



EPIPHANY  
OF THE LORD  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Student-Parent Handbook  
2020 – 2021

20910 Highland Knolls Drive  
Katy, TX 77450



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# 1 SCHOOL OVERVIEW

## 1.1 Mission Statement of Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston

Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston call young people to holiness and prepare them to live and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In collaboration with families, we teach the values of our faith and tradition, serve our community, and ensure academic excellence. Our schools are committed to the evangelizing mission of the church to educate and form witnesses who transform the world.

## 1.2 Mission Statement of Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School

Rooted in Catholic tradition, Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School promotes growth in the foundations of faith, knowledge, compassion, and character.

## 1.3 Foundations of an Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School education:

### **Faith:**

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School is dedicated to:

- Promoting a personal connection with God to all members of the community.
- Sharing the transforming grace of the Holy Spirit.
- Active participation in personal and collective prayer, reflection, and action.
- Developing understanding, dialogue, and respect for religious differences.
- Living and modeling Catholic teachings and Gospel values as members of Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School.

### **Knowledge:**

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School is dedicated to:

- Developing and implementing a rigorous curriculum based on educational research, reflection, and evaluation.
- Implementing a variety of teaching strategies and lesson formats to ensure all educational needs are being met.
- Providing ongoing professional development for faculty and staff to ensure effective and appropriate practices and programs are being employed.
- Using ethical and respectful use of technology to enhance understanding and learning objectives.

### **Compassion:**

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School is dedicated to:

- Offering opportunities for focused service and activism which inspires a lasting commitment to volunteerism and charity.



- Preparing students to understand, appreciate, and be responsible stewards of the earth's resources.
- Educating the entire community to question and reflect on the values of society and to act for justice.
- Staying informed and helping those in need who are affected by local, national, and global injustices and suffering.

**Character:**

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School is dedicated to:

- Teaching and practicing interpersonal skills and tools for navigating a wide variety of social interactions.
- Acknowledging and celebrating cultural and racial differences within our community and world.
- Promoting self-discipline, accountability, responsible decision-making, and leadership opportunities.
- All community members modeling acceptance, respect, and concern for themselves and others.
- Practicing proper etiquette in today's culture and social world.

## 1.4 Catholic Education

When you enroll your child into Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School (ECS), you enter a partnership with the Church, your family, and your child. This partnership is vital to the development of your child and the awareness of your family's and child's role within this community. Furthermore, this partnership is considered an agreement between faculty & staff and parents & students to comply with school procedures, regulations, and policies, including but not limited to such procedures, regulations, and policies set forth in this Handbook.

As written by Fr. Tom Lam, founding pastor of Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School:

*“The mission of the Church is evangelization—to spread the faith. The Catholic school plays a vital role in proclaiming the good news of salvation by teaching students to live knowingly as children of God and to assume the responsibility placed on them by virtue of their Baptism. In the daily life of the school, children will be taught to discern their vocation in a climate that will allow their faith to gradually mature and enable them to cultivate human values that have their origin in the figure of Christ.”*

The faculty and staff of Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School share the responsibility with you, the parent, of guiding your child's growth in all areas of his/her life, including: spiritual, intellectual, physical, psychological, and social.

All members of this partnership (parents, students, faculty, and staff) are expected to bring their support, time, and talents in this joint effort to fully develop each child. In addition, all members of the ECS community are expected to respect the integrity, prudence, and values of the Catholic Church and ECS. Therefore, language, actions, and attire which demonstrate a violation of moral values, or

disrespect to members of the ECS community or larger community will not be tolerated, as deemed by school administration. Conduct that creates an atmosphere of fear or harm will not be tolerated.

#### 1.4.1 Nondiscriminatory Policy

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School follows a policy of non-discrimination with regard to race, color, or ethnicity within its Christian foundation. The policy of non-discrimination refers to, but is not limited to, the employment of all school personnel, the acceptance and participation of all students, scholarship programs, and the solicitation and acceptance of gifts and donations.

### 1.5 Right to amend

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School administration and parish pastor retain the right to amend the Parent – Student Handbook. By no means is this Handbook considered all-inclusive. Administration and staff will exercise professional judgment and discretion to address situations fairly and retain the right to adjust policies and procedures as necessary. Parents will be given prompt notification of any changes made.

### 1.6 Administration

#### 1.6.1 Role of Pastor

The Pastor, under the authority of the Cardinal Archbishop, is the primary leader of the parish of which the school is a part. He maintains certain responsibilities related to the school.

The Pastor is responsible for the fostering, nurturing, guiding and coordination the ministries of the parish. He delegates the administration of the school to the Principal who administers the school in accordance with diocesan policies and guidelines. Satisfactory and effective administration depends on the cooperation and mutual support of both Pastor and Principal in matters of local education policy.

Based on guidelines of the Catholic Schools Office, the Pastor is responsible for hiring the Principal.

Any consideration of school foreclosure, change in a school's grade levels, or name, shall include consultation with the Archdiocesan Superintendent and foreclosure may happen with expressed approval of the Cardinal Archbishop.

#### 1.6.2 Role of Principal

The Principal is the leader of the school and accountable to operate the school in accordance with the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department (TCCB ED) and the guidelines of the Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Office (CSO). The Principal is responsible for all aspects of the operation of the total school program. The Principal works under the direction of the Pastor.

### 1.6.3 Role of School Advisory Board (SAB)

The role of advisory school board at Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School is referred to as the School Advisory Board or SAB.

Catholic school boards are advisory to the Principal and Pastor in parish schools or the Principal and Designated Pastor in Archdiocesan Regional schools. Boards assist the Principal and Pastor in Parish schools or the principal and Designated Pastor in Archdiocesan Regional schools to recommend policy, identify and articulate the educational needs and aspirations of the school and school community and engage in long-range strategic planning. These goals become the basis for program objectives, policies, and action plans for the educational program.

All school boards function for the good of the persons they serve. To ensure their proper structure and function, guidelines have been established for board members, executive officers, and Pastors. The Principal of each school is the educational professional to guide and assist the board members in their role, as it relates to the school.

## 1.7 Organization

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School is an integral part of Epiphany of the Lord Catholic Community.

The chief executive officer of the School is the Pastor of Epiphany of the Lord Catholic Community with the Principal responsible for the administration and instructional program of the School. The School Advisory Board cooperates with the Pastor and the Principal in developing the philosophy and goals of the School and in formulating policies which will enable the attainment of these goals.

## 1.8 Accreditation

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School is an accredited school in the State of Texas by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) through the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department (TCCB ED). ECS is staffed by degreed and certified personnel, chosen from highly qualified candidates.

