



2026-2027

Elementary Parent Handbook

CONTACT CROSS OF HOPE SCHOOL:

6104 TAYLOR RANCH ROAD NW, 87120



505-897-1832



505-897-9455



crossofhopeschool.org



facebook.com/COHSchool

*It is the policy of Cross of Hope Lutheran Church and School that we will promote equal access of services for all children and families, and prohibits discrimination based on race, color religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, or gender identity), national origin, disability, or age (40 or older).

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Church Compass Statement

Compass Statement

We are set free into HOPE-filled ministry to Love God, Transform Relationships and Serve Others.

Cross of Hope Lutheran Church and Schools is a multi-generational Christian community that joyfully follows Jesus.

We Value:

A Warm Welcome

We embrace you wherever you are on your journey of faith.

A Diverse and Inviting Community

We want everyone to feel love and acceptance.

Dynamic Worship

We experience God's presence through prayer and worship.

Learning about God

We embrace opportunities to learn and grow in faith.

Community Outreach

We share God's love with others.

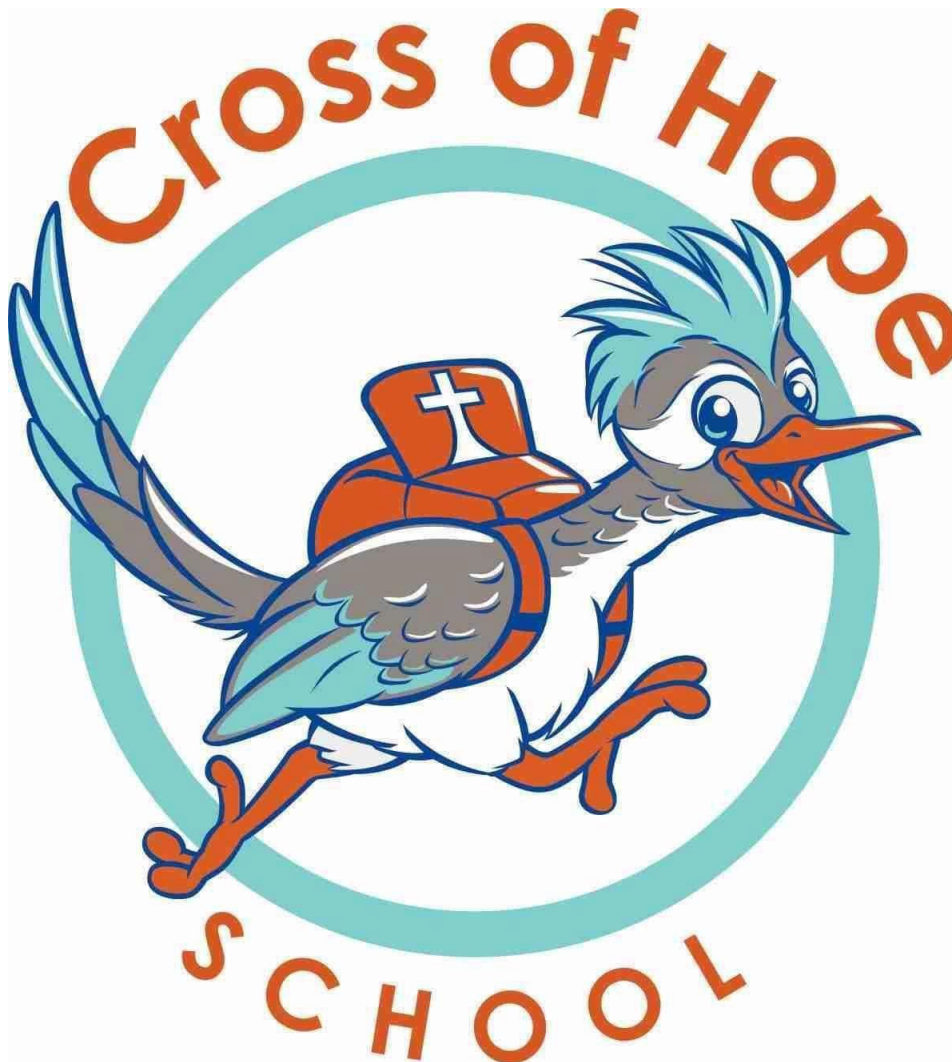
Church Mission Statement

Cross of Hope is a Spirit-centered community that shares Christ's love through worship, education, and outreach to develop and strengthen relationships with God.

School Mission Statement

Cross of Hope School is a welcoming Christ centered community providing high quality education in a nurturing environment that respects each child's development.

