contact their parents or guardians; teachers will do their best to assist a student, as developmentally appropriate and necessary, in accessing a school phone at a suitable time.

### **Middle School Only:**

**We ALLOW personal communication devices to be used from 2:25 PM to 2:35 PM** (end of school to start of Power Hour) so that students can connect with parents or guardians. Students may also ask a teacher at any time in the day if they can use a classroom phone to dial their parents; teachers will do their best to assist a student in using a phone when they are not in the middle of active instruction.

## **Contacting Your Child's Teacher**

All teachers and some assistants at ZCS have voicemail. During school hours, calls to teachers are routed through the main office or go directly to voicemail if the teacher has chosen to give out her/his direct number. After school hours, a menu is available.

E-mail is an easy and efficient way to contact staff members. These addresses are based on the basic format of first initial and last name @zcs.org. For example: Natalia McGowen - nmcgowen@zcs.org. Please allow up to 24 hours (M-F) for a response as our staff have other responsibilities throughout their day. If the message is urgent, please call the school's main office.

## **Contacting The Head Of School, Principals, or Preschool Director**

Our Head of School, Tom DeJonge; Tim Paauw, Middle School Principal; Betsy Koop, Elementary Principal; or Alicia Zandstra, Preschool Director would be glad to schedule time to talk with you. Please contact the office at 616-772-2609 to make an appointment. You can also visit our website at [www.zcs.org](http://www.zcs.org) or email us at [zcsinfo@zcs.org](mailto:zcsinfo@zcs.org).

## **Continuous Enrollment - see Enrollment section below for more information**

### **Mental Health Team Services**

We are blessed to be able to provide mental health support to students at Zeeland Christian through our short-term counseling services and social work support. At the request of parents and/or teachers, our mental health therapist may see students for three - four sessions at school and then make recommendations if any further support might be helpful. Our school mental health therapist is available to support families who are involved in adoption or foster care. ZCS also has a full-time social worker available to students and families. Our social worker may meet with students regularly to develop needed skills and support a student's mental health. Parent/Guardian permission and signed consent is needed for a student to meet with a member of our mental health team. Parents and guardians may contact their child's teacher to learn more about these supports for their child.

### **Curriculum/Supplemental Materials - Concerns**

Should a parent have a concern regarding curriculum and/or supplemental materials provided by ZCS,, we follow the communication model provided for us in Matthew 18:15-20 and stated in our Life Together Covenant. The parent should go to the person that he or she has the concern with first, sit down with him or her in Christian love, and discuss the concern. In this case, this conversation should first happen between the parent and the teacher who taught the curriculum or provided the materials in question. If the issue is not able to be resolved in this way, then a witness should be brought in to try to solve the problem. In this case, the relevant administrator (Preschool Director, Elementary Principal, or Middle School Principal) would be brought into the conversation. Most problems can be resolved in this way when all parties communicate with grace and humility, trusting in our common goals to Love God, Love Kids, and Love Learning.

If the situation is still not resolved, the concern should be brought to the Director of Teaching and Learning who will work with the Head of School to address the parental concern. If the parent is not in agreement with the decision made by the Director of Teaching and Learning and Head of School, the decision may finally be appealed to the Education Committee of the Board.

### **Ditto Upscale Resale - See Partnerships**

### **Dress Code**

The guidelines are simple. Some popular styles do not comply with these guidelines so please be thoughtful when buying school clothes. For the specific dress code and steps on how concerns with student clothing choices will be handled, see the linked document: [ZCS Dress Code & Procedure](#).

For families wishing to purchase ZCS logo apparel, orders are handled through GoodInk several times a year. Watch the Blue Note for when the online store is open for ordering.

### **Drills - Fire/Lockdown/Tornado**

According to the requirements set by the State of Michigan, we host 11 drills or practices throughout our school year. We conduct five fire drills, three tornado drills, and three lockdown drills. Our Facilities Director, Support Services Teachers and our Leadership Team are aware of these drills prior to them happening. This allows our teams to take the proper precautions and necessary preparations for students who may need specific support during these

drills. The first drill date and time for each particular event are made known to the teachers. All teachers practice drill responses with their students prior to the first drill.

