



# **The Brick Farmhouse School**

## **2025-2026**

### **Student/Parent Handbook**

**“Cultivating Our Future:  
Building a Love of Learning, Life, and Community”**

*Revised 7/10/25*

# Table of Contents:

## **Section 1: About Our School..... 3**

- Our Mission
- School Leadership
- Board of Directors
- Contact Information
- Educational Values
- Educational Approach
- Educational Philosophy
- Class Size
- Discrimination Policy

## **Section 2: Admission and Placement..... 5**

- Admission and Enrollment
- Level Placement and Curriculum
- Age Eligibility
- Students with Disabilities

## **Section 3: Financial Obligations..... 6**

- School Supplies
- Tuition
- Curriculum
- Volunteer Commitment or Buyout
- Fundraising
- Withdrawal

## **Section 4: Health and Safety..... 8**

- Illness Policy
- Allergies and Medical Safety
- Medical Emergencies
- Emergency Contacts
- Student Safety

## **Section 5: Academic Program ..... 11**

- Academic Calendar
- Snow Days & Inclement Weather
- Grades & Assessments
- Progress Reports
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Homework
- Attendance
- Make-Up Work

## **Section 6: Student School Day..... 13**

- Student Drop-Off
- Student Pick-Up
- Communication

Snack and Lunch  
Birthday Treats  
Dress Code  
Weather Policy

**Section 7: Behavior Expectations..... 15**

Statement of Conduct  
Behavior Reports and Policy  
Cell Phones and Personal Devices  
Computers, Tablets and Internet Use  
Forms, Policies & Procedures

## ***Section 1: About Our School***

### **Our Mission:**

Our goal is to create a flexible, yet rigorous, individualized, and comprehensive educational environment that serves to form a love of learning, life, and community.

### **School Leadership:**

Education Director: Sarah Johnson

Teachers: Sarah Johnson, Julie Jordan, Jennifer Campbell, Ally Manus  
& Becky Miller

Founders: Daren and Rebecca Loy

### **TBFS Board of Directors:**

President/CEO: Daren Loy

Vice President: Bryan Orban

CFO/Treasurer: Katie Hartman

Secretary: Catherine Milner

Rebecca Loy

Sharon Behme

Steven Stone

Matthew Cunningham

### **Contact Information:**

Sarah Johnson, Education Director: 217-710-3417

Rebecca Loy, Founder and Board Member: 217-415-8898

School Website: [www.thebrickfarmhouseschool.com](http://www.thebrickfarmhouseschool.com)

School Email: [thebrickfarmhouseschool@yahoo.com](mailto:thebrickfarmhouseschool@yahoo.com)

School Phone: 618-595-0024

### **Educational Values**

- We provide a rigorous, personalized academic program that allows students to explore their interests, set meaningful goals, and gain a deep understanding of key concepts and ideas.
- We value a well-rounded education that supports students' need for unstructured play, time in nature, social interaction, leadership development, creativity, and personal growth.
- We are committed to fostering a learning environment rooted in Christian moral values and expectations for everyone involved in the educational journey.
- We uphold the vital role of parents, recognizing their right and responsibility to be active and engaged partners in their child's education.

### **Educational Approach**

We follow a multi-age, competency-based instructional model where students advance through the curriculum by demonstrating mastery of the material. Core instruction in math and language arts is delivered in small group or one-on-one settings by the teachers, tailored to each student's individual learning level. Additional subjects may be taught in larger, multi-age groups with assignments customized to match each student's academic needs. Classroom aides and parent volunteers support students by overseeing independent practice and exploration.

### **Educational Philosophy**

Our schoolhouse and curriculum are not confined to a single educational method. Instead, we strongly believe in providing a flexible, rigorous, and well-rounded education rooted in the core values outlined above. We thoughtfully select curriculum resources that reflect our commitment to non-denominational Christian faith, the importance of family and nature, strong moral character, and academic excellence.