## 1.9 Hours of Operation

School Hours:

8:00 am – 3:10 pm (PrK & K), 3:25 pm (1<sup>st</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup>)

Early Morning Care: 6:45 am – 7:30 am

After School Care: 3:30 pm – 6:00 pm

- more details can be found in Arrival/Dismissal Procedures – Section 2

Office Hours:

7:00 am – 4:00 pm

## 1.10 Insurance

Students are typically included in their family's insurance program. Parents must complete an Insurance Verification Form each year. Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School, including all staff, assume neither responsibility nor liability obligations that result from injuries related to partitioning in curricular, extra-curricular, or other school-related programs provided by the school.

## 2 SCHOOL PROCEDURES & POLICIES

### 2.1 Admission

#### 2.1.1 Nondiscrimination

The Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston admit all students to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to the student body. They shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its admissions, loan, athletic, or scholarship programs. Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School adheres to the policies stipulated by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

#### 2.1.2 Policy

Admission to Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School is based on the availability of space and resources, as well as the developmental, scholastic, and behavioral qualifications of the applicant. All applicants are required to participate in admissions screening/testing at the request of the Epiphany Catholic School. Priority will be given to presently enrolled students receiving an invitation to re-enroll as a result of meeting the behavioral and academic standards of Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School. Parents and guardians also must conform their conduct to reasonable standards of cooperation and support consistent with the school's mission.

#### 2.1.3 Required Documents

- a. Certified birth certificate
- b. Baptismal certificate (if applicable)
- c. Confidential Teacher Recommendation Form
- d. Current immunization records
- e. Current Report Card
- f. Health Records and Diagnostic testing report (if applicable)

All required forms must be returned, and all fee payments must be up-to-date at the time of registration before placement is assured. Students attending on a visa must present it at time of enrollment.

#### 2.1.4 Age Requirements

- a. A student entering PreK 4 must be 4 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>
- b. A student entering Kindergarten must be 5 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>
- c. A student entering First Grade must be 6 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup>

#### 2.1.5 Factors considered during admissions process

The factors considered in the admission of new students are (exceptions may be made at the discretion of school administration):

- a. Completion of prior grade's academic and behavioral expectations
- b. Siblings of students presently enrolled at Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School
- c. Children of families who actively support the Parish and School through regular contributions of their time, talent, and/or treasure.
- d. Children of families who have been registered in Epiphany of the Lord Catholic Community for at least six months prior to beginning application process.
- e. Children of Catholic families who are members of surrounding parishes.
- f. Children of non-Catholic families

#### 2.1.6 Disclosure

Parents are expected to disclose with appropriate school personnel any significant or confidential information which may affect their child's educational progress during the admissions process. All psychological and/or diagnostic testing documents should be submitted with application. Failure to disclose all significant information/diagnosis may affect the child's continued enrollment status.

#### 2.1.7 Custody Information

Divorced or separated parents are required to file with the School complete court-certified copies of the most recent court-orders, including all amendments, modifications, and supplements.

The School will keep copies of the court-order on file and is not held responsible for failing to honor arrangements that have not been made known to the school. Parents and guardians are responsible to inform the school of any changes and/or updates.

## 2.2 Special Services

Consistent with the contents of the Church Document, *To Teach as Jesus Did*, and the Pastoral Statement of the U.S. Bishops, *Person with Disabilities*, the Archdiocese seeks to include students with special needs in our schools to the extent that the needs of such students can be met within the scope of the programs and resources offered. The Catholic Schools Office is aware that it is unrealistic to serve all categories of special needs students. However, Catholic Schools are cognizant of the fact that admission of students with special needs must be considered and reviewed on an individual basis.

#### 2.2.1 Legal Reference to Services

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that local school districts (where the Catholic school is located – Katy ISD for ECS) locate, identify, and evaluate all private school students

suspected of having a disability. This “Child Find” process must be conducted in consultation with private school representatives to ensure equitable access for private school students. In IDEA, these children are often referred to as “parentally placed private school children with disabilities”, and the benefits available to them differ significantly from the benefits for children with disabilities enrolled in public schools.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 educational sections (often referred to as ‘Section 504’ or simply ‘504’) provides that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from the participation in any program receiving federal assistance. Catholic educators strive to recognize and address the needs of all those who seek a Catholic education. Within our resources, Epiphany Catholic School and other Catholic Schools will offer services to eligible students with special needs, when possible. However, private schools are not required to significantly alter their programs, lower or substantially modify their standards to accommodate a child with special needs. Private educational institutions are only required to make minor adjustments to accommodate eligible students.

#### 2.2.2 Special Services Records

All psychological/diagnostic evaluations and/or reports regarding special needs testing of students received from local school districts and/or private agencies are forwarded to Epiphany Catholic School, upon request. These records must be kept on file at the school for a period of seven years after the exit of the students. These records are kept in a secure file and area accessible only to the principal and appropriate personnel working with the student. Each student’s secure file shall have a Viewing of Records Form. These records may not be forwarded to any other individual or agency, including other private or public schools. Parents may review the record at any time.

#### 2.2.3 Criteria for Acceptance of Students in need of Special Services

In making a determination regarding the admittance of a particular applicant, the school will review the child’s ability to meet the school’s academic, behavioral, social and physical qualifications. Each school determines its ability to meet the needs of the student applicant. Consideration should be given to the following:

- The student’s demonstrated ability to meet grade level requirements;
- The record of student’s ability to follow school rules and regulations;
- The student’s ability to meet socially acceptable behaviors;
- The student’s ability to meet the physical requirements of attendance.

#### 2.2.4 Epiphany Catholic School’s Policy for Students in need of Special Services

As a result of a diagnostic evaluation, a student must meet certain criteria to qualify for accommodations or modifications to his/her schoolwork. Each child is viewed individually with his/her unique needs considered.

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School recognizes the difference between accommodations and modifications, and that these terms are not interchangeable.

**Accommodations** – changes in how a student learns.

Diagnosis and recommended accommodations must be documented through a diagnostic evaluation and remain on file in the School. Within the resources of Epiphany Catholic School, the School will offer services to eligible children. However, private schools are not required to significantly alter their programs, lower or substantially modify their standards to accommodate a child with special needs. To ensure accuracy of accommodations, the evaluations must not be more than three years old, and any accommodations made by the schools must be kept on file and updated annually. Parents will be notified if/when evaluations are expiring and if/when accommodations are updated. Expired evaluations may not be recognized for accommodations, at the discretion of the School administration and Student Support Team (SST).