## **Enrollment Terms/Paperwork**

Continuous Enrollment is used at ZCS and it simplifies the annual process for current Elementary & Middle School students. This means that you will not need to reapply every year. It also allows our leadership team to move forward in preparations for the next academic year by making informed decisions about program offerings and staffing.

Enrollment and Tuition Contract (ETC) is signed when a student is enrolled at ZCS. You do not sign a contract every year. If your educational plans change, you'll simply notify us by filling out a withdrawal form in your Enrollment Portal by March 31st, 2025. If you submit the withdrawal form after March 31st, you will be charged a \$100 withdrawal fee per student. If the withdrawal form is submitted after June 1st, you will be charged a \$500 withdrawal fee per student.

Finalsite is the enrollment system used to submit yearly required paperwork. A parent account must be maintained by one adult to oversee the information for each child in their household.

Multi-Child Discount allows parents with more children to pay a lower percentage of the cost of education per child.

**Events During a Typical School Year** - All school-wide events can be found on our [website calendar](#) throughout the school year.

- Middle School Camps: Each year, middle school students attend one to two camps that are specially designed to move them forward in their personal, spiritual, and communal development.
- Pumpkin Fest Parade: Preschool students are invited to ride on a float during the parade for the Zeeland Pumpkin Fest on the first Saturday in October. The 7th/8th grade band will march in the Pumpkin Fest Parade.
- Grandparent/Grandfriend Day: This is a big deal! Scheduled for a half day in the fall, grandparents/grandfriends are invited to come to a special chapel as well as visit their students' classrooms.
- 
- Jingle Jog: Fundraiser for our sister school in the Philippines the week before Christmas break. As part of gym class, K-5 students dress up in Christmas attire to run for 12 minutes at a designated time. Students are invited to get monetary sponsors and parents are invited to run, too.
- Family Ski Days at Caberfae: ZCS families and friends go to Caberfae twice per winter. Students have fun skiing and spending time with their friends. There is a potluck, so you don't even need to be concerned about buying food. This is a great opportunity to ski and enjoy fellowship at really amazing rates! Watch for dates announced via the Blue Note in December.
- Unified Basketball Game: Unified teams combine middle school students of all abilities in a game of high energy that is a highlight for all who attend.
- Spelling Bee: For 5th-8th grade students.
- Robotics: Offered to 7th and 8th graders as a joint activity with Holland Christian Middle School.
- Destination Imagination: 4th-8th graders can apply to join a DI team
- 7th/8th Grade Play/Musical: Students have an opportunity to use their theatrical gifts and put God on display on the ZCS stage in the spring.
- 7th Grade Car Wash: Each spring our 7th graders bless communities in both Zeeland and the Philippines by taking pledges and holding a Totally Free Car Wash downtown Zeeland.

- **Market Day:** In the spring, 4th-grade students work in teams to develop marketing plans, create items and sell them at this event. Students in 1st-5th grade may bring up to \$5 to purchase items during the sale. All funds raised support our sister school in the Philippines.
- **Fun Night:** 8th-grade fundraiser event on an evening in May. Dinner and games available. All are invited to attend.
- **Running Club:** For 3rd-5th grade students. This group meets 2x/week in the spring to train for a 5K, held annually in May.
- **Memorial Day Parade:** Students in K-2nd grade walk with their class in the Zeeland parade on Memorial Day. The ZCS bands also participate.

## Extended Care

Extended Care is offered for students in Threeschool-5th grade. Extended Care is available before school from 7:00am-8:30am and after school from 3:30pm - 5:30pm. For children to attend, they must be registered with a weekly schedule in place. Please direct questions to staff at [extendedcare@zcs.org](mailto:extendedcare@zcs.org) or to Ginny Spahr at [gspahr@zcs.org](mailto:gspahr@zcs.org). For more information and registration, click [HERE](#).

## Family Groups

Beginning in 1st grade, students are assigned to a Family Group they will stay with throughout their time at ZCS. These groups include a few students from each grade level, 1st-8th, who gather to study the Bible and work on projects together several times each year. The 1st-5th grade family group members end the year with a Family Group Games day, which includes outdoor events for the Family Groups to participate in together..