### **Class Size**

We pride ourselves on maintaining small class sizes and low teacher- to -student ratios to support a focused, productive learning environment. Instructional group size and composition are thoughtfully planned to ensure leveled instruction meets the academic needs of each student.

### **Discrimination Policy**

The Brick Farmhouse School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational and admissions policies.

## ***Section 2: Admission and Placement***

### **Admissions and Enrollment**

To apply for the upcoming school year, please complete the online application and submit the form to The Brick Farmhouse School by **March 31, 2025**. Applications will be reviewed promptly, and applicants will be notified of their status within four weeks of submission.

If the application is accepted, an academic assessment will be scheduled with the Education Director to determine the appropriate placement. **A nonrefundable \$100 application and assessment fee is required at the time of the assessment.**

### **Level Placement and Curriculum**

Students' academic levels will be evaluated by the Education Director. Following the placement assessment, parents or guardians will receive guidance on how to order the appropriate curriculum materials for their child. To cover the cost of additional curriculum materials and supplies provided by the school, parents will be responsible for paying a nonrefundable curriculum fee. Curriculum materials should be ordered promptly to ensure it's arrival before the start of school. Curriculum fees must be paid in full with the first tuition payment on 8/1/2025. Students who damage or lose curriculum books, materials, or supplies will be responsible for replacing the items.

### **Age Eligibility**

Students who turn five years old on or before September 1 of the current school year are eligible to enroll in our elementary program. We currently support students in kindergarten through eighth grade, following a "growing with us" approach that supports each child throughout their academic journey.

### **Students with Disabilities**

While we strive to support the diverse needs of all learners, our program is not currently equipped to provide the specialized services required for students with profound disabilities. Enrollment decisions for students with mild to moderate disabilities will be made on a case-by-case basis, in collaboration with parents or guardians. Please note: students with a history of severe behavior challenges may not be eligible for enrollment.

### ***Section 3: Financial Obligations***

#### **School Supplies**

A supply list will be provided to every student. Families are expected to purchase the listed items before the start of the school year and replenish them as needed throughout the year.

#### **Tuition**

The annual tuition is **\$3,000 per student**. A discount of \$1,000 per student may be offered for the third and successive students enrolling from one family.

**Tuition Payment Options:** The school offers the following options for tuition payments:

1. **Lump sum payment (1 payment):** The entire tuition is paid in full on or before August 1st. (\$3,000 tuition rate per child plus monthly volunteer fee (\$50 per family per month/\$450 annually if not volunteering-see below).

2. **Monthly payments (10 payments):** Families may pay the tuition fee on a 10-month payment schedule. Tuition payments are due on or before the 1st of every month beginning in August through May for each academic year.

#### **Late Fees**

A \$50 late payment fee will be applied to any payment made after the 6th of the month. If you have an outstanding late payment that is not paid by the 1st of the following month, the school reserves the right to pause student attendance until tuition is made current.

#### **Curriculum Materials**

Parents/guardians are responsible for purchasing curriculum materials for designated subjects, as directed by the Education Director. All materials should be in hand by the first day of school.

### **Volunteer Commitment and Buyout Option**

Each family is required to volunteer in the classroom once per month (September – May) for a full school day. Alternative volunteer arrangements may be considered but must be approved by the Volunteer Coordinator in advance.

Families unable to fulfill the volunteer requirement may choose to pay a **buyout fee of \$450 annually or \$50 per month** for nine months. This fee can be added to the monthly tuition fee or paid in full at the beginning of the school year. Volunteer buyout fees are due on the first day of each month, September through May.

*Please note: Families that are experiencing financial difficulties should contact the Education Director immediately.*

### **Fundraising**

TBFS depends on a successful annual TBFS Dinner Event to continue to be able to provide the ideal educational experience to our enrolled students. Enrolled families agree to sell the equivalent of 10 adult tickets to our annual Foundation Dinner. Unsold ticket values will be charged via bi-yearly fee statements. Families agree to actively participate in all school-wide fundraisers in order to keep tuition rates affordable .

