



Students with Special Needs

Christ Community Lutheran School works diligently to provide accommodations and plans for students with special needs. We are honest about our capabilities as a private school and thoroughly consider each student's needs on a case-by-case basis. Below are our policies and services provided by the school.

Student Assessments

Kindergarten - 8th Grade (K-8)

All CCLS students in kindergarten to 8th grade take the *Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark Assessment* to determine their independent and instructional reading levels. Through this assessment, teachers are able to observe student reading behaviors one-on-one, engage in comprehension conversations that go beyond retelling, and make informed decisions about how to best instruct each child. These assessments are also used to track growth and are typically given three times a year. All CCLS 3rd to 8th grade students also take the *NWEA Map (Measures of Academic Progress) Growth Assessment*. The NWEA assessment is a computer adaptive test designed to evaluate and promote each child's academic growth and learning achievements. What makes this test special is its adaptive nature, ensuring a personalized testing experience that adjusts to each child's unique learning level.

Early Childhood Education (ECE)

CCLS ECE students are assessed through *Brigance Early Childhood Screens*, a tool that utilizes observation, interviews, and child performance to assess students in physical development, language development, academic skills and cognitive development, social-emotional skills and adaptive behavior. Students in our infant through 2-year old classrooms are assessed three times per year. Three and four-year old students are assessed two times per year. Students demonstrating concerns may receive additional screening to ensure progress and to determine any needs for additional evaluation. All CCLS pre-kindergarten students receive *Brigance* screening as one measure of kindergarten readiness. All prospective kindergarten candidates are required to undergo screening to assess readiness prior to admittance. Kindergarten decisions will be made with the results of *Brigance* screenings and other evaluation tools, along with supporting documentation and observations.

Resource Support

Kindergarten - 8th Grade (K-8)

CCLS employs several staff members who comprise a Resource Team for K-8 students. In combination with test scores and teacher observations, students can be recommended to receive reading intervention services from the Reading Specialist at our Elementary Campus (K-4); a Literacy Specialist is available for student support at our Middle School Campus. Our Resource Teacher is available for student support on the Elementary Campus from 8:30am-11:30am and at the Middle School from noon - 3:30pm each day. In addition, the Middle School Campus has a Resource Assistant who is available throughout the day, as needed, for student support services. Our Resource Team provides pull-out educational services and provides tools to teachers to help students thrive in the classroom. There may be circumstances when a student's learning and needs require more services than CCLS can offer. Below you will find information on the public school special education evaluation process.

Early Childhood Education (ECE)

CCLS partners with LASE (Lutheran Association for Special Education) to provide Educational Resource Specialists on each of our ECE campuses, on a part time basis, for additional support for our teachers and students.

Student Evaluations and Screenings

Kindergarten - 8th Grade (K-8)

CCLS works in conjunction with St. Louis County Special School District (SSD) to evaluate K-8 students who qualify for special education services. If a teacher feels that an evaluation may be important in meeting a student's needs, a meeting will be scheduled with the parent (or legal guardian) to discuss and explain the process. After the meeting, it is the parent's responsibility to call SSD and initiate the evaluation process. The SSD Student Intake Phone Number is 314-989-8123. Parents request a non-public packet to be filled out by the school and the family. If SSD accepts the packet, they will contact CCLS and the family to set up an observation and diagnostic testing with a school psychologist. Results of the evaluation will provide feedback on appropriate accommodations and help determine the best placement for the student. If the student qualifies for special education services, it may be recommended that the family accept the services and transfer to their home public school. Each case is unique and will be treated as such.

Early Childhood Education (ECE)

CCLS works in conjunction with local education agencies to provide screening and evaluation for students who may qualify for early intervention services. Our special education team, along with our classroom teachers, may recommend or require students to be evaluated by their pediatrician, Parents as Teachers, First Steps, the child's School District, and other community resources. If a teacher feels that an evaluation is important to assess a student's needs, a meeting will be scheduled to determine the student's needs and evaluation options. The results of the evaluation(s) will help determine the best placement of the student to meet his or her needs. If a student's needs exceed our capacity for support, the CCLS team will assist the parents in exploring opportunities that will provide the supportive educational environment needed. An appropriate timeline for the completion of evaluations will be established in coordination with CCLS and the other agencies. Delay or refusal to participate in additional evaluations may result in unenrollment.

Speech/Language and Occupational Therapy Services

CCLS partners with Kid Partners to offer screening to all incoming kindergarteners to determine if a student's occupational therapy (OT) and speech/language performances need to be addressed. If the child needs services, Kid Partners offers on campus speech therapy paid for by the family. Should a parent or teacher have a speech/language or OT concern regarding a non-kindergarten student, a referral can be submitted. The Kid Partners therapist will complete a screening to determine if further evaluation is necessary. Then the therapist will communicate with the family about the next steps and/or let families know if speech services are deemed necessary.

Can Students with a Current IEP or Accommodation/504 Plan attend CCLS?

Students with an IEP/ISP/ILP who are interested in attending Christ Community Lutheran School will be asked to share their IEP/ISP or Accommodation/504 plan and sign a release of documentation from the student's current school setting. CCLS Principals and Resource Specialists will carefully consider if CCLS has the resources to provide the student with an appropriate accommodation plan. We are honest about our capabilities as a private school and thoroughly consider each student's needs on a case-by-case basis. A meeting will be scheduled with CCLS staff and the child's family to discuss the decision whether or not the student will be admitted to and/or continue enrollment at CCLS.

Does CCLS Write Student Accommodation Plans?

To help meet our students' accommodation needs, CCLS will follow or write a Student Education Plan. These plans help provide the classroom teacher with a clear and concise plan of what accommodations a student needs in the classroom; it also helps bridge the students transition to the next grade level without having to "reinvent the wheel." These plans are reviewed annually and presented to classroom teachers prior to the new school year. It is the responsibility of the family and the teachers to arrange check-ins throughout the school year. These plans are suited for students who find success in the general education curriculum with accommodations; these plans do not provide special education services.

Dedication to a Safe Learning Environment

While we care for all of our students, when a student presents severe disruptions or a safety/health hazard, it may be necessary for CCLS administration to determine what is best for the overall safety of that student and the rest of our students without resorting to the progressive steps listed above. CCLS reserves the right to refuse admission, terminate enrollment or limit a child's participation at CCLS.