## Fidgets

Fidgets have become very popular. At times, they can benefit students, at other times they move from a tool to a disruptive toy within the classroom setting. If your child benefits from fidgets, please connect with your child's teacher to discuss their use during the school day.

## Field Trips

- Y5s-8th Grade Field Trips - Each classroom teacher will communicate the field trips for the school year. Field trips happen both on and off-site a number of times throughout the school year.
- Students will be transported for off-site field trips by bus or by parent volunteers (organized by classroom teacher or parent liaison).
- Students remain at school before and after all field trips unless noted otherwise by the classroom teacher.

## Field Trip Driving & Chaperone Guidelines

\* Guidelines for *parents/grandparents/family friends* who drive or chaperone for a field trip:

- Each **driver** must complete the volunteer registration process through the Raptor Volunteer Management system. Approval may require up to 5 business days. Please plan ahead! Please use this link to register: [Volunteer Registration Link](#)
- Each **driver** will need to upload the following into the Raptor system prior to being approved to drive (once per year unless either needs updating due to expiration).
  - Copy of their **driver's license**
  - Copy of proof of auto insurance (example: **Insurance Declarations page** - proves insurance coverage and gives liability limits)
  - [Field Trip Driver Guideline Form](#)



- This form will now be housed in the volunteer system, please remind field trip drivers that they signed it and are responsible for abiding by it.
- Each **chaperone** will need to complete the volunteer registration process through the Raptor Volunteer management system. Approval may require up to 5 business days. Please plan ahead! A link for registration will be provided soon!
- Each **driver AND chaperone** (even if not driving) MUST sign-in at the office using the volunteer sign-in system before heading to the classroom for the field trip.

**FinalSite** - see Enrollment section above for more information.

## Grading

### Zeeland Christian Elementary:

We use a standards-based report card using the following scale: 1 – Not Yet, 2 – Developing, or 3 – Got It. On many assignments that come home, you will see a 1, 1+, 2, 2+, or 3. Think of these numbers in terms of “not yet,” “developing,” or “got it.”

### Zeeland Christian Middle School:

Middle School grading has both standards-based report cards, using the same scale as above, and letter grading for assignments and assessments given and understanding displayed. Our letter grading uses the scale below:

|          |          |          |         |          |          |
|----------|----------|----------|---------|----------|----------|
| 97-100=A | 93-96=A- | 90-92=B+ | 86-89=B | 82-85=B- | 79-81=C+ |
| 75-78=C  | 71-74=C- | 68-70=D+ | 64-67=D | 60-63=D- | 0-59=E   |

Criteria For Grading: You can find specific information related to clear and consistent grading criteria [HERE](#).

## Health Services

Health Services are provided by the Ottawa County Health Department.

- Vision screening for students in grades 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 7th.
- Hearing screening for students in grades K, 2nd, and 4th.

## Hot Lunch

Hot lunch is provided daily for our staff and students by Holland Christian Schools. The food is prepared right in our kitchen and served fresh to our students daily. [Family Portal](#) is the system used to manage hot lunch accounts and charges.

- Free/Reduced Hot Lunch: You may apply for Free/Reduced Lunch Benefits today. Please go directly to [familyportal.cloud](#) where you will quickly and easily be able to apply for Free and Reduced Lunch Benefits online by selecting **Holland Christian School district**. One application per family for Free/Reduced benefits must be submitted each school year. Please be assured that this information will remain confidential. If you need an application mailed to you, please contact [slambers@hollandchristian.org](mailto:slambers@hollandchristian.org)
- The cost for hot lunch is **\$3.25** per student. Thursday is Pizza Day and an extra slice is offered \$1.75 for grades 3-8.

- Hot lunch orders must be in by 8:00 a.m. for middle school students and by 9:00 a.m. for elementary students. *\*If your student will be late to school, please make sure to call the school office and submit your child's hot lunch order before the cut-off time.*
- Menus can be found [HERE](#).

## Illness/Sickness Policy: When To Keep Your Child Home

- **A fever of 100 degrees or higher:** Your child must be fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medicine before returning to school.
- **Vomiting and/or diarrhea:** Your child must be free of vomiting/diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school.
- **A child that seems ill:** If your child seems unusually tired, pale, difficult to wake, has a headache or body aches, is confused or irritable, and/or lacks a normal appetite, please keep him/her home. Your child must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school.

