



SPARROWS
Home Education Community



FAMILY HANDBOOK

2024-2025

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2024-2025 Schedule at a Glance



Sparrows (Fridays) Meeting Dates:

Semester 1: Sept. 6, 13, 20 | Oct. 4, 11, 18
Nov. 1, 8, 15, 22 | Dec. 6, 13

Semester 2: Jan. 10, 17, 24 | Feb. 7, 14, 21
March 7, 14, 28 | April 11, 18, 25

Spread the Word (Tuesdays) Meeting Dates:

Semester 1: Sept. 17, 24 | Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
Nov. 5, 12, 19 | Dec. 3, 10

Semester 2: Jan. 14, 21, 28 | Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25
March 4, 11 | April 1, 8, 15, 29

Fridays when Sparrows has no classes but will meet for an optional field trip (locations TBA):

September 27 | October 25 | January 31 | February 28 | March 21 | April 4

Fridays when Sparrows has NO CLASSES:

November 29 | December 20, 27 | January 3

Important Dates:

Monday, August 19 | Parent Orientation Meeting (6 pm at Amery Free Lutheran Church)

Friday, December 13 | Advent Showcase (5:30 pm at Amery Free Lutheran Church)

Friday, April 25 | Spring Showcase (5:30 pm at Amery Free Lutheran Church)

Sparrows Home Education

A Learning Community

Guidelines 2024-2025

Location of Classes

Amery Free Lutheran Church

647 113th Street

Amery, WI 54001

Website/Email

sparrowshomeed.com

sparrowshomeeducation@gmail.com

Sparrows Board of Directors

Co-op Director

Caitlin Schwanke

caitlinjschwanke@gmail.com

414-914-5704

Teacher Liaison

Laura Deems

freyl2001@yahoo.com

706-248-0877

Registrar

Lacy Hassler

lacy.hassler@gmail.com

907-382-3439

Volunteer Director

Jayna Olson

jaynalschultz@gmail.com

715-554-2877

Treasurer

Megan Sackmann

megsomebody@hotmail.com

507-319-6376

Worship Director

Anna Ochoa

crqualitypaintersllc@gmail.com

612-669-0001

Sparrows Guidelines

Welcome! We're excited to have your family joining us at Sparrows Home Education this year. Please closely review the following information so that you can best understand how we function and what the expectations are at the co-op. Don't hesitate to reach out to our board members with any questions.

About Us

We are a group of homeschool families seeking to enhance our home education experience through the opportunities and support of a Christian homeschool group. We are an organization run by a volunteer board of directors. It is our desire to be a valuable asset to new and continuing home educators alike.

Teachers/Leadership

Our teachers are agreed upon and selected by our board members, though each one functions independently, providing for your families in their own separate and distinct ways. We encourage you to communicate directly with them regarding any classroom or curriculum questions you may have. Teachers and other leaders who are a part of our organization uphold and teach to a Biblical Christian worldview consistent with the following basic statement of faith. We believe it is vital for our board members and teachers to agree to and abide by this statement of faith.

Annual Family Fees

The fees collected by Sparrows are used to cover the costs of items such as educational materials, building use, website costs, P.O. box, and other incidental items necessary for operating the co-op.

Registration

When you register your child, you are making a year-long commitment to the group. IMPORTANT: By signing your registration form, you are agreeing to the terms of the guidelines. You must be sure you have read the guidelines thoroughly so you know what will be expected of you. Sparrows does not issue refunds. *Students are not allowed to switch classes once they are registered. We will allow a 2 week grace period on a case by case basis, but in general would ask that your student stay in the class they registered for.

Parent Orientation Meeting: Monday, August 19th, 2024

Each family is required to attend in order to make all final tuition payments and turn in all final documentation. This allows for adequate processing time for teachers and board members. Registration will close as of this evening. If payment is not received *in full* this night, your child will not be considered registered and his/her spot in any given class will be given to another on the waiting list. Also, your presence graciously allows the board to share important information to everyone all at one time and gives you the opportunity to ask questions, meet teachers, and receive syllabi and homework assignments due the first day of class.

Statement of Faith

I. We believe the Bible to be the infallible Word of God, the supreme and final authority for all faith and life.

II. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

III. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, and atoning death through His shed blood. We also believe in His bodily resurrection and ascension and His imminent bodily return in power and glory.

IV. We believe that man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and is therefore lost, and only those who put their faith in Jesus Christ alone can be saved.

V. We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose substitutionary death on the cross paid the penalty for man's sin.

VI. We believe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to convict man, indwell, guide, instruct, and empower believers for Godly living and service.

