



Sioux Falls Lutheran School

# EAGLES NEWS



[Mrs. Tia Esser](#)  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

[Mr. James Stubkjaer](#)  
MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL  
ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR

[Dr. Kristen Newell](#)  
ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL  
ELEMENTARY STEM DIRECTOR

[Mrs. Brenda Bernard](#)  
PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR

Jan. 9, 2026

## Happy New Year—the Results are IN!

My deepest thanks to all who participated in our recent ParentPulse survey. We are grateful for your thoughtful feedback and for the trust you place in us as partners in your children's education and faith formation. Overall, the results reflect a high level of parent satisfaction and loyalty—an indication that families feel confident recommending Sioux Falls Lutheran School and entrusting us with what matters most. We receive that affirmation with both gratitude and humility. As Scripture reminds us, *"Plans succeed with good counsel"* (Proverbs 20:18), and your voices help guide our work faithfully and wisely.

What follows is a brief summary of what we learned and how we are responding.

### What encouraged us most:

We were deeply encouraged that **92% of parents believe SFLS is nurturing students to be lifelong Christian disciples**—the very heart of our mission to develop capable servant-leaders who are *World Ready, Faith Secure*. Additionally, **89% of parents reported a strong sense of belonging** and affirmed the genuine care our teachers and staff show for students each day. This affirmation of our Christ-centered culture means a great deal to us.

### Where we're leaning in:

Your feedback also pointed to two areas needing continued attention. While overall ratings were strong, **discipline received an overall score of 79%** and **drop-off and pick-up procedures an overall score of 80%**—signaling opportunities to strengthen clarity, consistency, safety, and daily logistics.

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**What we're doing:**

Our leadership team is reviewing discipline practices to strengthen shared expectations and consistency across classrooms, guided by both grace and accountability. At the same time, our leadership and facilities teams are evaluating arrival and dismissal procedures to ensure these daily transitions reflect our shared commitment to safety.

**What's next:**

In the coming weeks, you will receive a short follow-up survey designed to help us gain greater clarity in several areas highlighted through ParentPulse. In addition to discipline and daily drop-off/pick-up logistics, we will invite your input on tuition value and extracurricular opportunities—so our next steps are clearly informed by your voices.

Thank you for your partnership, your honesty, and your care for this community. Together, we continue the shared work of developing capable servant-leaders—students who are known, loved, and formed for lives of faith and service.

With Deep Gratefulness,

Mrs. Tia Esser, Executive Director  
Romans 12:2

**READY TO FILE YOUR TAXES???****2025 TAX INFORMATION**

To find instructions for accessing your 2025 tax information through the FACTS Management System, click [HERE](#). Please consult your tax advisor for questions regarding tax credits and deductions. With any other other questions, contact Monica at [finance@sflutherschool.com](mailto:finance@sflutherschool.com).

**Launching This Spring: The SFLS K–12 Mentor Program**

This spring, we'll begin a new Mentor Program for our Kindergarten through 12th grade students—something rooted deeply in Scripture and inspired by the way Jesus walked so lovingly with His disciples. He taught them, listened to them, encouraged them, and reminded them again and again that they were loved.

Our Mentor Program is designed to pair one caring adult with a student for a simple weekly lunch-time visit. Students are recommended by their classroom teacher, who first connects with parents for permission. From

there, our team thoughtfully matches each child with a trained mentor whose gifts and personality fit well. Mentoring isn't about having all the answers—it's about showing up, listening, and helping a child feel valued and seen.

We are now seeking [applications](#) from individuals who feel called to pour into a young person in this meaningful way. If you feel even the slightest nudge, we encourage you to **read the FAQs below** and prayerfully consider whether God may be calling you to invest in a child through this meaningful ministry.

Questions may be directed to Mrs. Aker or Mrs. DeVos at [mentoringcoordinators@sflutherschool.com](mailto:mentoringcoordinators@sflutherschool.com).

## **[Apply to be a mentor!](#)**

### **FAQs**

#### **What is a mentor?**

To put it simply, a mentor is an adult willing to spend time with a student. The mentor shows interest in and cares for the student, listens intently, asks questions, and lets the student know he or she has an extra adult who supports them. All of this is done by simply being present with your student during their lunch break once per week.

#### **Why should you consider being a mentor?**

The best reason is that you'll make a lasting impact on the life of a young person. Your consistent presence will mean the world to your student, and he or she will remember what you did for their lifetime.

#### **How do I mentor a student?**

There are an endless number of ways to do this, but we would encourage you to utilize the many different games we have available to play together. During the game time, you can get to know each other through natural conversations. Your time, presence, interest, and care are the key elements you are offering when you mentor.

#### **When would I meet with my mentee?**

Once you are assigned to a mentee, you will be informed of the time of their lunch break. Looking at your schedule for the week, you then determine which weekday works for you to meet with the student every week at that time.