Roadrunner





Message from Director of School Ministry

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5

"But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." Galatians 5:22-23a

Dear Cross of Hope Families,

Welcome to Cross of Hope School! I pray you had a restful summer filled with adventures. I am so excited to begin our school year together. This year we are continuing to anchor in Jesus, standing on His truth found in His word. This year we will focus on God's role (being the vine) and our role (being the branches) while gaining a deeper understanding of the fruit that we produce in his spirit. I believe this will be foundational in transforming our hearts and our school community.

We welcome Amy Ellis to our staff this year. She is a highly qualified, licensed teacher and is excited to teach our children Spanish. She will also support our students by providing music, art and literacy intervention. We are thrilled to have Ms. Joy, Mrs. Evans, Mrs. Aragon, and Ms. Vola return as classroom teachers, along with our incredible specialist staff: Coach MC, Ms. Julie, Ms. Rebecca, Ms. Paula, and Ms. Ellie. These amazing staff members are lifelong learners, lovers of laughter, and most importantly, lovers of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Together we are prepared to support your family in a successful year!

I pray you feel welcome in our school. We are honored to have you join our community! Let the adventures of 2026-2027 begin!

Blessings,

Susan F. Rivera

Director of School Ministry

Cross of Hope Church & School

esdirector@crossofhope.org 505-897-1832

Message from our Pastor

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Romans 15:13

Dear Cross of Shope School Families,

It is a joy and blessing to welcome you in the name of Christ!

Please know that we are grateful to you- whether new or returning children and parents, teachers, and staff- we have the honor of joining together to learn and grow in life and faith this year. It is a tremendous blessing to abound in hope together.

On behalf of the community of faith of Cross of Hope Lutheran Church, we are honored and blessed to share this journey with you. As we begin this new academic year, we are excited to share in the nurturing, love and education of your child, as well as getting to know you, their supportive family. Our School Ministry is grounded in God’s Word of love made known in Jesus and dedicated to the mission of educating our children from this place of love and care through the Holy Spirit.

I invite and encourage you to participate in the life of the community throughout the year! If you do not have a church home, you are welcome to worship on Sunday. Find more information on worship, faith formation, and to keep up the date with what’s going on at www.crossofhope.org.

Along with Ms. Rivera, Mrs. McClain and our faithful staff, I am eager to get to know you and your child, to provide pastoral care and support along the journey, and to show God’s unfailing love as best as I am able as we grow in life and faith together. During times of illness, joy, death, and celebration, please be encouraged and invited to contact me so we may join in prayer for you and caring response as a community of faith. It is a blessing to be in this ministry together.

God bless your school year!

Peace,

R. Adam Berndt, Pastor

Community Covenant

As members of the Christian community of Cross of Hope Lutheran Church and Schools, we commit, with the help of God, to relate to each other through Christ, and thus hold ourselves and each other to:

- 1. Listen to each other** *“Let everyone be quick to listen slow to speak.” James 1:19*
- 2. Respect the privacy of those who confide** *“A gossip goes about telling secrets, but one who is trustworthy in spirit keeps a confidence.” Proverbs 11:13*
- 3. Challenge each other with the truth** *“Rather speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.” Ephesians 4:15-16*
- 4. Deal with people directly. Don’t complain to others.** *“If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone”. Matthew 18:5*
- 5. Strengthen each other** *“Speak only what is useful for building up...so that your words may give grace to those who hear” Ephesians 4:29*
- 6. Be gentle with one another** *“My friends, if anyone is detected in a transgression, you who have received the Spirit should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness.” Galatians 6:1*
- 7. Do not speak ill of others in the fellowship** *“Beloved, do not grumble against one another so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors!” James 5:9*
- 8. Do not judge each other** *“Therefore you have no excuse, whoever you are, when you judge others; for in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, are doing the very same things.” Romans 2:1*
- 9. Pray for and with one another** James 5:16
- 10. Confess your sins to one another** James 5:16
- 11. Forgive one another** *“Forgive, & you will be forgiven; give & it will be given to you.” Luke 6:37b-38a*
- 12. Freely participate in the Body of Christ according to your gifts and talents** *“As you go, proclaim the good news, “The kingdom of heaven has come near!” Matthew 10:*

Policies & Procedures

Enrollment Process

The enrollment process consists of three (3) parts, **Admissions, Enrollment and Financially Enrolled.**

Completion of the Online Enrollment Process occurs once a family has met the requirements of these 3 parts.