Volunteering and Service Teams

Every member's involvement and cooperation is what makes the co-op function efficiently. We encourage and require active participation in our group, so *please join ONLY if you are interested in becoming fully committed*. With a team approach to getting things done, we enjoy a strong and bonded sense of community with room for vibrant growth.

One parent of each Sparrows family is required to serve a set number of hours and will serve in designated areas of the co-op to fill those hours. You will get more details about your hours and how to apply them appropriately following registration. When you register, you will complete a preferred volunteer section where you may indicate your preferences for where you would most like to serve.

We are asking that all volunteer hours be filled by a parent of enrolled Sparrows' students. We are not allowing official alternates or subs for volunteer hours this year. The reason behind this is that we need to know who is at the building and why for liability purposes. If, however, you need this arrangement or something like at times to make co-op work, please reach out to the board and we will discuss it on a case-by-case basis. Thank you for understanding and please reach out with questions if you have any.

We have a Volunteer Director who will assign, organize, and assist you with your service team responsibilities.

Nursery will be available to utilize for teacher helpers but you will be responsible for your children if you're setting up, cleaning up, or serving in a timeframe outside of co-op hours.

FINDING A SUB FOR YOUR SERVICE TEAM SLOT

It is *vital* important, if you find you are unable to fill your assigned service team slot, that **you take responsibility** to find a substitute or manage the volunteer position between you and your spouse. This will ensure that all of Sparrows' needs are met. We require that each Sparrows member take personal responsibility for their service team requirements in the event they cannot fulfill them (if you drop out, have a sick child, etc.). Please do not reach out to board members or use social media platforms to let people know and then assume that you've done your due diligence. This is ultimately your responsibility and cannot be left open and a burden for the board to assume. Your cooperation here is absolutely required.

Trade Option - MAKE A TRADE WITH A FELLOW PARENT VOLUNTEER

If you cannot fill your scheduled volunteer slot, simply call or email another parent volunteer to trade assigned dates with you. We recommend that you print out our family contact sheet that we send out at the beginning of each year. Then, once you make an agreement and a change to the schedule, *you MUST notify the Volunteer Director of the change ASAP (please email our Volunteer Director and not the general email for Sparrows)*.

Regarding Service - Please Note:

If at any time during the year your child is withdrawn from Sparrows, you will be required to find a substitute for *all* of your future volunteer obligations and to notify the volunteer director of those substitutions.

All volunteer slots must be fulfilled by a parent or approved alternate of a currently enrolled student.

Attendance Policy

Please report all absences to your child's teachers directly via email as soon as you know they will be absent. Teachers do not keep formal attendance but do appreciate knowing who to expect in their classes each day. If you know in advance that your child will be absent for a family vacation or other special event, please give your teachers as much prior notice as possible. Please note, refunds will not be given for missed classes. If anyone besides a parent is bringing students to co-op the board must be notified via email and permission granted to the family. *No unregistered students are allowed in any classes or at co-op (cousins, friends, etc.).

Weather Policy

The Board members will make the decision to cancel or hold classes when the weather is questionable and will notify members via email. If this is necessary, we will use our predetermined make-up day(s). Please note there are no refunds for any further weather-related cancellations.

Discipline Policy

We want to encourage our students to glorify God by their respectful behavior toward teachers, parents, and peers. Additionally, the intent with the following policy is to provide an enjoyable and optimal learning environment. **The following items should be reviewed with your children:**

General Expectations:

Be attentive to the teacher.

Follow directions the first time they are given without arguing.

Show respect for others by not handling their property or disturbing them.

Tell the truth.

Respectfully raise your hand and wait to be called on before answering.

Use kind words, not insults, name-calling, crude talk, or swearing.

Always remain in your classroom with your teacher, in study hall with the supervisor, or within close proximity to a parent. Children should never be freely roaming the building alone. They must be with a parent, teacher, or volunteer.

Seek modesty in physical appearance (clothing), language, and actions.

All Ipod/smart phone devices must be used in an appropriate, school-related, need-based manner and must not be a distraction to others. As a general rule, devices must be kept in a backpack or out of sight during class time unless otherwise indicated by a teacher.

Physical aggression toward students, volunteers, or teachers will be taken very seriously and may be grounds for immediate dismissal.

No weapons or illegal drugs are allowed.

Treat the building with the utmost respect at all times. Leave the building as clean, if not cleaner, than when you arrived.

Be quiet, especially around the office, and in the hallways, as church staff may be working.

Hang coats on the hallway coat racks.

Refrain from roughhousing, running, or loud behavior.

Formal discipline is as follows:

The following steps for correction of student behavior may be initiated and carried out by a teacher or board member.