### **Withdrawal**

The school should be notified *in writing* of any withdrawals. Once a student's enrollment has been confirmed, a space is reserved for the upcoming school year. Due to limited capacity, the school is unable to accommodate all interested applicants, and as a result, some families may be turned away. Furthermore, it is challenging to fill a vacated spot mid-year. To mitigate significant financial loss from mid-year withdrawals, the following policy will apply for the 2025-2026 school year:

Should a family choose to withdraw their student(s) **after the start of a semester**, payment for the **entire semester** in which the student(s) attended school and subsequently withdrew will be immediately due in full.

*For example*, if a student is enrolled and attends school for the months of September and October but is subsequently withdrawn, payment for the entire first semester (August through December) will still be payable in full to the school upon



withdrawal. Exceptions may only be granted under extraordinary circumstances and solely at the discretion of the school administration and Board of Directors.

## **Section 4: Health and Safety**

### **Illness Policy**

Our school is a well-child facility. This means that the occasional mild cough or cold is not grounds for exclusion; however, if your child experiences any of the symptoms outlined in the illness policy, they will not be allowed to attend school. If a child becomes ill during school hours, parents will be contacted to pick up their child. If a parent cannot be reached, we will contact an emergency contact listed on your child's informational sheet. No discounts will be given for your child's absences due to illness.

We understand that it can be an inconvenience for a parent to take time off of work when a child cannot attend school; however, there are reasons for the exclusion. Any time an ill child doesn't feel well enough to participate comfortably in activities, it requires more care than the teachers are able to provide without compromising the learning, health, and safety of the other children. An ill child can also quickly spread illness to the other children in the group. In a classroom environment, the needs of the group as a whole take priority. We ask parents to assist by keeping sick children at home. *Thank you!*

#### **When a child may not attend school:**

- **Fever:** Children will be sent home if their temperature is 100.4 degrees F or higher and must stay home the next day for observation. Children must be free of fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. The same policy applies if your child develops a fever at home. They must be fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.
- **Rash:** Any rash other than a common diaper rash, minor skin irritation, or chronic condition will require that child to be sent home for an evaluation and diagnosis from their doctor in writing of exactly what it is. They may return to school based on that written doctor's evaluation, and clearance that it is not contagious. Rash and skin irritations requiring exclusion include but are not limited to Chicken pox/Shingles, Measles, Hand, foot, & mouth, MRSA, Mumps, Scabies, Ringworm, Impetigo, MC, Fifth Disease, Roseola, Rubella, and Scarlet Fever.

- **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye):** Children will be sent home if there appears to be an unusual amount of discharge from or irritation to their eye(s) and must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school, they will need an evaluation and diagnosis from their doctor.  
  - If the diagnosis is BACTERIAL CONJUNCTIVITIS children must have received at least 24 hours of treatment prior to returning..
  - If the diagnosis is VIRAL CONJUNCTIVITIS your child may return AS LONG AS THERE IS NO DISCHARGE.
- **Diarrhea:** Children will be sent home if they have new-onset loose bowel movements, and must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school, children must be free from diarrhea for 24 hours.
- **Vomiting:** Children will be sent home if they vomit and must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school, children must be symptom free with no vomiting for at least 24 hours.
- **Persistent Hacking Cough:** Children may be sent home if they have a persistent hacking cough (non-allergy) and should stay home the next day for observation. If it does not improve, they will need an evaluation, diagnosis and clearance from their doctor.
- **Lice:** Children will not be readmitted until 24 hours after treatment and must be nit-free. The director or a teacher will make an evaluation and determine if the child can be readmitted.

### **Common Cold Policy**

Children suffering from a common cold will be assessed on an individual basis. Factors of consideration include the developmental level of your child in congruence with our ability to limit the spread of germs. The younger your child, the more difficult it is to keep the spread of germs down. For example: hand to face contact, mouthing of toys, uncontrolled nasal discharge, uncovered sneezing and coughing etc.