- **Admissions** - an application submitted to the school with payment for the registration fee is required. While 'in Admissions', an application is reviewed by administration and staff to assure that Cross of Hope will be a good fit for each student and that the student will benefit from the Christian education at our school.
- **Enrollment** - all requested documentation along with the student application must have been reviewed by administration and staff. Any observations or interviews must be completed and accepted. Families will receive an official email from the school, welcoming them once their student has been accepted.
- **Financially Enrolled** - a tuition agreement with FACTs or payment in full must be made as well as both the Registration Fee and Instructional Materials Fee are completely paid.

Enrollment Timeline

- **Returning students** - Re-Enrollment begins the last week of February and is 'closed' to ensure that returning students are guaranteed enrollment. This period lasts for one week.
- **New Students** - Enrollment starts after returning students. At this time all available spots are open to a 'first come, first serve' basis. Enrollment is open until classrooms are at maximum capacity.

It is the policy of Cross of Hope Lutheran Church and School that we will promote the equal access of services for all children and families and prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, or gender identity), national origin, disability, or age (40 or older)

Cross of Hope School reserves the right to admit only those students whom the administration feels can benefit by the school and its program(s). Furthermore, the school is unable to provide for students requiring special education classes or students with diagnosed learning disabilities. We also reserve the right to only enroll students whose families support all of Cross of Hope and its efforts in education and ministry and may, at our discretion, dis-enroll students/families who are found to, in word and/or in deed, break the 'Community Covenant' outlined in this Elementary Handbook.

Admission to kindergarten as required by New Mexico State Statute, shall be made solely on the basis of chronological age. A child who is 5 years of age prior to 12:01 am MDT on September 1 of the school year can enter kindergarten at the beginning of that school year.

N.M. State. Ann. § 22-13-3

Staff Roster

NAME	POSITION	EMAIL
ADAM BERNDT	CHURCH PASTOR	COHPASTOR@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
SUSAN RIVERA	DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL MINISTRY	ESDIRECTOR@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
NANCY LACHER	INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT	NLACHER@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
DEA EVANS	KINDERGARTEN	DEVANS@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
LINDA ARAGON	1 ST GRADE	LARAGON@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
JENNIFER VOLA	2 ND / 3 RD GRADE	JVOLA@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
JOY THORNHILL	4 TH /5 TH GRADE	JTHORNHILL@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
PAULA WILLIS	MATH INTERVENTIONIST	PWILLIS@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
REBECCA LOVATO	TECHNOLOGY/ LIBRARY	<u>RLOVATO@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG</u>
MCMARSHAL HARTZENBERG	PHYSICAL EDUCATION	MHARTZENBERG@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
AMY ELLIS	SPANISH/ART/ MUSIC	AELLIS@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
JULIE MARTIN	LUNCH MANAGER/ADMIN ASST	JMARTIN@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
ELLIE HAND	EA Elementary	EHAND@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
TRISHA McCLAIN	PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR	<u>PSDIRECTOR@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG</u>
AMBER GRIFFITH	PRESCHOOL TEACHER	AGRIFFITH@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
LORI BRAUNHARDT	PRESCHOOL TEACHER	LBRAUNHARDT@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
ROSA MARQUEZ	Ps EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT	RMARQUEZ@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
KRISSY CASTILLO	Ps EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANT	KCASTILLO@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG
BRIANNA MARES	FINANCE OFFICER	FINANCE@CROSSOFHOPE.ORG

***updated 7/31/26**

After School Care –

We are excited to offer after-school care (4 years old – 5th grade) through Rio Grande Educational Collaborative (RGEC).

- M-Th 3:15 to 6:00PM
- F 12:15- 6:PM
- If applying through RGEC, there will be no cost.
- Drop in students will be charged \$31 per day.
- Apply at nmeccd.org/apply.for.services/ or contact RGEC for further information.

Arrival & Dismissal

Classes will begin and end PROMPTLY at these times:

*Doors will open at 7:45 a.m.

Monday – Thursday:

- 8:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m. Kindergarten thru 5th grade

Fridays:

- 8:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Kindergarten thru 5th grade

Morning Arrival

- **PLEASE plan to arrive at least 5 minutes prior to the start of your child's class.**
- All children must be accompanied by an adult to the school's playground front gate. There will be no curbside drop off.
- Students must be in the classroom at their designated start time or will be counted as tardy.

Late Arrival

- If a parent arrives outside the designated pick-up times, they will need to ring the front doorbell for assistance.
- The school will give grace to students arriving late if the school office and administration deem there are conditions that could not be overcome or foreseen.