## Infinite Campus/Report Cards/Student Information

The Infinite Campus Parent Portal, in conjunction with Zeeland Public Schools, allows Young 5s-8th grade parents to view their own child's school records for the current school year, anywhere, anytime through a secure web browser. [Link to Infinite Campus](#)

**New families:** You need to fill out the [acceptable use policy](#) and return to [zcsinfo@zcs.org](mailto:zcsinfo@zcs.org). Once this form is filled out the school office will be able to provide login information.

**Current families:** If you have misplaced/lost your username/password, please email [hwolters@zps.org](mailto:hwolters@zps.org) to have your password reset.

## Language Immersion

ZCS offers total immersion programs in both Spanish and Mandarin Chinese. Students enrolled in these programs receive all of their classroom instruction in their target language through 2nd grade. Beginning in 3rd grade, social studies is the medium for English instruction, and the amount of time dedicated to English increases slightly each year. Students also participate in a world language class (Spanish Y5s-8th for English and Mandarin immersion students or Mandarin Y5s-5th for Spanish immersion students) twice per week.

## Locations

- Central Ave (Main Site)
- Creation Ridge Preschool: Held at RidgePoint Community Church since 2020.

## Logo

Our current logo intentionally has three flame sections to represent the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and has a circle encompassing the flame to represent the all-encompassing love of Christ and the inclusion of every student. This fresh and vibrant look reminds us that there is a fire that burns in the hearts and minds of every student, educator, and faculty member at ZCS, driving us to be more innovative, more inclusive, and more servant-hearted with every action we take. We pray that this God-given fire burns bright in every member of our school community.

## Lost And Found

We have three locations where lost and forgotten items are stored. Parents are welcome to check into the office and search the lost and found locations at any point during the school year. These items are typically donated to Ditto Upscale Resale at the end of each semester. A notification goes out in the Blue Note before the items are donated giving parents a chance to do one last search for missing items.

- **Preschool** - Items are kept on the bench in the commons for about a week and then brought to the elementary lost and found.
- **Elementary** - Items are kept in a small room next to the boy's bathrooms down the 3rd-grade hallway.
- **Middle School** - Items are kept on a wire rack just inside the door of Project Room #93.

## MAP Growth

MAP stands for Measures of Academic Progress and is developed by the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA). Each 2nd-8th grade child takes a MAP Growth assessment in early fall, mid-winter, and late spring. Students in 1st grade participate in MAP growth during the winter and spring sessions only. MAP Growth measures what students know and informs what they're ready to learn next. The score reports are shared with parents following each testing session.

## Medical Forms:

Please review the various forms necessary for students who will need to take medicine at school OR for students who suffer from seizures, allergies, migraines, and/or asthma. Please print, complete, and submit to the school nurse at Rams Fest or before school begins. You can find all the forms on the [Current Families Page](https://zcs.org/schoolforms) or by visiting [zcs.org/schoolforms](https://zcs.org/schoolforms).

## Middle School Small Groups

Every middle schooler is placed in a small group with other 6th-8th graders as a way to develop middle school community and establish a culture of relationships across grade levels where students can have fun doing activities that help them get to know each other and grow in the Lord together. Small groups meet about six to eight times throughout the year during our Friday afternoon scheduled chapel time. Each September, we kick off our small groups with an afternoon at Lawrence Street Park for a time of worship and games.

**Mission, Beliefs, and Values Statement:** [ZCS Mission, Beliefs, & Values Statement](#)

## Moms In Prayer

Led by an organization called Moms in Prayer, this is a weekly time where moms can pray over their children and the staff surrounding them. We have had a group at ZCS for over 30 years, and this year may be the year God is calling you to join! Look for information about joining in the Blue Note.

## PaperGator

The Paper Gator is in the back parking lot and is a fundraiser for the school. Supporters are welcome to place newspapers, catalogs, magazines, junk mail, phone books, and office or school paper in the container. Please, no plastic, metal, trash, glass, or cardboard (including cereal boxes).

## Elementary Parent Partners

The vision for starting Parent Partners is to have a strong community of parents to assist in providing a high-quality Christian educational experience. How do we do that? By having parents partnering with the school to make ZCS a place where families feel welcomed and teachers feel supported.