#### **Where would I meet with my student?**

Mentors and mentees will meet in the reading area at SFLS. Games and books are provided for your use.

#### **How do I become a mentor?**

Simply complete the [mentor application](#) and authorize a background check. Once approved, you'll be invited to a training session that walks through the program, answers questions, and helps you feel confident and prepared. After training, our team will thoughtfully match you with a student who will benefit from your care.

Thank you for considering this wonderful opportunity!

## SIoux FALLS LUTHERAN SCHOOL

# Ribbon Cutting & DEDICATION

**YOU'RE INVITED!** Middle & High School Wing Ribbon Cutting & Dedication

Tuesday, January 20 • 4:30 p.m.  
Sioux Falls Lutheran School

6715 S. Boe Lane  
Sioux Falls, SD 57108

Celebrate this milestone with our SFLS community!



SIoux FALLS  
LUTHERAN SCHOOL  
World Ready. Faith Secure.



**NEW**

**THANK YOU FOR MAKING AN IMPACT:** (Below is a message from Kathy at LUNCH IS SERVED.)

Thank you for supporting Lunch is Served in every way possible. We are overwhelmed by your gifts of talent, time, and treasure. Thank you for blessing Lunch is Served with your monetary donation (K-12 first quarter chapel offerings) of \$772.16. Your kind gift will purchase food and supplies to keep workers alert and focused on their jobs. Thank you for the food from your food drive and thank you to your 8th graders that came to volunteer! They were hard workers and so kind to each other and everyone at Lunch is Served!

Thanks to our community partners like you, we were able to provide nearly 23,000 meals for the working poor in our community in 2025. Our meal recipients say that having lunch helps them have the energy to get through the workday.

Most of the people we serve are working temporary or part-time jobs and live day-to-day. We believe that our simple sack lunches provide not only nourishment, but are a tangible symbol of support and encouragement.



## EMAIL TO RESERVE YOUR TABLE!

**Trivia Night: Saturday, January 24, 2026 at 6:00 in the SFLS commons.** Support the current 7th grade class for their Black Hills Leadership Trip in the fall! A full table costs \$96 and consists of 8 people. Individuals may also participate at a cost of \$12 per person. Dessert and drink concessions will be available for purchase. Thanks for helping make this wonderful opportunity possible! Register by emailing Ms. Ockander ([mockander@sflutherschool.com](mailto:mockander@sflutherschool.com))



**2026-27 SCHOOL CALENDAR:** please find the new calendar [here](#).

**KIDS NIGHT OUT RESCHEDULED** to February 7, 2026.



Please [register here](#).

## RE-ENROLLMENT + NEW STUDENT ADMISSIONS

Re-enrollment for the 2026-27 school year will take place from **Monday, January 12–Friday, January 23**.

To help you prepare for re-enrollment, please take time to review the 2026-27 tuition rates listed below. **In addition, please keep an eye on your inbox and take time to read the full email regarding 2026-27 tuition and enrollment info, which contains a letter that outlines how tuition decisions are made and how they support excellence in teaching, faith formation, and the student experience.**

### 2026-2027 Tuition Rates

#### **Fees:**

- New Student Application Fee: \$25
- New Student Enrollment Fee: \$400 (\$200 Registration Fee + \$200 Tuition Deposit)
- Returning Student Re-Enrollment Fee: \$225 through January 23; \$300 after January 23

All fees are non-refundable. If your family intends to re-enroll but would benefit from additional time to pay the \$225 re-enrollment fee, please contact Monica Johnson in our business office at [finance@sflutherschool.com](mailto:finance@sflutherschool.com).

#### **Tuition:**

[Click Here for K-12 Tuition Rates](#)

[Click Here for Preschool Tuition Rates](#)

#### **Other tuition & fees related changes for 2026-27:**

- Multi-child discount: **\$500** per additional student. *The multi-child discount cannot be combined with any other discounts, with the exception of the association church rate.*
- A **change fee of \$50** will apply to any preschool schedule change that happens on or after June 1 and reduces the amount of time a child is present in the classroom.

Our deepest thanks for entrusting us with the care and education of your children. It is a joy and honor to serve your family at SFLS, and we look forward to sharing re-enrollment instructions with you next week. Please feel free to contact our admissions or business offices with any questions throughout the re-enrollment process.