Afternoon Dismissal

- Parents will park their car and pick up their child from the class line on the playground. There will be no curbside pickup.
- If you have someone else coming to pick up your child, please notify the school that morning so we know whom to expect. They will be asked for ID, and we will verify with the child that they are comfortable leaving with that adult. For a friend or family member that will regularly pick-up, please add them as a 'Pick-up Contact' in the family information section of FACTS.

Early Sign Out

- **The early release of students causes disruption to the academic performance of all children. No students will be released within the final thirty (30) minutes of the school day unless authorized by the Director or Director's designee (i.e., emergency, sickness).**

Art

Students in grades K-3 will attend a class on the basics of Art twice weekly to enhance their extra-curricular experience at our school. Students in grades 4-5th grade will continue to participate in art instruction in their classrooms as in previous years.

Attendance

Regular and timely attendance is a principal factor in student achievement.

Per New Mexico's Compulsory Education Law, COHS students are allowed no more than 10 unexcused absences per school year.

Parents/Guardians must notify the school each day that the student will be absent. Please call 505-897-1832 or email esdirector@crossofhope.org to inform us that your child will be absent **before 8:00 a.m.** on the day of the absence.

Excused Absences are allowed for the following reasons with appropriate documentation:

- Illness (including chronic illness documented in a student's school file.)
 1. If sick for three or more days a doctor's note will be required to return to school.
- Limited family emergencies.
- Death in the family
- Medical, health or legal appointments.
- Suspensions.
- Deployment of a military parent.

Unexcused Absences are absences for reasons not included under 'Excused Absences'.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Non-school sponsored activities or trips
- Family vacations outside of the normally scheduled school breaks
- The school will take an 'early intervention' approach to working with families before absences and tardies become problematic.

Missed Assignments while Absent:**If a student has an absence due to a family vacation:**

- Teachers are NOT expected to gather school materials for parents to pick up prior to their trip. Students may catch up with the assignments when they return to school.

If a student is absent 1-2 days due to a regular cold or stomach flu:

- Teachers are NOT expected to gather school materials for parents to pick up. Students may catch up with the assignments when they return to school.
- Virtual Instruction will not be provided.

If a student has an extended absence due to illness:

- Teachers will provide a packet of homework for the parents to pick up upon request.
- Virtual Instruction will not be provided.

Background Checks

To help ensure that our students are safe, background checks are required of anyone who has school-related involvement with students at Cross of Hope during the school day. This includes ALL staff and volunteers. Background checks cost \$42, last for two years and can be filed for in the school office.

Behavior Support

Supporting student behavioral choices is a collaborative effort by the parents, guardians, students, and staff.

The primary goal at Cross of Hope School is to provide and maintain a safe, just, affirming, and appropriately challenging environment that promotes learning and positive personal growth. We believe in instilling self-worth, taking social responsibility, and emphasizing both self-advocacy and the repairing of any harm that takes place within relationships.

This plan is focused on:

- Providing clear expectations for students, parents, and staff
- Communicating promptly with parents and students
- Teaching and addressing student's social emotional wellness, including self-advocacy
- Consistently reinforcing the high expectations found in our Community Covenant
- Maintaining a Zero-Tolerance for any physical aggression

Parents can expect to be contacted on the same day for minor issues. For more serious infractions, parents will be contacted as soon as possible after staff has mediated the issue at hand.

Please Note: FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's educational records. As infractions will be recorded in each student's file, information about any infraction falls under FERPA protection. **The details of how a student is disciplined or the events and circumstances around an infraction are considered 'private' and will not be made known to anyone outside of the student's parent/guardian relationship and the appropriate staff member(s) who have an educational need to know.** When two or more students are involved in the same incident, every effort will be made to ensure the privacy of each student and information about one or the other will NOT be shared with the other student, parent/guardian(s).

Cell Phones

Cross of Hope encourages the appropriate use of cell phones during school. This includes:

- Phones on silent mode or vibrate during times volunteering or working with students.
- No photos of students allowed without parent permission.
- Students may have cell phones at school if they are off during the school day and kept in their backpacks. They are to be used only to communicate with parents for drop off or pick up information. This includes the use of watches.
- Teachers are encouraged to use email, the Remind App, FACTS or school phones to communicate with parents rather than personal numbers.

Check In /Check Out of Students

- If a parent arrives outside the designated drop-off or pick-up times, they will need to ring the front doorbell or call 505-897-1832 for assistance so as not to disrupt the instruction schedule.
- Volunteers and visitors **MUST** check in at the Welcome Desk prior to entering the building. ALL persons checking out students early must have a valid picture ID and be registered as a pickup contact on FACTS. We will not allow students to leave with adults who do not have advance permission to take the student.