**Modifications** – changes in what a student learns.

Diagnosis and recommended modifications must be documented through a diagnostic evaluation and remain on file in the School. Within the resources of Epiphany Catholic School, the School will offer services to eligible children. However, private schools are not required to significantly alter their programs, lower or substantially modify their standards to accommodate a child with special needs. To ensure accuracy of modifications, the evaluations must not be more than three years old, and any modifications made by the schools must be kept on file and updated annually. Modifications must be noted on both the report card and the permanent record card, if the curriculum is altered. Parents will be notified if/when evaluations are expiring and if/when modifications are updated. Expired evaluations may not be recognized for modifications, at the discretion of the School administration and SST.

**NEW STUDENTS** – Students with documented special learning needs must have supporting documentation and/or diagnostic assessment results submitted with their application. The SST, the Admissions Committee, along with other appropriate faculty and staff will determine if the applicant is qualified to enroll, with or without his/her disability. If the applicant is qualified for enrollment, the SST will determine if and what reasonable adjustments can be made to educational program for each individual student.

**CURRENT STUDENTS** – If a teacher or parent is concerned about a child's academic, behavioral, or emotional progress the topic must be discussed with the family, teacher, and school administration. If testing is agreed upon to ensure continued growth of the student, families must submit the diagnostic assessment results as soon as possible. If accommodations or modifications are needed for the student to continue to progress, the information will be submitted to the SST for review. The SST will inform the parents of educational options moving forward, either within ECS or outside.

All testing that results in accommodations or modifications must be updated every three years in order to insure appropriate and effective intervention methods. Testing that is older than three years will be considered expired and may no longer be accepted by the School for accommodations or modifications. All referrals and evaluation results will be kept on file.

#### 2.2.5 Student Success Expectations for Student with Special Needs

All available school resources shall be utilized to promote student success. Parents are expected to disclose any pertinent information that would be of specific educational value in programming



adequately for their children. If it is determined that school's resources cannot meet the needs of the student, or if parents or guardians fail to act on the school's recommendations for remediation or diagnostic evaluation, the School Administration may request withdrawal of the student, or deny admission for the following year.

#### 2.2.6 Standardized Assessment for Students with Special Needs

Standardized assessments are one of several means of evaluating student performance. All students participate in the Archdiocese standardized assessment program. Special accommodations may be given to students who have been diagnosed with a disability. Testing accommodations must be planned for in advance with the SST. Additionally, any adjustments made on the Archdiocese wide standardized assessment must be requested from the Catholic Schools Office with the appropriate form.

#### 2.2.7 Chronic Illness or Injury

Prior to the first day of class, or as soon as new information is gained, parents will inform the principal, nurse, and teacher of any chronic illness or injury their child has sustained. Parents and the appropriate staff will develop a Student Healthcare Plan, which will include instructions for identifying/observing the illness or injury, care and treatment, medication orders, and any special instructions.

All medication or equipment must be provided by the parents and housed in the nurse's office with appropriate ECS medication forms completed by parent. Self-administered asthma medication may be carried with the student. However, physician orders and ECS medication forms must be filed in the nurse's office.

Injuries that require limited movement or participation in school related activities for any amount of time require a physician's note being filed with the nurse's office.

### 2.3 Withdrawals

To officially withdraw from Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School, notice in writing must be given to the school office prior to the date of withdrawal. Any student who is withdrawn must wait one full calendar year before reapplying. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the School Administration.

### 2.4 Arrival, Dismissal, & Attendance Information

In order to provide safety for the students and to improve traffic flow, ECS limits pedestrian crossing during the time of arrival and dismissal. It is imperative that each family and visitor cooperate with the arrival and dismissal procedures for the safety of everyone involved.

#### 2.4.1 General Carpool Guidelines

- Parents must cooperate with the school and act as a model to the students of the need to follow safety rules.
- Every school family must have a car tag issued by the school. This includes students who walk to and from school, families who only have one student in their

carpool, etc.

- Every driver must display their carpool tag so that it may be read by electronic reader.
- For everyone's safety, traffic parking patterns must be observed; please observe the 5 miles per hour speed limit and do not pass other vehicles.
- Students are required to wait in the hallway in the afternoon.
- Parents should not devise shortcuts – all students are expected to be picked up in the carpool line.
- Students may not cross in between the cars in the carpool line or walk through the parking lot unless accompanied by a faculty member.
- Parents should instruct their child(ren) to always walk in front of their own car when loading or unloading.
- During morning drop-off, parents should stay in their vehicle and students should exit the vehicle in a prompt and organized manner, and on the side closest to the school.
- Students are not allowed to run, play ball, etc. in the carpool loading area.
- The use of cell phones when operating a vehicle on the church/school grounds is prohibited. (See "Cell Phones/Electronic Devices/Telephone Use", this Section)
- Parents must handle exceptions or emergencies before or after the regular pick-up, i.e. (before 2:30 p.m. or after 3:30 p.m.) If assistance is needed, the parent should call the school office.
- Group transportation (athletic games, scouts, etc.) will be coordinated so as to limit interference with the regular pick-up procedure.
- Parent offenders of any statement in this policy are subject to a conference with the Principal and to further consequences at the Principal's discretion.

#### 2.4.2 Arrival Procedures

During morning drop-off, cars must enter the campus through the East entrance off Norwalk Drive. Drive straight towards the school and turn right towards the carpool lane. Once car has entered carpool lane the students may unload on the right-hand side of the car onto the sidewalk.

Early arrival (6:45 - 7:30 a.m.) – All students arriving before 7:30 a.m. may enter through the front door and report to the early morning care room. At 7:30 a.m. all students will report to their homeroom.

Arrivals from (7:30 - 7:55 a.m.) – All students will enter through the front doors and go directly to their homeroom.

Please do not park and walk your children to the doors. It is dangerous to have pedestrian traffic moving between the carpool line.

#### 2.4.3 Dismissal Procedures

Everyone must use the carpool system to pick up students from 3-3:45 pm. Any student who has not been picked up by 3:45 will be taken to Extended Day - After School.

Parents must not walk up to retrieve their child(ren) from afternoon carpool.

Afternoon Carpool: There are two dismissal times.

For families with multiple students attending ECS who are dismissed at different times, all students will be dismissed with the oldest sibling.

#### First Dismissal: 3:10 p.m.

First dismissal carpool consists of students in grades PrK 4 & Kinder - without an older sibling. First dismissal carpool is at 3:10 p.m. Cars may begin lining up for first dismissal no earlier than 2:30 p.m.

All cars are required to hang carpool tag on rear-view mirror or visor.