Parent Partners' overarching mission is to support teachers and provide opportunities for parents (and grandparents!) to be involved in their kids' educational environment by assisting teachers and building relationships with other parents (and grandparents!).

If you are interested in volunteering at school, please email [parentpartners@zcs.org](mailto:parentpartners@zcs.org)- we will make sure to get into the Volunteer Management system. If you have questions, feel free to reach out.

## Parent Liaison

Each classroom has one to two parent volunteers who act as liaisons for that particular class. These liaisons help coordinate teacher gifts, support the teacher, and engage with families from the class throughout the year. Parent Partners will oversee and support the Parent Liaisons.

## Partnerships

**Addalingua:** As our partner supporting our Dual Language programs, addalingua provides professional development and instructional resources for both our Spanish and Mandarin immersion programs. They provide research-backed feedback and support as we strive to provide the best dual language education around.

**All Belong:** All Belong Network, formerly the Christian Learning Center, helped begin inclusive education at ZCS 35 years ago. All Belong advises ZCS, along with other churches and schools, on ways to best meet the needs of all students. You'll often see All Belong representatives on tours of ZCS with other school leaders who are seeking to learn more about our student support services.

**Ditto Upscale Resale:** In 1994, Ditto Upscale Resale was started in partnership with Holland Christian Schools to help offset tuition costs for families at HC and ZCS. We praise God for the faithful work of the staff and volunteers who have provided millions in tuition assistance for Christian education in our community. Email [zcsinfo@zcs.org](mailto:zcsinfo@zcs.org) for information on how to serve or donate items.

**Grace Community Christian School:** Our [sister school](#) in the Philippines. The relationship between Zeeland Christian School and Grace Community Christian School began in 1999 and has grown through the years. Our connection now includes student trips, teacher prayer partners, classroom student connections, fundraisers (preschool coin collection, Jingle Jog, 4th grade Market Day, and 7th grade Car Wash), and student sponsorship opportunities.

**Holland Christian Schools:** We are committed to a strong relationship with Holland Christian Schools. We share resources, athletics, and collaborate where applicable in board and administration efforts, curriculum, and teaching. The ZCS multi-child tuition discount applies to students enrolled at Holland Christian High School.

**MOSAIC Foster & Adoption Group:** ZCS School MOSAIC, started in 2019, actively works to connect, empower, and advocate for families who choose adoption, foster care, refugee care, kinship care, or participate in Safe Families to develop supportive relationships while celebrating their unique backgrounds, experiences, cultures and races. The heart and intent of this group is to create a community for children and families, as well as to educate staff and those in the greater ZCS community on how best to support and love those who are from these types of families. Through this community, we hope to 1) serve students by making space for them to connect with others who understand their life journey and 2) serve families by creating a safe place for expressing concerns, asking questions,

sharing resources, and supporting each other through prayer. To learn more or to get connected, email [zcschoolmosaic@gmail.com](mailto:zcschoolmosaic@gmail.com).

**Ridge Point Community Church:** ZCS has a partnership with Ridge Point Community Church to host the Creation Ridge Preschool site. This is a Spirit-led and natural partnership that enhances Zeeland Christian Preschool.

**Zeeland Public Schools:** ZCS is very grateful for the friendly and collaborative partnership we have with ZPS. ZCS utilizes ZPS for busing as well as for ancillary services such as speech, physical therapy, social work, etc. We follow Zeeland Public Schools for delays and cancellations, with announcements made via email, news stations, and Facebook.

## Power Hour

Power Hour is a supervised space in the middle school that is **available specifically for middle school students who have younger sibling(s) in elementary** and need to wait until their dismissal to be picked up. There is a daily cost to attend Power Hour. Staffing is light due to after school meetings for teachers and other needs, so it is not meant for academic support or other closely monitored needs. After school, each student attending Power Hour must check into the Power Hour by 2:35 PM by finding the staff member located by the project rooms who will use the Brightwheel attendance app for billing purposes. For more information on Power Hour and Brightwheel, please reach out to your child's teacher. Middle school students who are still on campus after 2:35 PM will be signed into Power Hour and required to join the group and be billed for the day. ZCS' Behavior Expectations apply to the Power Hour as well.