Child Abuse

Cross of Hope School follows NM State Law about reporting child abuse as stated below:

- **Mandated Reporting**

Every person who knows or has reasonable suspicion that a child is being abused or neglected in New Mexico must report the matter immediately to CYFD's Statewide Central Intake child abuse hotline (1-855-333-SAFE [7233] or #SAFE from a cell phone), or to law enforcement or the appropriate tribal identity. Specific professionals mentioned under the law as mandated reporters are licensed physicians, residents or interns, law enforcement officers, judges presiding during a proceeding, nurses, schoolteachers, school officials, social workers, and members of the clergy who have information not privileged as a matter of law.

- **Reporting Abuse or Neglect**

It is important for every person to take child abuse and neglect seriously, to be able to recognize when it happens, and to know what to do when you see it. Call CYFD's Statewide Central Intake (SCI) at 1-855-333-SAFE [7233] or #SAFE from a cell phone if you suspect child maltreatment is occurring.

When making a report of abuse or neglect, you may choose to remain anonymous as the reporter, and will be immune from liability, civil or criminal, if you have acted in good faith by reporting this abuse. We encourage reporters to provide information about who they are, as it assists CYFD in their investigative process. The reporter's name remains confidential unless ordered to be released by a court of law. In rare cases, a reporter could be required to testify in court if such testimony is necessary to protect the child.

Classroom Observation

Cross of Hope staff are observed by the director and provided feedback on teaching strategies yearly as part of their evaluation. In addition, the director may observe the class to assist with other situations.

Communication

Cross of Hope School uses email regularly to communicate with families about school- wide information. **Please make sure that you check your email regularly** for information from teachers and administration. For some events text messaging via Remind is also used. (School Closures, quick reminders, emergency information, etc.) Please keep your contact information updated in FACTS to receive all communications from Cross of Hope School.

Computer Science

- Students in grades K-5th are taught the basics of computer use.
- Students will be taught at a grade appropriate level the concepts of computational thinking, creative problem solving, persistence, block coding and much more.
- Students will acquire research, publishing, & keyboarding skills.

Conferences

Parents will be required to attend scheduled conferences with their child's teacher during the first and second trimesters of the school year. Please see the school calendar for dates. To schedule a meeting with your child's teacher, the administration or other school staff, please contact them directly via their email (found in this handbook).

Conflict Resolution

In seeking solutions to conflicts at COHS, we follow Matthew 18:15-17.

Our intent is to find a peaceful, God-pleasing solution to our differences. This is how we will proceed:

1. If you have a conflict with someone at COHS, arrange a meeting between that person and yourself. Explain your grievance and seek mutual agreement. If an agreement is reached, the conflict is resolved.
2. If upon meeting, an agreement is not reached, request another meeting together with one or two independent witnesses so that everything can be brought out in the open. Remember that the goal is to seek agreement and resolution to the conflict. If an agreement is reached at this meeting, then the conflict has been resolved.
3. If after these two meetings, a resolution or an agreement still cannot be reached, request a meeting with the school director and the other party, and/ or Pastor Adam. At this meeting, the director will advise and guide both parties to seek agreement and resolve the issue amicably. If agreement is reached, all parties benefit. If, however, the agreement still cannot be reached, the Director will make a decision. The decision of the Director is binding on all parties.

Custody/Visitation/Legal Status

It is the policy of our school that the parent/guardian who enrolls a child must provide documentation concerning any legal status issues: guardianship, visitation, restraining order, powers of attorney, court orders, CPS orders, etc. The school will enforce any legal document but will not prohibit a parent access to a child without proper authority. The enrollment form must accurately represent the correct names and status of the parent/guardian. During enrollment at our school, it is the obligation of the parent to notify the school of any change in legal status of the child/parent relationship and provide legal documentation which verifies the change in status.

Disaster and Lockdown Drills

These are practiced monthly with all students and staff at Cross of Hope Church and School. The purpose of these drills is to acclimate students and adults to a procedure that they will be able to follow quickly, effectively, and safely.

Dress Code

Appropriate dress in school is important because it can be a source of disruption in the classroom and on the playground.

Cross of Hope Dress expectations are:

- All attire should be free of any signs, symbols or logos that are inappropriate for our Christian environment.
- Clothing should fit in a manner according to the child's size.
- Hats and character headbands may be worn outside only.
- Sunglasses are allowed to be worn outside the building.