Enter from the Norwalk side, turn right and then left – follow the 3:10 pm carpool signs. The first in line must stop at the carpool stop sign and wait until faculty member waves the line into the carpool lane at 3:10 pm.

Cars that are in the wrong line or waiting in the carpool lane may be asked to circle back onto Highland Knolls, then to Norwalk, and join the correct dismissal line.

#### Second Dismissal: 3:25 p.m.

Second dismissal carpool consists of students in grades 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> and younger siblings. Second carpool starts at 3:25 pm. Cars may begin lining up for second dismissal no earlier than 2:30 pm.

All cars are required to hang carpool tag on rear-view mirror or visor.

Enter from the Norwalk side, turn left – follow the 3:25 pm carpool signs. The first person in line must stop at the carpool stop sign and wait until faculty member waves the line into the carpool lane at 3:25 pm.

Cars that are in the wrong line or waiting in the carpool lane may be asked to circle back onto Highland Knolls, then to Norwalk, and join the correct dismissal line.

#### 2.4.4 Walkers & Bikers Procedures

Approval will be granted only to students who actually walk or ride their bike to their home in the neighborhood. Directions will be given to these students upon approval.

#### 2.4.5 After School Activities Pick-up Procedures

All students must be picked up in carpool or from Extended Day unless they are participating in after school sports or a school sponsored activity immediately after school. Instructions for pick-up procedures from afterschool activity will be communicated to parents by afterschool teacher or coach.

#### 2.4.6 Forgotten Items in the Classroom or School

If a student has forgotten an item at school after he/she has been picked up in carpool, the driver should park, and the student should cross at the crosswalk with supervised assistance then report to the front office. However, after 4pm the school office is closed, and the item may not be able to be retrieved until the following day. Not all items will be allowed to be picked up depending on facility and faculty schedule.

#### 2.4.7 Attendance

In compliance with Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department (TCCBED) and the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, schools have 75,600 instructional minutes for students in grades K-12. Pre-K programs shall operate as best suits the local community.

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School establishes and publishes a school calendar prior to the beginning of each school year. Parents/guardians will honor the calendar established by the school. Daily school attendance is an effective way to assure continued academic progress.

In Texas, a student missing more than 90% of the class minutes, may not receive credit for class completion. Promotion or credit may be jeopardized if a student misses more than 7560 minutes, or 16 days of school, excused or unexcused. At Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School, any student who accumulates ten (10) or more unexcused absences and/or tardies during a quarter will be contact by school administration. Excessive absences may affect the student's academic success, continued enrollment, or re-enrollment for the following year.

Absences are categorized into two distinct categories:

##### 2.4.7.1 Excused Absences – any day missed due to illness, emergency, or with permission of the school administration

- Illness – If a student is unable to come to school due to illness, the parent/guardian is expected to notify the office and send a written note upon the student's return to school. If the absence is prolonged (3 days or more) the student must bring a note from a doctor or physician.
- Family Emergency – Deaths, serious or prolonged illnesses are handled on an individual basis. The family and/or student must communicate with school administration as soon as possible regarding these situations and plans will be developed accordingly.

2.4.7.2 Unexcused Absences – any day missed due to vacation or activities planned outside of school activities. Additionally, any days missed without the required documentation for an excused absence will be recorded as unexcused.

Parents are encouraged to schedule trips and vacations during planned vacation periods and extended weekends to avoid unnecessary interruption to student learning.

**\*\* Some attendance issues require special care and consideration. These issues will be considered and handled on an individual basis by School administration \*\***

##### 2.4.7.3 Make-up work

Students who have an excused absence are allowed one day for each day absent to complete missed work, assignments, and tests. If the absence is prolonged (3 days or more), the student will create a Make-Up plan with his/her teacher upon their return with a doctor's note.

**Assignments will not be given in advance of an absence.**

Teachers are not required to give make-up work or make-up assessments for unexcused absences.

#### 2.4.7.4 Half-Day & Full-Day Absences

Half-day absences are assigned for students who miss between 2 - 3.5 hours during an academic day, either in the morning or afternoon. Full-day absences are assigned to students who miss over half of the academic day (3.5 hours or more). A general guideline:

- Arrive after 11:30 am = Half-day absence
- Arrive after 1:30 pm = Full-day absence
  
- Depart before 11:30 am = Full-day absence
- Depart after 11:30 am = Half-day absence

These designations are general guidelines and will be determined on an individual basis by school administration.

#### 2.4.7.5 Tardiness

The tardy bell rings at 8:00 am everyday school is in session. Students must report to the front office to obtain a tardy slip before being admitted to class. At the discretion of School administration, tardiness may be excused for medical appointments when the student presents a written note from the medical provider.

Habitual tardiness seriously affects school performance. Parents will be notified for a conference with School administration when habitual tardiness is a concern.

## 2.5 Birthdays, Party Invitations, Gifts, Snacks, Etc.

The school invites parents/guardians to join their child for lunch on their birthday. If your child's birthday falls on a weekend, a holiday, or during the summer, parents are allowed to celebrate their child's birthday on another day scheduled with the homeroom teacher.

General guidelines for birthday celebrations:

- Bring treats for entire grade level
- Treats should be small – mini cupcake, brownie bite, cookie, donut hole, etc.
- Treats must be prepared in individual servings – all treats must be pre-cut and ready to serve
- All treats must be store bought and include a complete ingredient list for review by school staff

- No colored icing (white is permitted)
- No nuts of any kind (including peanut butter)
- No frozen treats
- Other birthday paraphrenia are not permitted – balloons, flowers, posters, locker decorating, etc.

Party invitations may only be given out at school if the entire class is being invited or all students of the same gender in the class are being invited. Please reach out to the homeroom teacher for more information.

## 2.6 Deliveries During School Hours

Classes will not be interrupted to deliver books, homework, lunch, etc. Students will not be allowed to use the school phone to call home for forgotten items.

An important aspect of building responsibility in children is allowing them to experience logical and natural consequences.

## 2.7 Emergency Policy & Procedures

A crisis management plan has been developed and is reviewed yearly to provide immediate assistance in the case of an emergency. The crisis management plan addresses concerns regarding safety, receiving accurate information, and a long-term plan to minimize the effects of the crisis. Every Archdiocesan school has a crisis management plan. Teachers know procedures to shut down classrooms and contact administrative officials in the school in the case of an outside threat and are also trained in case of an inside threat which would result in the evacuation of the school. Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School follows the guidelines of the Catholic School Office (CSO) for bomb threats, fire drills, inclement weather drills, and lock-down procedures.