### **Allergies and Medical Safety**

Known allergies, action plans, or medical needs must be disclosed through the registration packet. This includes but is not limited to food, medications, environmental factors, and animals. While the school cannot guarantee an allergen-free space, every effort will be made to remain sensitive and responsive to students' allergy-related needs. Chronic illnesses and medical action plans (i.e. asthma) should be discussed with the Education Director personally. Students must come to school equipped with necessary medications, such as rescue inhalers, epipens, etc. Teachers will be informed of any medical concerns and will follow appropriate procedures to ensure students' health and safety. It is the responsibility of the parent and the child's medical provider, not the school to ensure that students' medical needs are met and that appropriate plans for management are made with school administration.

### **Medical Emergencies**

In the event of an illness or accident requiring urgent medical attention, staff will immediately contact 911. Every reasonable effort will be made to notify the parent or guardian as soon as possible. If a parent or guardian cannot be reached, staff may authorize emergency care, including transportation to a nearby hospital, as deemed necessary.

### **Emergency Contacts**

As part of the registration packet, families are asked to provide up-to-date emergency contact information. These designated contacts will serve as a back up if the parents or guardians are unavailable during an illness, injury, or other emergency. It is the family's responsibility to promptly update the school with any changes to emergency contact details.

### **Student Safety**

The safety and well-being of all students, staff, and families are the school's highest priorities. Our school maintains a secure and supportive environment by implementing the following safety protocols:

**Secure Campus Access:** Exterior doors remain locked during school hours. Doors are locked by 8:15am everyday or directly after the arrival of all students. Students are not permitted to open the doors or exit the building without being accompanied by a parent, volunteer, or staff member.

**Student Supervision:** Students are supervised by qualified staff at all times inside and outside of the building. During outdoor play, students must stay within the field of vision and hearing of the supervising adults. Students should be counseled by parents to not engage in behavior that would constitute unnecessary risks. The school is not liable for accidents or injuries.

**Clearances:** All staff and volunteers will be required to have an updated background check before they will be permitted in the building. Background checks will need to be updated every three years. It is the responsibility of anyone present in the schoolhouse to ensure administration is aware of any changes to an individual's criminal record.

**Emergency Preparedness:** Staff are trained in emergency procedures including fire drills, lockdown protocols, and first aid. Fire and tornado drills will be held at least two times per school year.

## ***Section 5: Academic Program***

### **Academic Calendar**

The academic calendar is included in your welcome packet. You may also view the school calendar posted on the website. Please review the calendar and note the instructional days, holiday breaks, and field trips. We will hold special school events and holiday parties to be announced throughout the school year.

### **Snow Days and Inclement Weather**

In the event of severe weather, our school will follow the closure announcements of Southwestern CUSD #9. If they are closed due to hazardous road conditions, we will follow suit. However, TBFS may remain open if closures are due to cold temperatures only and road conditions are safe. School closures will be confirmed through ClassDojo. Should weather conditions worsen during the school day or the forecast appears concerning, we will monitor the situation closely and communicate any early dismissals or closures promptly via ClassDojo.

### **Grades and Assessments**

At our school, we focus on mastery-based learning rather than traditional grading systems. Our goal is to support each student in developing a deeper understanding of core concepts at their own pace. Student progress is measured through ongoing observation, portfolio work, projects, and skills assessments. Teachers provide regular, individualized feedback to guide learning and growth.

### **Progress Reports**

The school is committed to maintaining open communication between teachers and families regarding each student's academic and personal growth. Progress reports are issued three times per year, approximately every 10 weeks. Progress reports are not traditional letter grades, but instead emphasize a holistic view of the student's learning journey. Parents are encouraged to schedule a progress conference following the distribution of progress reports to discuss their child's progress in greater detail and collaborate on next steps for support and enrichment.

### **Parent -Teacher Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled in November at the request of a parent/guardian to discuss student's progress, goals, work habits, support strategies, and social interactions. Families are encouraged to bring any questions, concerns, or feedback to ensure the conference is a collaborative dialogue focused on the child's well-being and growth. Additional progress conferences may be requested by either the family or school if concerns or new goals arise during the year.