Be aware of the weather and ensure that your child comes to school prepared for current conditions.

Emergencies/Accidents Policy

A completed registration form with medical and emergency information is required. In case of accidental injury, we will try to contact a family member immediately. If necessary, we will also call an ambulance or the paramedics. Until the arrival of a parent, an ambulance or paramedics, the director, teacher, or assistant will be in charge and make decisions about the care of your child. You will be expected to assume responsibility for any resultant expense not covered by insurance. The school will maintain a parent's signed consent agreeing to this provision. It is to your child's benefit that you keep the school up to date on the telephone numbers and other pertinent information. Please notify the school IMMEDIATELY if changes occur. All Cross of Hope staff are trained annually in CPR and First Aid.

Enrollment Contract

This is a legally binding contract required to be signed by all parents/custodians/financially responsible person(s) as a condition of enrollment at Cross of Hope School. The contract outlines the annual tuition and fees and the financial obligations required of each parent/guardian/financially responsible person(s).

Field Trips

To enhance learning opportunities teachers will occasionally plan field trips for their students to participate in. All field trip proposals must align with the grade level curriculum and be submitted for approval by the Director of School Ministry. All field trip fees and expenses will be paid in cash or check made out to Cross of Hope School

Financial Aid and Discounts

Financial Aid

- Cross of Hope School offers limited financial assistance, out of a fixed pool of funds based on current enrollment numbers to families who qualify by **demonstrating financial need**.
- We contract with FACTS Grant & Aid to process and review all submitted Financial Aid applications. The application period begins the **last week of February**. **All Applications are submitted** and awarded **online through FACTS**.

Tuition Discounts:

- Payment in Full - \$200
- Referral Refund - \$100
- Church Member – 10%
- Siblings (for each sibling after the first concurrently enrolled student) - \$300

Active Military - \$200

Please Note:

- Only **ONE** Discount may apply per child/per family. Discounts are **NOT** stack-able.
- Financial Aid will only be awarded **ONLY** when there are funds available in the school's operation budget.

Health of Students

Please keep your child home from school when he/she is currently or has exhibited any of the following symptoms within the previous 24 hours:

- Diarrhea, vomiting, headache, sore throat, rash, persistent cough, persistent runny nose.
- Chicken pox, measles, mumps, pink eye, hand-foot-mouth, or undiagnosed rash.
- Temperature of 100.4° or the need to control fever with medication.

Students who become ill at school during the day will be separated from other children. The student's temperature will be checked, and their parents/guardians will be called to inform them of the situation. If symptoms or fever are present, the school will ask that the child be picked up. **Please note:** In the event of a positive COVID case, please refer to the New Mexico Department of Health. <https://www.nmhealth.org/>

Homework Policy

Homework at Cross of Hope School is intended to provide additional practice and enrichment for the student to complete at home. It may be required Monday-Thursday. It will never be required over the weekend or on holidays. K-2nd will have no more than 30 minutes of nightly homework. 3rd-5th will have no more than 40 minutes of nightly homework. Homework will not be averaged into report card grades for the subject area but may be marked and recorded for completion and effort. This may be recorded as a completion/effort rate under Work Habits on the report card.

Immunization Policy

All children attending Cross of Hope School must be current in all immunizations required by the Department of Health. Required shots should be scheduled by the date the shots are due. A copy of your child's current immunization record must be on file at the school at the time of Online Registration. Children will not be admitted to the school without proof of current immunizations. Immunization records must always be kept current with the school office. A copy of the New Mexico School Entry Immunization Requirements can be obtained from the NM Department of Health.

Parents who choose to not have their child immunized **must** obtain a state approved Certificate of Exemption. The Certificate of Exemption **must** be on file at the school **NO LATER** than the first day of school. There are no exceptions. The Certificate of Exemption can be obtained from the New Mexico Department of Health.

It is the responsibility of the parents to keep the school informed of immunizations. If parents do not comply with the required immunization documentation, the child will no longer be able to attend the school.

Inclement Weather

Inclement weather days will follow the Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) schedule. An alert from our school administration will be sent via text or email to inform all registered (FACTS) Cross of Hope families that a school delay or cancellation has been set in place.

Instructional Materials

Cross of Hope staff are guided by Common Core Standards when making curricular decisions. The staff attend training and professional development sessions on a regular basis to assist with teaching strategies, implementation of curriculum, and best teaching practices.