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School follows the guidelines of the CSO, as well Katy Independent School District (Katy ISD) regarding weather related school closings. During periods of severe inclement weather, the local radio/TV stations carry frequent bulletins of the Catholic Schools and/or Katy ISD closings. If the Catholic Schools or Katy ISD close, Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School (ECS) will be closed as well.

Additionally, ECS utilizes the IRIS Alert System to contact all community members of school closings or other emergency information. Please ensure all contact information is up-to-date within the School's systems.

With regard to the wide area our students travel from to attend ECS, weather conditions near each home may vary and require special consideration. Parents/guardians are expected to exercise their own judgment regarding their child's safety and security.

## 2.8 Health & Nurse Procedures

The clinic at Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School (ECS) is staffed by registered nurses. Prior to the first day of school (or as soon as possible for newly identified conditions), parents will complete a Student Healthcare Plan, which will include instructions for identifying/observing the illness or injury, care and treatment, medication orders, and any special instructions.

All medication or equipment must be provided by the parents and housed in the nurse's office with appropriate ECS medication forms completed by parent. Self-administered asthma medication may be carried with the student. However, physician orders and ECS medication forms must be filed in nurse's office.

Injuries that require limited movement or participation in school related activities for any amount of time require a physician's note being filed with the nurse's office.

### 2.8.1 Emergency Contract Information

The clinic is a place for an ill or injured student to wait as comfortably as possible until a parent/guardian can come for him/her. Accurate telephone numbers are vital for student safety and prompt communication. The parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring the numbers listed are accurate and up-to-date. Names and numbers of parents/guardians and other emergency contacts who have parental permission to pick up the student are a required piece of enrollment. Parents may update contact information through online Student Information System (FACTS/ParentsWeb).

### 2.8.2 Student Illness or Injury Procedures

For protection of all students, the following guidelines will be enforced at all times. A student will be sent home with:

- Fever of 100° F or higher
- Suspected contagious or communicable disease (e.g. impetigo, strep throat, chicken pox, pink eye, vomiting, diarrhea, etc.)
- General malaise – too ill to remain at school

If a student has any of the above symptoms in the morning before coming to school, he/she should remain at home. If a child remains at home because of a communicable or contagious disease, a parent should call the school to determine when the child may return to school.

**FEVER - a student must be fever free without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours before returning to school.**

**DIARRHEA or VOMITING - a student must not return to school before 24 hours following the last occurrence.**

### 2.8.3 Immunizations

All students in Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Catholic Schools must be in compliance with the immunization requirements of the Texas Department of Health, Immunization Division.

A complete Immunization Record, showing a history of immunizations received must be on file for each child enrolled. All immunizations must be completed and validated by the doctor or health care clinic prior to the first day of school. No child will be enrolled in class without the completion of these requirements. Upon notification of a deficiency by the school, students must provide acceptable evidence of vaccination within 10 school days to remain enrolled.

The only exception to the forgoing requirement is a medical exemption signed by a licensed physician (M. D. or D. O.) authorized to practice in the State of Texas. Catholic schools in Texas do not accept exemptions from immunizations for Reasons of Conscience.

#### 2.8.4 Medication

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School clinic is staffed by a Registered Nurse. The daily routine of school clinic includes managing student medications. Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School will adhere to the Texas Education Code regarding the administering of medications to students by school employees.

- Medication (prescription and non-prescription) may be administered to student only upon written request by the parent/guardian and physician. This includes, but is not limited to: topical antibiotics, Hydrocortisone ointment and mosquito sprays. The request must state the following:
  - i. Student's name
  - ii. Name of medication
  - iii. Prescribed dosage of medication
  - iv. Times of administration of medication
  - v. Route
  - vi. Exact date medication is to be given
  - vii. Liability release
  - viii. Signature of parent/guardian and physician
  
- All medication (prescription and non-prescription), must be in its original container and be properly labeled in English. A properly labeled prescription medications is one with pharmacy label stating the student's name, the name of medication, and prescription date. Non-prescription medication must be in the original container indicating directions for use and labeled with student's name.
- School personnel has a responsibility to question a medication order, discrepancies in an order, or incompleteness of an order. The parent/guardian will be notified of the issue. The parent must take appropriate steps to correct the problem. The school may refuse to give medications if a discrepancy is determined.
- It is the student's responsibility to report to the designated area to take his/her medications. Appropriate measures may be taken to ensure the medication is given.
- The parent/guardian or designated adult must bring the medication to the clinic. All medications (prescription or non-prescription) must remain in the school clinic. EXCEPTION: It may be possible to develop a Student Healthcare Plan allowing students with asthma to possess and self-administer prescription asthma medicine while on campus or at a school related event or activity.



Parents/guardians should contact the school nurse to implement this plan and complete necessary forms.

- Parents/guardians must pick up unused medicine by the last day of the school year. The nurse will dispose of any medication left in the clinic.

#### 2.8.5 Allergies

The parents/guardians are responsible to inform the School if their child has an allergy. Children who have been issued a prescription for an EpiPen shall deliver at least two to the school nurse for use in case of an emergency. An individual treatment protocol should be developed by the child's allergist and on file with the school nurse. The school cannot assume responsibility for treatment in the absence of such protocol. The forms and medicine must be delivered to the school nurse by the parent/guardian, in addition to a discussion between nurse and parent/guardian to review plan.

Parents must inform the School if ongoing monitoring is required for the child. Failure to disclose pertinent medical information in a timely fashion can be cause for dismissal.

#### 2.8.6 Homework Request

If a student is unable to come to school due to an illness, the parent/guardian is expected to notify the school office by 9:00 am. It is the student's responsibility to obtain notes from class or approach the teacher for make-up work. Parents/guardians are to send a written note upon the students return to school. Teachers are not required to provide homework in advance for student absences.

Please see 4.5 Homework Policy

### 2.9 Extended Care – Morning & After School

#### 2.9.1 Morning Care

The school day begins at 8:00 am, with morning carpool opening at 7:30 am. Morning care is provided to families who need to drop off their child(ren) between 6:45 am – 7:30 am, supervised by a faculty member for an additional fee.

#### 2.9.2 After School Care

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School (ECS) is pleased to provide After School Care, extended care program. All ECS families are required to enroll their child(ren) in After School Care (at no cost) in case of after school emergency care. This is an extension of the school day and as such, will follow the official school calendar and policies. After School Care hours are 3:30 pm – 6:00 pm. This program is not scheduled on school holidays nor early dismissal days. Information and registration forms are available on the school website.