## Project-Based Learning (PBL)

Students at all grade levels work to develop deep content knowledge as well as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity and communication skills through Project-Based Learning. A real-world problem or complex question is taken on by students over an extended period of time, culminating in a public product or presentation for a real audience.

## RAMS

RAMS stands for Reading And Math Success and is the ZCS name for a small group instruction time that is sometimes referred to in other schools as RtI (Response to Intervention), MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support), Super Switch, or WIN (What I Need) time. We have built RAMS Time into our schedules three times per week for 30 minutes for our 1st-4th grade English and Spanish Immersion students. During this time, ALL students from the same grade level and same language group (i.e. 1st grade English, 2nd grade Spanish Immersion, etc.) are placed into small groups based on data from a variety of assessments. Each small group works with a teacher on content at their level, focusing on what they are ready to learn and providing appropriate challenges. Throughout the year, teachers gather with our MTSS Coordinator, Kristi Van Dyk, for data meetings to analyze the data they've collected, rearrange the small groups, plan the instructional focus for each group, and evaluate student growth over time.

## Report Cards

Printed report cards will be sent home four times per year, at the end of each quarter, for students in 1st-8th grade. Kindergarten students will receive report cards twice per year. Parents of middle school students may access the Infinite Campus Parent Portal at any time to check on assignments and progress.

**School Board** - If you would like to connect with the Zeeland Christian Board of Trustees, please feel free to email [zcsboard@zcs.org](mailto:zcsboard@zcs.org).

## School Delays/Cancellations

- Zeeland Christian operates on the same schedule as Zeeland Public Schools when there are weather delays and cancellations.
- Sign up for [Z For Me emails](#) from Zeeland Public Schools. They send out emails with delays and cancellations.
- Tune into local radio or TV stations for updates.
- **Delays:** When school is delayed for two hours, it means that all buses will run two hours later than scheduled. School start times will be exactly two hours later as well.
  - **Hot lunch** will be provided as scheduled on delay days.
  - **Morning Preschool** - No School on delay days.
  - **Morning Young Fives** - No School on delay days.
  - **Morning Only Kindergarten** - No School on delay days.
  - **Before School Care** is available on delay days for students who were already scheduled for that morning. (Before School Care is not available for students not on the schedule for that morning.)
- **Severe Weather**
  - Zeeland Christian has a weather radio that notifies us immediately when a storm watch or warning has been issued.
  - In the event of a tornado watch, children will remain in school with the weather monitored continually.
  - In the event of a tornado warning the children will seek immediate shelter in the school in assigned areas until the warning expires.
  - During a severe weather event, parents are allowed to pick up children at any time but students will not be dismissed on their own.
  - During the winter, wind chills are taken into consideration and staff will make the decision on how long students go outside.

## Social Media

Request to join the ZCS Family Facebook Group [HERE](#).

Request to join the ZCS Early Childhood Family Group [HERE](#).

Like Zeeland Christian on Facebook [HERE](#).

Follow [@zeelandchristian](#) on Instagram [HERE](#).

## Society Members/Report

A society member is "anyone who has children in attendance at our school (including parents, legal guardians, and step-parents) and acknowledges and accepts that education at ZCS is taught in alignment with the principles expressed in the ZCS constitution, and the three forms of unity of the Reformed Churches as embodied in the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, and the Canons of the Synod of Dordrecht of 1618-1619."

An annual meeting for members is held each year in late winter/early spring.

[Society Meeting Report - April 2024](#)

## Spiritual Journals

Beginning in preschool, students make multiple journal entries each year expressing spiritual growth during that school year. The completed journals are presented to students at their 8th-grade graduation, highlighting each student's personal walk with our Lord during their school career at ZCS.

## Student Clubs and Fundraising

All student clubs or fundraising for school activities must be approved by the Head of School or his designee. All funds must be processed through the school finance office.