Megan Baedke,  
[mbaedke@sflutherschool.com](mailto:mbaedke@sflutherschool.com)  
Director of Community Engagement  
Preschool & Kindergarten Admissions

Vania Asmus,  
[vasmus@sflutherschool.com](mailto:vasmus@sflutherschool.com)  
Admissions & Marketing Coordinator  
1st-12th Grade Admissions

Monica Johnson,  
[finance@sflutherschool.com](mailto:finance@sflutherschool.com)  
Finance & Business Director

### CAREER CORNER



We're hiring a 5th Grade Teacher for the 2026–27 school year, as well as Preschool Educational Assistants and Eagle Care Workers for the current school year. Learn more and apply:

## CELEBRATE HIS GIFTS GALA

### ✨ **In His Spotlight Drawing** ✨

In anticipation of the upcoming Celebrate His Gifts Gala, we're getting ready to host a drawing for the **In His Spotlight Table**—a reserved table for 8 guests in a premier location with special perks at the 2026 Celebrate His Gifts Gala!

 **\$75 per ticket** |  **Only 75 tickets available**

 **One winner receives:**

 **Reserved table for 8** (a \$525 value!)

 **4 front-row parking spots on Gala night** (February comfort matters!)

✨ **One additional surprise revealed Gala night**

Strong odds. Incredible value. A night to remember. Information had been sent out December 22.

The **In His Spotlight Drawing** will take place on **Saturday, January 10, at SFLS between the varsity girls and boys home basketball games (approximately 3:30pm)**. You do not need to be present to win.

Grab your drawing ticket, gather your favorite people, and prepare to enjoy an unforgettable event that shines a light on the transformative power of faith, creativity, and community at SFLS!

To learn more about the Celebrate His Gifts Gala, visit [www.siouxfallslutheran.com/celebrate-his-gifts-gala](http://www.siouxfallslutheran.com/celebrate-his-gifts-gala).

## CHAPEL

**Campus Chaplain** the week of January 12 is Hailey Jo Miller, DCE from Memorial Lutheran Church.

**Chapel on Wednesday, January 14**, will be led by Pastor Sutcliffe from Risen Savior Lutheran Church, in the Meyer Chapel & Performing Arts Center.

This year's theme is Walk by Faith, and this week we focus on Faith in Jesus' Ministry; The Centurion's Great Faith.

Chapel Times:

- 6-12: 8:05
- K-5: 8:50

**Preschool chapel** will be held on **Wednesday, January 14**, led by DCE Liz Peters from Memorial Lutheran Church, in the Early Childhood wing, beginning at **8:40 AM** and **9:00 AM**. The theme is **"Jesus' Baptism"**.

**Chapel Offerings: 3rd Quarter: \$75.12**

**We honor God by serving others!**

## COUNSELING SERVICES



Barb DeVos, Contracted School Counselor, is available to support your child's well-being. Barb is at Sioux Falls Lutheran School Tuesday through Friday.

[bdevos@carrollinstitute.org](mailto:bdevos@carrollinstitute.org) or [bdevos@sflutheranschool.com](mailto:bdevos@sflutheranschool.com)

## PTF (PARENT TEACHER FELLOWSHIP)

### Next Meeting:

Monday, **January 12, 2026**, 5:30 PM

### **Spirit Night at the Game!**

Join us for **Spirit Night, Friday, January 9**, hosted by the **Sioux Falls Lutheran School Parent Teacher Fellowship**, as we come together to cheer on our Eagles! Volunteers will be **in the commons area across from the concessions stand**, handing out fun spirit items to help show your Eagle pride and support our team.

*Note: Items are available in limited quantities and will be given out on a first-come, first-served basis for no cost.*

### CONNECT WITH THE PTF ON FACEBOOK



Scan the QR Code with  
your camera app to go  
to the SFLS PTF  
Facebook Page



## RAISERIGHT (AKA SCRIP)

Order Dates by 10 AM	Pick-Up Dates after 11 AM
Monday, January 12	Thursday, January 15
Monday, January 26	Thursday, January 29
Tuesday, February 17	Friday, February 20

**\* No RaiseRight orders the week of February 9 due to the Presidents' Day Break. No School Thursday, February 12- Monday, February 16, 2026.**

## EAGLE CARE

Happy New Year! We have had a great week getting back into the swing of things. We wish God's blessings to Rachel Flaten and Katy VonDerHarr. Both have served Eagle Care faithfully for the past 4 years or more. Rachel is student teaching and Katy will have a social work internship. We will miss them.

## PRESCHOOL



Our preschool families collected and donated 460 lbs - two SUV loads of food to Feeding South Dakota! Thank you to our families and staff who are serving their community in a very tangible way! Thank you to Miss Heather Miller for organizing this food drive and delivering all of the donations.

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

We were so thrilled to see everyone back after Christmas break. Elementary students are learning new territory in our brand new High School wing, where their Music classroom and Spanish classroom now reside. It is so fun to be a part of something new.

As a heads up, our winter round of MAP testing begins January 20. This is always a great "check-in" to see how everyone is learning and growing midway through this year.