#### 2.10 Financial Information

### 2.10.1 Financial Account Responsibilities

Parents are expected to keep current all financial accounts at Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School (ECS). Report cards, transcripts, and school records are not released if any outstanding debt exists. All past financial obligations to the school must be fulfilled, including any assessed late fees and charges, for the school to consider re-registration or admission to a new school year.

Checks written to ECS are not held for deposit and are generally immediately processed. Postdated checks are not accepted. Any returned check is subject to a \$30.00 charge.

### 2.10.2 Tuition

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School (ECS) is an integral part of Epiphany of the Lord Catholic Community and exists primarily to serve children of active and supportive parishioners. The annual tuition rate is established upon the recommendation of the School Advisory Board (SAB) following a review of the annual operating budget. The operating budget for the school includes revenue from major fundraisers, as well as, parish investment.

The parish investment enables all students to benefit from Financial Assistance. However, the school continues to reserve some funds to provide additional assistance for families with multiple students and need-based financial aid for qualified students.

Tuition is collected on an annual basis at Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School on a designated date in June. Parents who wish to make periodic payment for tuition may do so through ECS' FACTS online tuition management system. Failure to pay tuition in full on a designated date in June may result in loss of enrollment, at the discretion of the school administration.

### 2.10.3 Financial Aid

Applications for tuition assistance are available online through the School's website during the re-enrollment and enrollment periods, respectively. Applications must be completed and submitted prior to application deadline to FACTS for any consideration. Families are notified by the school administration of available assistance. Qualifying students must maintain satisfactory academic progress and a record of good conduct. Participants are expected to keep the school apprised of changing needs following acceptance of assistance. Furthermore, the awarded financial assistance is for the following academic year only. Families who wish to receive financial assistance must apply every year.

## 2.11 Visitors and Guests

### 2.11.1 Visiting Procedures

For the protection of every student in attendance at Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School, no one is allowed on the school premises without first receiving clearance from the school office. State law prohibits the interruption of a teacher during class time or while performing any official duties.

All parent volunteers, visitors, and guests are required to check in at the school office and provide valid photo identification (driver license or ID card). A visitor's badge will be issued and must be worn at all times while the visitor is on campus.

Student visitors, such as family members and/or graduates, must make arrangements in advance with school administration. These visits are normally limited to lunch periods.

Visitors must check in and out at the front office.

#### 2.11.2 Volunteers

Volunteers are a vital piece of Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School. All volunteers are required to follow specific guidelines. The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston requires that volunteers in the Catholic schools complete a Criminal Background Check and complete Safe Haven training prior to volunteering.

Safe Haven is a child sexual abuse awareness program adopted by the National Council of Catholic Bishops. It is offered online through the Archdiocese and the training is about 1 hour long. Everyone who completes the course is registered within the Archdiocese. Those volunteers whom have completed the course will be added to ECS's Approved Volunteer List.

Volunteers are required to sign in at the front office and receive badge before reporting to their work area. If you cannot be at school during scheduled times, please arrange for a substitute. Upon completion of work/shift, volunteers must sign out in the front office. Please refrain from visiting classrooms or traveling to areas outside of designated work space.

Please make arrangements for younger siblings as they may not be brought to campus during volunteer hours. Volunteers represent the school and parish, and therefore should show support for the school and governing policies at all times. School administration may terminate service of any volunteer who fails to uphold the policies and procedures of the school.

#### 2.11.3 Visitor Dress Code

Volunteers should dress appropriately for a Catholic school campus. Overly casual attire, exercise clothing, sports attire, or shorts/skirts of an inappropriate length or style should not be worn.

#### 2.11.4 Field Trips & Chaperones

Class visits to places of cultural and/or academic significance enrich classroom instruction. Teachers shall coordinate field trips plans with school administration. Permission slips must be signed and returned so that students can participate. Permission cannot be given over the telephone. All field trips are part of the regular school curriculum and are considered regular school days. If a student does not participate in a field trip, he/she will be counted absent and are not permitted to come to school during the field trip.

When a parent/guardian is asked to chaperone a field trip, he/she is responsible for students and represents Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School (ECS) and Community. Siblings are not permitted to attend field trips or volunteer opportunities. Chaperones are expected to dress appropriately to represent ECS.

Students must leave from school and return to school with their class on field trips. Students are not permitted to be dropped off or picked up at the field trip site without prior approval from school administration.

## 2.12 Uniforms & Dress Code

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School students wear uniforms in grades PreK – 8<sup>th</sup>. In an effort to teach our children that it is not the clothing nor the possessions that make each person special, Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School requires all students to wear the designated uniform for their grade level. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to see that students conform to the uniform regulations.

Students out of uniform or inappropriately dressed will call their parents/guardians to bring the appropriate items. If parents/guardians cannot be reached or refuse to cooperate, an attempt to provide the student with appropriate garments will be made through lost and found and/or used uniform supply. Final judgements about what is deemed acceptable or unacceptable dress is at the discretion of school administration.

Students are expected to be well-groomed and dressed in complete presentable uniforms at all times. All clothing must be in good condition and clearly marked on the inside with the student's name. All clothing must have school logo and purchased through school approved vendor(s).

### 2.12.1 Regular Uniform

The following Regular Uniform is the standard, daily uniform worn by students at Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School. Unless a day is designated as "Dress Uniform" (see below), all other days are "Regular Uniform" days.

#### **Girls:**

#### **Required Uniform for Regular Uniform days (PreK – 1<sup>st</sup>)**

Tops: Light blue polo with school monogram

Bottoms: Plaid pleated skort or khaki pant/shorts

Shoes: Athletic type shoes – see more details below in section 2.12.11

Socks: White socks – see more details below in section 2.12.11

Optional Regular Uniform items for Girls PreK – 1st:

Light Blue or Navy Short-sleeve Polo dress with required navy modesty shorts and school monogram

Navy Fleece Jacket with school monogram

**Required Uniform for Regular Uniform days (2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>)**

Tops: Light blue polo with school monogram

Bottoms: Plaid pleated skort or khaki pant

Shoes: Athletic type shoes – see more details below in section 2.12.11

Socks: White socks – see more details below in section 2.12.11

Optional Regular Uniform items for Girls 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>:

Navy Fleece Jacket with school monogram

Optional Regular Uniform items for Girls 6<sup>th</sup> Grade:

Bottoms: Khaki skort

**Boys:**

**Required Uniform for Regular Uniform days (PreK – 4<sup>th</sup>)**

Tops: Navy or Light Blue Polo shirt with school monogram

Bottoms: Khaki pants or shorts

Belts: Dark colored belt

Shoes: Athletic type shoes – see more details below in section 2.12.11

Socks: White socks – see more details below in section 2.12.11

Optional Regular Uniform items for Boys PreK & Kinder:

Pull on khaki shorts or pants – no belt required

Navy Fleece Jacket with school monogram

Optional Regular Uniform items for Boys 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>:

Navy Fleece Jacket with school monogram

Optional Regular Uniform items for Boys 6<sup>th</sup> Grade:

Tops: White Polo shirt with school monogram

### 2.12.2 Dress Uniform

The following Dress Uniform will be required whenever students attend all-school liturgies, special events, and at various other times determined by school administration. If a student is not dressed appropriately, he/she is at risk of non-participation in the activity.