## Support Services

- The **Resource Room** program serves many of our students in both elementary and middle school. The staff works to meet the needs of students either through direct intervention and/or resourcing classroom teachers.
- The **Reading Support** program provides additional reading intervention and support for students who qualify based on assessment data. Students receive targeted literacy intervention based on research-based practices.
- **Inclusive Education** is a vital part of our culture here at Zeeland Christian. We desire to be a fully inclusive community for students of all abilities. This program has truly blessed Zeeland Christian, working to meet the physical, emotional, social, and academic needs of all students.
- **Psychological Educational Services** can be arranged if the support services team determines they are beneficial and are administered by All Belong Network or Zeeland Public School.
- A **Mental Health Therapist** and **School Social Worker** are available to support students and/or families.
- **Ancillary Services** are provided by ZPS and the OAISD for students who meet eligibility requirements. Two ZPS speech pathologists are on site to work with preschool and elementary students who qualify. In addition, an Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, Social Worker, Vision Consultant, and Hearing Consultant come on-site to support students with these services.

## Toys From Home

Toys from home are not permitted to be brought to elementary school unless there is a special circumstance in which the teacher states that it is allowed (ex., stuffed animals at school for comfy day, show and tell, etc.) or if the toy has been approved for use at school by the student's teacher.

## Treats For Classrooms (Birthdays/Celebrations)

If you would like to bring a treat for your child's class, please follow these guidelines:

- **Check with the teacher** to confirm a date/time.
- All treats must be **non-edible**.
- Bring enough treats for **all students**.

## Tuition - Finals site

Payments for student tuition are handled through the Finals site, ZCS's admission, enrollment and billing platform. For billing you have the option to pay annually, semi-annually, quarterly, or monthly, with your first payment for each new school year being due in July or September depending on which payment plan you choose. Setting up automatic payments is encouraged for monthly payment plans.

## Tuition Assistance

At ZCS the goal is for a family not to pay more than 18% of their income in tuition for their children to attend school each year. Tuition assistance consists of two levels and is offered for families with children in Y5s through 8th grade. Level 1 maxes out at 50% of a family's tuition cost and Level 2\* requires additional information and consideration from our Finance Committee. If a family also has a preschooler, that tuition number is also taken into account when awarding assistance. The application window for each school year is in March and is handled through the FACTS system. Please contact [finance@zcs.org](mailto:finance@zcs.org) for more information.

\*Preschool only families can apply for Level 2.

## Tuition Reducing Incentive Program (TRIP)

TRIP is a program that provides current and future families of Zeeland Christian School an opportunity to reduce their tuition. Through the TRIP program, gift/merchandise certificates are purchased from participating businesses at a discount. These certificates are sold at face value to families who participate in the program. The discount, or credit, that is earned by TRIP is passed on to the families registered to participate in the program in the form of tuition credit. Families may sign up for TRIP on the [Current Families page](#). Any TRIP updates or changes are published in the Blue Note in the "TRIP News" section.

## Vaccine Preventable Diseases

The school will follow the recommended protocol (including timelines) as set by the Ottawa County Health Department for dealing with the following:

- Removal of any underimmunized\* child who seems to show symptoms of a disease that is vaccine preventable.
- Removal of any underimmunized child if there is a confirmed case of a vaccine preventable disease in the school.

\*This does not currently include COVID-19.

\*This does include:

DTP, DTaP, Tdap (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis)

Polio

MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)

Hepatitis B

Varicella (Chicken Pox)

PCV13 (Pneumococcal disease)

Hib (Influenza type b)

- Removal of any staff member diagnosed with a vaccine preventable disease in the school.

\*Underimmunized Children are those who are not up to date on the state recommended vaccinations including those children whose parents have chosen to sign a waiver declining the recommended vaccinations for their children.

## Volunteers:

We welcome volunteers and ask that all volunteer inquiries begin with an email to [zcsinfo@zcs.org](mailto:zcsinfo@zcs.org) where the offer will be directed to the appropriate director for approval. Background checks will be required for all volunteers.



## **Welcome Family**

Families who are new to the Zeeland area or new to Zeeland Christian have the option to be connected with a current ZCS family. This family serves as one more resource in answering questions and getting connected to the greater ZCS community. If you're interested in being a welcome family or being connected to a welcome family, please contact [admissions@zcs.org](mailto:admissions@zcs.org).

## **ZCS Expand(ED) Summer Camps**

A variety of summer camp options are offered by teachers at ZCS (i.e. tutoring, sports, language, etc). Information is released via the Blue Note around Spring Break.