



SPARROWS
Home Education Community

FAMILY HANDBOOK

2026–2027

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I. General Information

2026–2027 Schedule at a Glance

Sparrows (Fridays) Meeting Dates

Semester 1: Sept. 11, 18, 25 | Oct. 9, 16, 23 | Nov. 6, 13, 20 | Dec. 4, 11, 18

Semester 2: Jan. 15, 22, 29 | Feb. 5, 12, 19 | March 5, 12, 19 | April 2, 9, 16

Sparrows (Fridays) Meeting Times

Arrival: 8:45a

Morning Assembly: 9:00

Block 1: 9:30–10:15a

Block 2: 10:15–11a

Block 3: 11–11:45a

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

October 2 | October 30 | February 26 | March 26

Fridays when Sparrows has NO CLASSES

November 27 | December 25 | January 1 + 8

Important Dates

Monday, August 24 | Parent Orientation Meeting – 6 pm at Amery Free Lutheran Church

Friday, December 11 | Advent Showcase – 5:30 pm at Amery Free Lutheran Church

Friday, April 16 | Year End Picnic Celebration – 12:30 pm at North Park in Amery

Location & Contact Info

Location of Friday Classes

Amery Free Lutheran Church

647 113th Street

Amery, WI 54001

Email

sparrowshomeeducation@gmail.com

Sparrows Guidelines

Welcome! We're excited to have your family join us at Sparrows Home Education this year. Please closely review the following information to understand our function and expectations.

Vision Statement

Sparrows is a thriving coalition of home-educating families fortified in community and rooted at home.

Mission Statement

Our mission at Sparrows Home Education is to equip families to confidently home-educate their children. We believe a living home education is the best place for a child's interconnected spirit, mind, and body to flourish. Our community seeks to be a place for iron to sharpen iron so that families can do the real work at home of setting an educational feast.

Educational Philosophy

Our program partners with parents as the primary educators. All of our instruction is grounded in a biblical worldview, emphasizing curiosity, diligence, responsibility, and wisdom. Faith is integrated naturally into academics, relationships, and daily practices.

Teachers/Leadership

Our teachers are approved by our board members. Each educator works independently, supporting your families in their own unique ways. Please communicate directly with them regarding any classroom or curriculum questions. As part of our organization, teachers and other leaders are expected to uphold and teach from a Biblical Christian worldview consistent with the following basic statement of faith.

Annual Fees

The fees collected by Sparrows are used to cover the costs of items such as educational materials, building use, and other incidental items necessary for operating the co-op. Our facility fee this year is \$130, as well as an additional \$45 per student (including nursery and pre-k students). There may be additional fees paid directly to the educators depending on which classes you select.

Registration

When you register, you are making a year-long commitment. By signing your registration form, you are agreeing to the terms of the guidelines. Please read the guidelines thoroughly. Sparrows does not issue refunds. We require your students to stay in the classes they registered for and will only consider switches on a case-by-case basis.

Parent Orientation Meeting: Monday, August 23, 2026

All families are required to attend orientation. We need adequate processing time for teachers and board members. Your presence allows the board to share important information and allows you to ask questions, meet teachers, and receive syllabi.

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.

VII. We believe that God created humanity in His image as male and female, and that these two distinct, complementary genders reflect the created order and purpose established by God.

Family Partnership

We believe education is most effective when families and educators work together.

Educators agree to:

- Support program policies and values
- Provide consistency and excellence in their classes and materials
- Ensure consistent attendance and punctuality
- Communicate thoroughly and respectfully with students, guardians, and leadership
- Hold students accountable to the Sparrows code of conduct

Parents/Guardians agree to:

- Support program policies and values
- Ensure consistent attendance and punctuality
- Communicate respectfully with instructors and leadership
- Hold students accountable for behavior and assigned work
- Supervise students between classes when required

Students are expected to:

- Follow instructor directions
- Treat others with respect
- Come prepared and ready to learn
- Demonstrate self-control and responsibility

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. If, however, a sub or alternate is needed 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 or parents during co-op, but you will be responsible for your children if you are setting up, cleaning up, or serving in a timeframe outside of co-op hours.

A teaching role in the classroom fulfills your volunteer role for the semester. A volunteer role may also be fulfilled by an older teen in the family through teaching a class and will be approved on a case-by-case basis.

Finding a Sub for Your Service Team Slot

It is vitally important, if you find you are unable to fill your assigned service team slot (vacation, illness, etc) that you take responsibility to find a substitute or manage the volunteer position between you and your spouse to ensure that all of Sparrows' needs are met. 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, contact another parent volunteer to trade assigned dates with you. Print out our family contact sheet, which 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 Operations Director, Christine Spading, of the change.

Please email Christine Spading (spadingcj@gmail.com) once you have made an appropriate switch.

II. Policies & Procedures

Attendance Policy

Please note that 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. We need to know who is in the building and why for liability purposes. Unregistered students are not allowed in any classes or at co-op (cousins, friends, etc.).

“No Drop Off” Rule

Sparrows is not a drop-off co-op, meaning that every child enrolled must have a participating parent who is in the building the entire time that the child is there. If the participating parent is not abiding by this rule, the Sparrows Board will contact the parent by phone or email. If that parent offends again, that family’s participation at the co-op may be jeopardized.

Guardianship

In limited situations, Sparrows does allow a guardianship transfer to another registered parent. The guardianship form will be provided by request and needs to be filled out and approved by the Sparrows board before it can take effect. A guardianship form needs to be filled out and either emailed or placed in the “mailbox.”