Step One:

If a student clearly disregards a basic expectation or behaves in a manner that is disrespectful or disruptive, a simple warning will be communicated by the teacher, and the teacher will issue a discipline note to the parents. Parents are strongly encouraged to contact the teacher to discuss what happened.

Step Two:

If the child continues to be disruptive, he or she will be removed from all classes for the remainder of the day. Parents will be required to have their child directly with them for the remainder of the day.

Note: In the event that a student has reached Step Two, parents will be required to discuss the issue with the board. If problems continue, the board reserves the right to suspend the student for the remainder of the year without refund.

Family Reconciliation Policy

We always aspire to honorably and peacefully resolve disappointments and/or conflict at Sparrows, and we seek to do so by following the biblical guidelines given in Matthew 18. As a general rule, when any one of us (leadership, teachers, members, students) who is part of Sparrows encounters conflict, it is our goal to listen, seek to understand, express our concerns, and hopefully resolve things without linking any other individuals into that process, therefore unfairly burdening them with information and issues they cannot address. This means that when you have a concern or a complaint, it is rarely (if ever) appropriate to first bring it up to a board member or to draw in other Sparrows members. Any issue that you may have needs to be brought directly to the individual with whom you have the concern. If, after faithfully seeking to resolve any issues one-on-one, you find the problems cannot be reconciled, then it may be warranted for you to bring the issue to the board for help. At that point, we will gladly walk with you. Sparrows leadership is committed to diligently seeking out reconciliation. If, after many attempts, and in the very rare event that a conflict simply cannot be resolved, the board reserves the right to revoke membership in the group without refund.

Health/Attendance Policy

In order to provide an optimal learning environment as well as a courtesy to others, we require that a child not be brought into any classes if he or she demonstrates any of the following symptoms:

- A fever within the last 24 hours
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- Pinkeye
- Any undiagnosed rash or lesions
- Runny nose with yellow or green discharge
- Persistent cough
- Nits or lice found on *anyone in your family*

**If in doubt, please do not bring your child out of consideration to the other co-op families.*

If you determine your child has been to class and later exhibits symptoms of a communicable illness (i.e. chicken pox, lice, etc.), please let the board know so we are able to notify our other families and the staff of the church of a possible exposure. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping Sparrows a safe and healthy place to learn!

Classroom Observation Policy

Parents must get *prior* permission from the *teacher* before observing in a classroom. Board members cannot grant this freedom. Also, barring extreme circumstances, we ask that no parent(s) sit in on *every* class for the entire year, as one of the goals for our students is to gain a sense of independence in the organized classroom setting of Sparrows.

Emergency Procedures/Policy

Parents agree to assume all responsibility for their children while participating in Sparrows. Parents also agree to accept any and all financial responsibility for any medical or legal expenses that may occur due to taking part in any group activity. We require that each student has an Emergency Procedure Form on file. Amery Free Lutheran Church and all its employees and members shall be exempt from any legal actions or financial responsibility due to any injury, etc., that may occur during any Sparrows activities.

Communication

E-MAIL | Our primary mode of communication is via weekly email updates. Please let us know if you are not receiving the weekly emails by contacting us at sparrowshomeeducation@gmail.com. **It's very important that you're reading these emails in full each week so that we are not constantly reiterating information.** Thank you!

SPARROWS WEBSITE | Find the most updated important documents and Sparrows schedule and contact info at sparrowshomeed.com.

FAMILY MAILBOXES | Board members, teachers, and other members of the group may also communicate some information through handouts on class days, so please be sure to check your family mailbox each week.

NOTE: ONLY information related directly to Sparrows classes and special events will be shared over email. In order to keep those weekly emails manageable and of high importance to all (and so you'll read them!), we use the mailboxes for all other outside opportunities such as piano lessons, homeschool seminars, discounted days at local establishments, or other bits of information that you may want to share with the group. This type of information will not be included in your weekly updates. We encourage you to share such information in the mailboxes. Please keep the following tax exemption provision in mind as you insert information into the mailboxes.

TAX EXEMPTION PROVISIONS:

No substantial part of the activities of Sparrows shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Sparrows Commitment

Please sign and return this page prior to the first day of classes.

I have read, I understand, and I am committing to adhere by the rules, regulations, and principles laid out in the Sparrows Family Handbook. I am in agreement with the Statement of Faith and our family commits to acting in accordance with the Biblical standards outlined in that Statement.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE FORM

One form required per child enrolled (including nursery aged children). Bring these to orientation, email them to sparrowshomeeducation@gmail.com, or bring them to the first day of co-op. **We must have one on file for each child enrolled prior to classes beginning.**

Name : _____

Birthday : _____

Allergies : _____

MEDICAL / BEHAVIORIAL CONDITIONS

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

IMPORTANT NOTES