As we begin this new year of 2026, we are blessed to be able to use the beautiful new addition in the MS/HS wing. Students are getting accustomed to their new schedules, new rooms, the new distance between classes, and what it takes to get there on time! While many things of the school day are new and fresh, we are thankful for our God who is constant and unchanging. He is with us through all of our transitions, joys, challenges, and through ups and downs we all go through. We are thankful for the forgiveness we have through Jesus who gave His life so that we can have Life Eternal.

ATHLETICS



**HS BB GAME VOLUNTEERS: We are in need of 4 scoretable workers for each of the home JV (Boys and Girls) and C (Boys) games: book, scoreboard, clock and shot clock. (Adults only) Please sign up [HERE](#) for games your player WILL NOT be playing in to minimize conflict of interest.**

**The times are approximate as we will have a rolling schedule on doubleheader game nights.**

**Thank you everyone for your help.**

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO WORK THE GATE: Please sign up [HERE](#) to help greet, scan QR Codes, and collect money.**

## HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

### Games:

- **Girls:**

- January 9: HOME vs Canton: JV 4; V: 6:30
- January 10: HOME vs Sunshine Bible Academy: JV: 12; V: 2:30
  - Seniors players will be recognized after the Varsity game
- January 17: Varsity @ DVC Invitational vs Viborg-Hurley 5:30

- **Boys:**

- January 9: HOME vs Canton: JV 5:15; V: 7:45
- January 10: HOME vs Sunshine Bible Academy: JV: 1:15; V: 3:45
  - Senior players and cheerleaders will be recognized before the Varsity game
- January 13: HOME vs Gayville-Volin: JV 6:15; V 7:30
- January 16: @ Chester: JV 6:15; V 7:30

- January 17: Varsity @ DVC Invitational vs Elkton-Lake 3:00
- Click the [LINK for the girls game schedule.](#)
- Click the [LINK for the boys game schedule.](#)

## POWER LIFTING:

- Practices: 6:15 - 7:30 AM: M/W/F
- First Meet: January 17 in Baltic

## DRAMA

**ATTENTION: This was previously scheduled for Saturday, January 17. Rescheduled date for this event is Monday, January 19, 2026.**



## MUSIC

## JANUARY Middle School Ensemble Calendar



## [Click or scan to take a look at the SFLS Strings Site!](#)

### ASSOCIATION CHURCHES

[Memorial](#) - Rev. Doug Slavens, DCE Hailey Jo Miller and DCE Liz Peters



[Faith](#) - Rev. Corey Aker and Rev. Jason Rensner

[Lord of Life](#) - Rev. Billy Newell

[Our Redeemer](#) - Rev. Brett Simek

The annual Luncheon will be on **Saturday, January 10, 2026, 11AM-1PM**. There will be a variety of soups and pies. This year your freewill donation will go toward future events sponsored by the Our Redeemer Discipleship committee. [Signup](#) is not required, but is appreciated.



### Soup & Pie Luncheon

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church  
2200 S Western Ave, Sioux Falls

**Saturday, January 10, 2026  
11AM-1PM**



Variety of Soups and Pies

Your freewill donation will go toward future events sponsored by the Our Redeemer Discipleship Committee.

[Resurrection](#) - Rev. Chris Ascher

**\*\*Click this [link](#) for all church worship times!\*\***

### SUPPORTING MEMBER

[Zion](#) - Rev. Greg Lehr

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Please visit your FACTS family portal calendar or click this [link](#) to our website for upcoming events.

## Help is 3 Numbers Away



**211** maintains a comprehensive database of community resources and provides information and referrals for essential needs like:

- Food
- Housing and Shelter
- Utility Assistance
- Healthcare Services
- Government Services

**Call for Information and Community Resources**

**211**

**211** also can connect people with information and referrals for:

- Transportation
- Legal Services
- Support Groups
- Disaster Aftercare
- Everything Else

**988** provides crisis support for:

- Thoughts of Suicide
- Mental Health Crisis
- Substance Use Crisis
- Emotional Distress

**Call for Suicide Intervention and Crisis Support**

**988**

**Whole Person Care**

**Warm Handoff**

**Call for Emergencies**

**911**

**911** provides first responder dispatch for:

- Medical Emergency
- Fire
- Reporting a Crime
- Disaster Response
- Life-Threatening Situation

*Safe2Say South Dakota is a statewide tip line that allows South Dakota students, school staff, and community members to safely and anonymously report sensitive information that concerns their safety, or the safety of others, including mental health concerns.*



**SAFE**  
**2**  
**SAY**  
**SOUTH DAKOTA**

[safe2say.sd.gov](https://safe2say.sd.gov)

Please contact [schooloffice@sflutheralschool.com](mailto:schooloffice@sflutheralschool.com) with any questions or concerns.



**SIOUX FALLS  
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