### **Homework**

We believe that learning continues beyond the classroom but should never interfere with a child's natural curiosity, family time, or well-being. Homework will not be given on a nightly basis. Homework will be assigned sparingly and intentionally, with the goal of reinforcing concepts, building responsibility, and involving families in the learning process. **Homework is minimal** and will vary based on age, skill level, and individual need. Assignments may include reading at home, light practice in core subjects, or occasional **project-based learning**.

It is recommended that at an age appropriate time, families complete The Good and the Beautiful Maturation and Sexual Reproduction unit at home. We believe that this content is a family matter and will not be discussed or taught in our schoolhouse.

### **Attendance**

Consistent attendance is essential for student growth, academic progress, and community connection. School hours are 8am to 2:30pm Monday through Thursday. Students are expected to attend regularly and arrive on time. If a student is unable to attend school on a scheduled day, please notify the Education Director or a teacher via ClassDojo before the start of the day. If a student needs to leave early, please send a note or contact the Education Director or a teacher. Email may not be checked during the day, so please do not use email for last-minute schedule changes. **Tuition refunds are not given for tardiness or absence.**

### **Make-Up Work**

Students are responsible for completing missed work. Make-up work will most likely need to be completed at home to prevent the student from falling behind in their instruction. Teachers will provide guidance and flexibility based on the nature and length of the absence.

## ***Section 6: Student School Day***

### **Student Drop-off**

Both the preschool and elementary doors will be unlocked by 7:50am each day. Elementary students can be dropped off at the front of the building and enter through the main front doors where they will be greeted by a staff member or volunteer. Preschool students need to be walked downstairs to the preschool room. The preschool door is located on the north side of the building.

### **Student Pick-up**

Each family must fill out the authorized pick-up portion of the information packet. Preschool ends at 11am. Preschool parents, guardians, or authorized pick-ups must park and retrieve the preschool students from the preschool classroom or school yard at the time of dismissal. Our K-8 students dismiss at 2:30pm. Parents, guardians, or authorized pickups should form a line starting on the north side of the building heading south. Vehicles should pull all the way up to the garage to allow for more cars to pull up to the building. To ensure safety, students will wait behind the patio railings until the line of vehicles have stopped moving before walking to their pickup vehicle.

### **Communication**

Our school utilizes ClassDojo for all of our communication needs. Parents are asked to set up a free ClassDojo account to receive school updates and announcements, send and receive messages to school staff, and monitor student behavior and progress.

### **Snack and Lunch**

Parents are asked to send a filled water bottle (preferably spill-proof for younger students) and a packed lunch with their child each school day. All food should be ready to eat, requiring little to no preparation. Microwaves are available in the kitchen for students to heat their lunches under adult supervision and assistance. Students are allowed to have a snack during morning recess. We encourage students to bring healthier snacks as opposed to candy, and please no gum. Please inform the school, via the information sheet, of any food allergies or dietary restrictions in the event of shared snacks or cooking activities.

### **Birthday Treats**

We love to celebrate our students' birthdays! Please feel free to send in a birthday treat on your child's special day! Summer birthdays may be celebrated on a prearranged day during the school year; half birthdays are a great time for those!

### **Dress Code**

Students should come to school dressed in clean, modest and comfortable clothing that allows for free movement and active play.

Clothing Guidelines:

- Shorts are permitted but must be of modest length.
- Shorts or leggings should be worn under skirts to maintain modesty during active play.
- Clothing should not contain vulgar, inappropriate, or distracting images or text.

Any student wearing clothing that does not align with the dress code will be asked to change.

### **Weather Policy**

Students will be playing outside in all weather conditions that are deemed safe. We will stay inside if there is precipitation falling (rain, snow, sleet), the temperature (or windchill) is less than 35 or greater than 90 degrees, or snow or ice covering the playground.