For more information on Common Core State Standards please visit:

www.corestandards.org/what-parents-should-know

Cross of Hope School will continue to utilize a variety of resources including textbooks, online resources, subscriptions, and publications to provide students with the most current and research-based learning opportunities available. Teachers attend professional development sessions and study different methodologies to implement classroom practices for student improvement. Utilizing state standards as our guidelines and NextGen Science standards to address science standards.

Library

K-5th grade students will participate in a weekly library program which provides instruction in the use of the library and promotes the enjoyment of reading. Students may check out books on a weekly basis. Lost or damaged books will be paid for by families.

Lost & Found

All items without nametags/ labels will be placed in a large wooden box located in the church's Great Hall. Items that are left behind will be placed in it. Periodically the contents of lost and found are put out on display for their owners to find. Families will be notified of display times and all items not collected during that time will be donated.

Lunch

We will be offering a hot lunch program through Rhubarb & Elliot catering services. Students may also bring their own healthy **nut-free** lunch to school in their backpack with their name on the lunch box/bag. (Microwaving is not available for student lunches.)

Medication

- Cross of Hope Lutheran Church and School does not have a licensed nurse on staff, and we are therefore unable to administer any type of medication to our students. This follows The National Association of Nurses position statement.
(www.nasn.org/advocacy/professional-practice-documents/position/statements/ps-medication)
- Please note: The use of prescribed Inhalers and EpiPens are the only exception to this policy. They will always be stored in grade level emergency backpack.

Students may NOT carry these in their personal backpacks.

Movies in the Classroom

On occasion teachers may plan for their students to watch an age-appropriate movie. All movie proposals must align with the student's grade level curriculum and be submitted for prior approval by the Director of School Ministry.

Music

K-5th students will participate in a weekly music program which provides instruction in rhythm, beat, melody, voice, and introduction to several instruments.

Nut Free Policy

Cross of Hope School strives to be a nut-free school. **For the safety of our students who have severe nut allergies, we ask that you do not bring any nut-based products to school, including peanut butter or Nutella.** Sunflower seed butter is a safe alternative to other nut butters. We understand that it is impossible for children with allergies to peanuts to avoid a reaction if peanut product remnants are in the environment. While Cross of Hope School is unable to guarantee a peanut-free or allergen-free program setting, we have procedures in place to assist our students with severe allergies to peanuts and will make every attempt not to expose them during school hours.

Parties

- Birthdays may be celebrated in the classroom with teacher approval. Parents may send in a simple (nut-free) treat to be shared with the children in the classroom. Teachers will decide the appropriate time for the treat to be shared.
- If you are planning a party after school at your home or elsewhere, you are asked to mail the invitations rather than handing them out at school, so that no child feels left out.

Photographing Students

Cross of Hope does not allow photos of students without parent permission.

Physical Education (PE)

Physical Education (PE) is held twice a week for each grade level. The class focuses on teaching children coordination and physical ability through a variety of sports and activities. All PE Classes will be held on-site.

Recess

Cross of Hope will provide supervised, safe, and unstructured free-play recess each week for students in K-5th grades.

Recess will provide children with choices to help them to develop rules for play and release energy and stress.

Recess will be conducted outdoors when weather permits. In case of inclement weather, appropriate recess activities will be conducted indoors.

Respect of Property

Cross of Hope students, staff, and parents are expected to treat other's property with respect. This includes school, church, and individual property of others. This also includes stealing, damaging, defacing, or otherwise intentionally disrespecting the property of others and may be enforceable by law.

Retention Process

Teachers recognizing students with significant educational progress deficiencies shall notify the director no later than the end of the second trimester if retention is anticipated.

The teacher will work closely with the director, intervention specialist and other support personnel to develop a special support program. The parent or guardian shall be notified no later than the end of the second trimester of the possibility of retention. Parent or guardian help should be elicited when initial concerns arise.

No student shall be retained without documented remediation/intervention strategies, which are focused on the student's unique needs and are provided based on the school remediation plan program and recommendations from school support staff members and to the extent possible with the student's family.

Decision to Retain

A conference consisting of the director of School Ministry, teacher, and parent or guardian must be scheduled, and the parent(s)/guardian(s) notified of the conference. All factors concerning possible retention will be taken into consideration. A review of relevant records will be conducted, and interested parties encouraged to share their points of view.

As per NM statutes chapter. 22, public schools 22-2c-6. A parent who refuses to allow their child to be retained shall sign a waiver indicating that the child's promotion is against the specific advice and recommendation of the certified school instructor and the school director.