#### **Girls:**

##### **Required Uniform for Dress Uniform days (PreK – 4<sup>th</sup>)**

Plaid Jumper with navy modesty shorts – jumper hem should reach the top of the knee

Blouse: Peter Pan collar style long- or short-sleeved, with ECS monogram on collar

Shoes: Flat navy/black dress shoes or navy/black/tan topsiders – (no athletic/sport shoes)

Socks: White knee socks

Students in grades PrK – 1<sup>st</sup> may wear dark colored athletic shoes on dress uniform days

##### **Optional Dress Uniform items for Girls:**

Navy Leggings

Cardigan Sweater with school monogram

##### **Optional Dress Uniform items for Girls (5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup>):**

Plaid Skirt with navy modesty shorts – skirt should reach the top of the knee

Blouse: Oxford blouse, with ECS monogram on collar, plus navy cardigan sweater

#### **Boys:**

##### **Required Uniform for Dress Uniform days (PreK – 6<sup>th</sup>)**

Tops: Blue Oxford shirt with school monogram, plus navy sweater vest with school monogram

Bottoms: Khaki pants

Belts: Dark colored belt

Shoes: Black, brown, navy loafers, topsiders, or dress shoes – (no athletic/sport shoes)

Socks: White

Students in grades PrK – 1<sup>st</sup> may wear dark colored athletic shoes on dress uniform days

### 2.12.3 Proper Wear

- i. Shirts must be tucked in at all times.
- ii. Shoes must be properly secured – tied, buckled, etc.
- iii. Waistbands and shirtsleeves may not be rolled.
- iv. Pants/shorts and skirts must be worn at natural waistline.
- v. All girls must wear modesty shorts under skirts.
- vi. Skirts and shorts must reach within 2 inches of top of the child's knee.

#### 2.12.4 Sweatshirts & Jackets

Only monogrammed solid navy school sweatshirt, navy cardigan, or solid navy school fleece jacket – purchased from approved vendor, may be worn during school hours. For added warmth, any jacket or coat may be worn to and from school, and when going outside.

#### 2.12.5 Free Dress days

Throughout the year, certain days will be designated as “Free Dress Days”. Free Dress passes may also be awarded to students. Free dress passes may not be used on Dress Uniform Days.

Free Dress Days:

- All clothing must be modest and appropriate for a Catholic school setting.
- Proper attire policies are still in place (length of skirts & shorts, type of shoes, and style of clothes, etc.)
- Final judgments about what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable dress lies with school administration.

Scouts may wear scout uniforms on meeting days, unless meeting day falls on a Dress Uniform Day.

#### 2.12.6 Spirit Wear

Specific days throughout the school year will be designated as Spirit Days. Students may wear designated school spirit shirts with Regular Uniform bottoms. Most Friday’s are Spirit Days unless otherwise noted.

#### 2.12.7 Jewelry

Jewelry and other accessory items are not part of the school uniform. Girls only, may have small stud earrings. Boys and girls are permitted to wear a wristwatch (see section about technology for more information about types of watches permitted) and one religious necklace and/or bracelet. The school is not responsible for the loss, breakage, or theft of jewelry and/or personal items.

Body piercing is not permitted other than girl’s ear piercings (see above).

#### 2.12.8 Makeup & Polish

Boys are not permitted to wear fingernail polish or make-up at any time.

Girls in PreK – 5<sup>th</sup>: no fingernail polish or make-up is permitted.

Girls in 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>: Only solid color nail polish is allowed.

Artificial nails are not permitted.

#### 2.12.9 Hair

Hair color and styles which are deemed distracting to the educational environment are not acceptable for any student. Boys hair must be trimmed so that it does not touch the top of the collar, hang over the top of the ears, or touch his eyebrows. A parent will be contacted and any distracting appearance must be remedied for continued enrollment.

Facial hair is not permitted.

#### 2.12.10 Belt

A belt must be worn with shorts/pants that have belt loops. An exception may be made for PreK and Kindergarten students. Belts may be brown, black, or navy only, without symbols, patterns, or branding visible.

#### 2.12.11 Shoes & Socks

Shoes

- Athletic type shoes are preferred for comfort and safety
- Athletic type shoes must be navy, black, gray, or white – or any combination of those colors
- Athletic shoes may not have any other colors
- Laces must be solid navy, black, gray, or white
- Shoes must have rubber sole
- No boots, sandals, open-back, heeled, or open-toed shoes may be worn
- Dress Uniform days, navy or black dress shoes are required, or brown loafers for student's 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and up.
  - Students in grades PrK – 1<sup>st</sup> may wear dark colored athletic shoes during dress uniform days

Socks

- White socks are to be worn daily and visible above the shoe.
- Dress Uniform days, all girls will wear thin knee-high socks and all boys will wear white socks.

#### 2.12.12 Tights & Leggings

Girls may wear navy or black tights or leggings under their skirt. Ankle length leggings may be worn with socks. Otherwise, leggings must have feet.

#### 2.12.13 Bows & Headbands

Girls may wear small hair bows or headbands.



### 2.12.14 Backpacks

Rolling Backpacks are not permitted.

## 2.13 Cell Phones & Electronic Devices

Students are not permitted to use electronic devices (cell phones, IPODS/IPADS, smart watches, fitness trackers) on campus while school is in session. Student Chromebooks may be used with Faculty supervision and at appropriate & authorized times.

Students may not use cell phones (including texting) on campus during school hours (7:00 a.m.-3:45 p.m.) Use of cellular phones by students during school hours is prohibited per Archdiocesan Policy.

The school office phone may be used for emergencies only. Calling parents for forgotten homework, projects, or making social plans, etc. does not constitute an emergency.

Students are not permitted to email parents during the day from their chrome books without teacher permission and approval from school administration.

- For the first offense (all grades), confiscated cell phones and electronic devices will be held and returned to the student at the end of the same school day.
- For the second offense, the confiscated electronic device will be held by the Principal/Assistant Principal until picked up by the PARENT at the end of the following school day.
- For a third offense, the confiscated electronic device will be held by the Principal/Assistant Principal and returned to the parent after a \$25 fine has been paid.