Please make sure your child has the necessary seasonal items: rain/mud boots and cold- weather gear (warm pants, coats, gloves, hats). We encourage students to dress in layers to remain comfortable inside, outside, and during changes in weather. Students are welcome to store seasonal items at school, as well as a change of clothes in the event of accidents or spills during the school day.

## **Section 7: Behavior Expectations**

### **Statement of Conduct**

At The Brick Farmhouse School, we are committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and positive community where all students can thrive academically, socially, and personally. Our Statement of Conduct outlines the expectations for student behavior to ensure a positive and supportive learning environment. All members of our school community are expected to uphold these standards.

### **Core Values**

Our conduct expectations are grounded in the following principles:

- **Respect:** Treat all individuals—peers, faculty, staff, and visitors—with dignity and kindness.
- **Responsibility:** Take ownership of your actions, academic work, and contributions to the school community.
- **Integrity:** Act honestly and ethically in all endeavors, both in and out of the classroom.
- **Safety:** Prioritize the physical and emotional well-being of yourself and others.
- **Excellence:** Strive for personal growth and commitment to high standards in all activities.

### **Behavior Reports and Policy**

Parents will receive daily behavior updates through the ClassDojo App. Procedures for handling misconduct, restorative practices, and consequences for behavior infractions are outlined in detail in the Behavior Policy and Statement of Conduct. Parents and students must acknowledge they have read and agree to those policies and procedures.

### **Cell Phones and Personal Devices**

Cell phones or personal device use is not allowed during the school day. The Education Director and teachers have phones to communicate with parents and can be reached through ClassDojo throughout the school day and during contract hours. The school also has a landline that can also be utilized throughout the school day (618-595-0024). If a student *must* bring their phone to school, we ask that it be silenced and remain in the student's backpack in their locker. They may check their phones at lunch if necessary.



## **Disciplinary Measures:**

Our goal is to help build responsible technology habits while maintaining a distraction-free classroom. To support a positive and focused learning environment, the following steps will be taken if a student does not follow the cell phone policy:

- First Offense – Verbal reminder and the phone is put away.
- Second Offense – Phone is collected by staff and returned at the end of the day. Parents are notified.
- Ongoing Issues – The school administration will refer to the Behavior Policy for further disciplinary actions including a parent/guardian meeting to discuss consequences.

Please note that the school is not responsible for any lost or damaged cell phone or electronics brought into the classrooms.

## **Computers, Tablets and Internet Use**

The use of technology at our school is intended to enhance learning, foster creativity, and build responsible digital citizenship. To ensure a safe and productive environment, the following guidelines apply to all students:

- **Purpose of Technology:**

Technology, including laptops, tablets, and internet access, is provided for educational purposes only. Personal, recreational, or non-educational use of technology is not permitted unless specifically approved by a teacher.

- **Responsible Use:**

Students are expected to use technology respectfully and responsibly, following teacher instructions and guidelines. Any attempt to access inappropriate, harmful, or non-educational material is strictly prohibited. Students may not download, install, or delete software on school devices without staff permission.

- **Digital Citizenship:**

Students must practice good digital etiquette, including respecting the privacy and work of others. Cyberbullying, inappropriate messaging, or misuse of online platforms will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action.

- **Privacy and Security:**

Students should never share personal information online, including addresses, phone numbers, or passwords. School staff reserve the right to monitor technology and internet use to ensure compliance with this policy.

- **Consequences:**

Violations of this policy may result in restricted access to technology, loss of privileges, and/or further disciplinary action as determined by the school staff.

### **Forms, Policies & Procedures**

Parents/Guardians must agree to school policies and procedures and sign & turn in all permission slips, liability forms, Code of Conduct, Behavior Policy, etc. by the date specified or risk paused enrollment until the required forms are signed and returned to the school. Thank you for your cooperation!



# The Brick Farmhouse School

“Cultivating Our Future”

Building a Love of Learning, Life, and Community

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in the 2025–2026 TBFS school handbook.

Parent/Guardian’s Name:

---

Parent/Guardian Signature:

---

Students Enrolled:

---