Safety

Cross of Hope has developed a comprehensive Safety Plan to address the specific needs and details of our students and facility. This document covers a wide range of procedures from fire drills, lock-down drills, active shooter drills, natural disasters, etc. and the expectations and communication that is practiced by Cross of Hope staff and students if any one of these events were to occur. The school Safety Plan is a supplemental document to this handbook and can be obtained in the school office. For security reasons it will NOT be posted online.

Spanish

K-5th students will participate in a weekly Spanish program. This program will introduce our students to basic words and communication.

Telephone and Messages

All Cross of Hope School personnel will respond to phone calls and emails within a 24-hour period, excluding weekends and holidays.

Toys

No toys at school unless sharing in the classroom.

Toys or personal sports equipment will not be used on our playground during recess.

Tuition and Fees

Enrollment costs at Cross of Hope Elementary consists of:

Tuition, Registration Fee, and Instructional Materials Fee.

- **Tuition:**

For the 2026-2027 School Year tuition is \$8,000.

Payment can be made in two ways:

1. **Payment in Full** can be made by the first full day of school in August without penalty.
2. **Monthly installments** can be made through our partnership with the FACTs tuition management company.

Please Note:

- Families who enroll for monthly installments will agree to a payment schedule which is set for 10 monthly installments with first payment auto-drafting through FACTs in July.
- All families are required to sign an annual **Tuition Contract**, a legally binding agreement made with the school that outlines the family's financial obligations to Cross of Hope School.
- Fees:

For the 2026-2027 School Year there are two fees associated with enrollment.

- **Registration Fee** - \$150/ re-enrollment by March 2nd
\$200/ Open enrollment
- **Instructional Materials Fee** - \$300
- The **Registration Fee** holds a student's place at Cross of Hope School while administration and staff review applications for admittance. (It does not guarantee acceptance to Cross of Hope School.)
- The **Instructional Materials Fee** covers the expense of all textbooks and curriculum related materials used in the classroom. It is due upon completion of enrollment.

Please Note:

- Both the **Registration Fee and the Instructional Materials Fee are NON-REFUNDABLE.**

- Tuition and fee rates are subject to annual review and change at the discretion of the Cross of Hope Church Council. Tuition for the school year is set in the winter of the preceding year and will be communicated via enrollment literature.

- **Financial Dis-Enrollment**

Families who have missed two monthly payments and have not made suitable arrangements within fourteen (14) calendar days of the second missed payment will be informed that their child(ren) will not be readmitted to school according to the specifications of this policy.

Please Note: Student records and report cards will be held until account balances have been paid.

Withdrawals

Thirty (30) days written notice is required to withdraw or disenroll your child.

Please Note: *According to the terms of your Enrollment Contract you will be responsible for paying a percent of your balance based on the date of your child's enrollment.*

Worship

Cross of Hope Lutheran Church and School is grounded in and formed by God's Word and Sacrament through our worship life. If you are in search of a church home, please join us for worship on Sundays. All are welcome!

- **Chapel**

One of the most important and unique aspects of Cross of Hope School is its emphasis on Christian Studies, Christian Character, and Community Worship. Each classroom has dedicated a portion of their weekly curriculum to Christian Education where the students learn about Jesus, sing worship songs, learn Bible Stories, and prepare to lead chapel in the Sanctuary.

- **Christian Holidays**

We follow a liturgical calendar that is shared by many Catholic and Protestant churches. Our year takes shape around the Birth, Life in Ministry and Passion of Jesus Christ. During the year we will engage in education and observational experiences of Las Posadas, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Lent, Holy Week and Easter and Pentecost. Students may not be familiar with these observations in the history of the church and are invited to participate along with their families.

DISCLAIMER AND NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS

Cross of Hope School deems this policy and programs guide, created in 2025 a 'living' document. At our discretion, policies, procedures, programs, and all information contained within are subject to change with or without any prior notification. We will make a good faith effort to notify families of currently enrolled students at Cross of Hope School of any changes that are made by the administration in a timely fashion.

Cross of Hope School

ACCEPTANCE OF ALL SCHOOL POLICIES

I, _____, Parent/Guardian of _____,
(Printed Name) (Student Name)

have read and understood the policies outlined by Cross of Hope School.

My signature below constitutes my understanding and my agreement to adhere to the school policies as explained in the 2026-2027 Cross of Hope School Handbook.

Furthermore, I have read and discussed the section about our community covenant (page 8) with my child so that they understand how we are relating to one another at school in faith.

Parent / Guardian Signature #1

Date

Parent / Guardian Signature #2

Date

Student

Date