Enrollment & Attendance

- Enrollment is completed annually and subject to availability
- Regular attendance is expected
- Students should arrive on time and remain for the full class period
- Excessive absences or tardiness may result in a parent conference

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, there is a potential for 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. Discipline is intended to guide, correct, and restore, helping students grow in wisdom, responsibility, and self-control. Discipline is handled with prayer, grace, and consistency, with the goal of correction and restoration rather than punishment. Parents are partners in this process. Review the following 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 or within proximity to a parent.
- Children should never be freely roaming the building alone except to move between classes or use the restroom. They must be with a parent, teacher, or volunteer.
- Seek modesty in physical appearance, language, and actions.
- All electronic 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.
- Students are responsible for personal belongings.
- Refrain from roughhousing, running, or loud behavior outside of gym class.

Formal Discipline

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

First Offense:

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. Verbal correction and redirection; student reflection encouraged. Parents may be notified.

Second Offense:

If the child continues to be disruptive, he or she will be removed from the class and will have to sit with the parent for the remainder of that class time. The student may return to the next block if appropriate. Parent notification and conference as needed.

Third Offense:

In the event the student commits a second offense multiple times, and the issue continues, parents will be required to discuss the issue with the board.

If the problem continues, the board reserves the right to suspend the student for the remainder of the year without refund.

Severe or unsafe behavior may result in immediate removal.

Parent Partnership

Parents/guardians agree to support expectations, ensure punctual arrival and pickup, encourage accountability, and partner with instructors in correction and growth.

By participating in Sparrows, students and families agree to uphold these standards in order to maintain a respectful, Christ-honoring learning environment.

Attire Policy

Our learning group values a respectful, distraction-free environment that supports focus, participation, and mutual respect. Clothing choices should reflect modesty, appropriateness, and consideration for others in a shared learning space.

General Guidelines

Participants are expected to wear clothing that:

- Provides appropriate coverage of the body
- Is not overly tight, sheer, or revealing
- Allows for comfortable movement and active participation
- Is suitable for a learning environment

Footwear

- Shoes should be appropriate for the day's activities and safe for movement
- Closed-toe shoes may be required for certain activities or settings

Seasonal & Activity Considerations

- Layers are encouraged for comfort and modesty
- Dress expectations may vary slightly for outdoor activities, physical activities, or special events, with advance notice provided

Shared Responsibility

We recognize modesty can be subjective and cultural. Families and participants are encouraged to use discretion and align clothing choices with the spirit of this policy: respect for oneself, others, and the learning environment.

Conflict Resolution

We aspire to honorably and peacefully resolve disappointments and/or conflict at Sparrows by following the biblical guidelines given in Matthew 18. As a general rule, when any one of us (leadership, teachers, parents, 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.

In summary, concerns should be addressed respectfully and directly, following a biblical model:

1. Speak directly with the involved member
2. If unresolved, contact program leadership
3. Leadership decisions are final

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 (temperature at or above 101 degrees) 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 for 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!

Additionally, parents must notify leadership of medical needs or allergies.

Classroom Observation Policy

Parents must get prior permission from the teacher before observing in a classroom. Board members cannot grant this freedom. Also, barring special 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 read these emails in full each week so that you are informed of any changes. Thank you!

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.

Financial Policies

- Tuition and fees are due according to the published schedule (\$130 facility fee plus \$45/student in addition to any fees to be paid directly to educators)
- Late payments may result in dismissal
- Refunds are not issued after the term begins unless otherwise stated

Facilities & Property Use

- Respect and care for all facilities and equipment is required
- Students are responsible for personal belongings
- Damage to property may require restitution

Legal & Administrative

- Participation requires signed waivers and acknowledgment forms

- Background checks could be performed for staff and volunteers
- Photos or videos may be used for program promotion with consent

Acknowledgment

Participation in Sparrows indicates agreement with the policies outlined in this handbook. We are grateful for the opportunity to partner with families in providing a Christ-centered educational enrichment community.

This handbook is subject to updates as needed. Families will be notified of significant changes.

III. Forms

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

Sparrows Commitment

_____(initial) 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.

_____(initial) I, the undersigned, do hereby agree to assume all the responsibility for my child(ren) while he/she/they are participating in any and all Sparrows classes or activities. I also agree to accept any and all financial responsibility for any medical and/or legal expenses that may occur due to taking part in any co-op activity.

_____(initial) I understand that Sparrows, all its members, leadership team, and instructors, as well as Amery Free Lutheran Church facilities, their staff and members shall be exempt from any/all legal action or financial responsibility due to any injury, etc. that may occur during co-op hours or during any co-op activity.

_____(initial) I understand that I am responsible for any and all property damages incurred by my student(s) and agree to reimburse Amery Free Lutheran Church accordingly.

_____(initial) I understand that the co-op is run by volunteers, and that I will be expected to fulfill my duties and responsibilities as a member of the co-op. Failure to do so may result in the loss of member privileges.

_____(initial) I understand that the Amery Free Lutheran Church building is being made available for our use during co-op hours and we agree to do our part to leave the building as good as or better than we found it. My child(ren) and I will treat the building, staff, teachers, and leadership team with respect at all times. Any damage, costs or extra cleaning fees charged by the church as a result of member negligence will be passed onto co-op members.

_____(initial) I have read, understood and hereby agree to abide by the rules/guidelines as stated herein.

_____(initial) I permit Sparrows to take pictures of my child(ren) during class days and at events and use said pictures for co-op and yearbook purposes only (no social media).

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: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Allergies: _____

MEDICAL / BEHAVIORAL CONDITIONS

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

IMPORTANT NOTES