Should any further offense occur, the student will be forbidden to bring a cell phone on campus. The school is not responsible for any confiscated items being lost or damaged.

### Parents/Legal Guardians

Calling, texting, or emailing students during school hours (7:00 a.m.–3:45 p.m.) is strictly prohibited. Messages of an emergency nature will be relayed to students if you call the school office. We ask that you please respect this policy so as not to place your child in a disciplinary situation.

Parent cell phones must be turned off or put on vibrate while on the school campus or while attending school activities. All cell phone use must occur outside the building.

For the safety of our students, cell phone use by drivers during carpool is prohibited.

*Specifically:*

- During morning carpool, cell phone use is prohibited from when a vehicle enters the campus until the vehicle exits the campus.

- During afternoon carpool, cell phone use is prohibited from when the line begins to move until the vehicle exits the campus.

Offenders of this policy are subject to a conference with the Principal and to further consequences at the Principal's discretion.

## 2.14 Lunch

### 2.14.1 Lunch Options

Students have the option of bringing their lunch from home each day or purchasing a lunch from the contracted catering company. No soft drinks may be consumed by students during school hours. Estimated cost is \$5.00 for regular lunch. This does not include snacks or the large lunch. Hot lunches are prepared and served daily.

### 2.14.2 Lunch Schedule/Visits

Lunch is considered part of the regular school day. Parent lunch visits should not be excessive nor more than once a month or so. Our teachers are spending lunch time with their classes and value that time with their students in another environment. Students need this time together to build social skills and to learn to interact with each other outside of the classroom. Thank you for helping us with this important aspect of your child's education. Parents must sign in at the school office and receive a visitor tag for birthday lunches.

Students must either bring their lunch or purchase their lunch in the cafeteria. Forgotten lunches will be accepted until 9 a.m. in the school office. If it is not possible to deliver your child's forgotten lunch by 9 a.m., we will be sure that he/she is provided a lunch from the cafeteria.

Students are expected to follow all school rules and cafeteria rules throughout the lunch periods. They are expected to clean up after themselves and refrain from any activity such as throwing food, running, shouting, or any other disruptive behavior while at lunch.

## 2.15 SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Texas State Law requires anyone suspecting the abuse or neglect of a child to report the suspected abuse or neglect, preferably to the Child Protective Services (CPS) Child Abuse Hotline, 1.800.252.5400, or at their website: [http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/contact\\_us/report\\_abuse.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/contact_us/report_abuse.asp). The hotline, located in Austin, is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Texas Law specifically requires that a person make a report to Child Protective Services or to a local law enforcement agency immediately, no later than 48 hours after first suspecting a child has been abused or neglected. All reports of suspected child abuse or neglect are confidential. The school Principal and the Catholic Schools Office should be advised after the report is made. If the report is made in good faith, reporters are immune from civil or criminal liability.

State Law requires that the person suspecting the abuse should be the reporter. Additionally, the law requires reports of *suspected* abuse, not an inquiry or investigation whether abuse occurred. In fact, the

mental health professionals ultimately responsible for assessing a child and the prosecutors responsible for proving abuse ask that the reporter not attempt to validate the abuse.

### 2.15.1 The Investigation

Texas Law allows investigation of alleged child abuse by CPS to include an interview and examination of the child who is the subject of the report. That interview may be conducted at any reasonable time and place, including the child's school. Accordingly, when visited or otherwise contacted by authorities stating their intention to investigate child abuse, the Principal or an adult designated by the principal will examine the credentials and record the investigator's name, agency and contact information and, thereafter, facilitate the interview with the alleged victim of child abuse. If CPS wishes to speak to any other children, the school will usually require the consent of the other children's parents.

State Law provides that the interview of the alleged victim of child abuse shall include "the presence of persons the department or designated agency determines are necessary." Frequently, investigators will conclude that parents and other family members are not "necessary" to the interview and should not even be advised that the interview is occurring. The parents and school personnel do not have the right to be present at the interview of the alleged victim. The school will not notify the alleged victim's parents unless requested to do so by the CPS investigators.

The rights of CPS to investigate include the right to transport the child: therefore, the child may be taken from the school without the school's consent. State Law provides that a person commits an offense if a person attempts to interfere with the lawful transport of the alleged victim for purposes relating to the interview or investigation. Should investigators decide to transport the child from the school; the investigators ordinarily attempt to advise the victim's parents in advance. Irrespective of the investigators attempt to do so; the school will not contact the parents until after the child has been safely removed from the school premises.

### **3 STANDARD OF CONDUCT**

The goal of any discipline program is to assist the student in achieving self-discipline which will manifest itself in clear and logical reasoning and in action which is consistent with good moral principles. The plan consists of well-defined regulations and logical consequences for student behavior.

#### **3.1 Discipline Policy**

The School's discipline policy is based on the assumption that children have the capacity to make choices in their behavior and actions, which will either hinder or help their own growth and development. Parents/guardians and educators are called to work together to provide an atmosphere that will enable children to accept their decision-making ability and understand both the positive and negative consequences of their behavior and decisions.

Students who misbehave or make poor choices which infringe on the academic process will be disciplined. Parents/guardians will be notified when a child has seriously misbehaved and/or when consequences assigned. Prior to the notification, parents can be assured the student had been spoken with regarding the misconduct and subsequent consequences. The notification to parents/guardians serves to alert parents/guardians to the situations and request their assistance with shaping the student's decision making.

Infractions in the classroom are under the authority of the teacher. However, all teachers have authority over all students, regardless of age or grade. School expectations are designed to establish clear guidelines for student behavior. The School approaches behavior as students are choosing their actions. When a student chooses to break rules, consequences must be accepted and a change in behavior or actions is expected.

The School administration reserves the right to place a student on probation, suspension, or expulsion as deemed appropriate by the circumstances, in addition to assigning detention, timeouts, or various tasks throughout the campus. The Principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary matters and can waive or assign any disciplinary action for just cause.

#### **3.2 Behavior Expectations**

Teachers, parents, and students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner befitting the reputation of Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School, both on campus and at school sponsored activities. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action being taken. The Administration reserves the right to amend, suspend, or add new rules or guidelines to school disciplinary policies as needed. Furthermore, the Administration reserves the right to enforce standards of conduct and behavior not mentioned in this document.

##### **3.2.1 Acceptable Behavior**

All students are expected to:

- Be on time
- Come prepared to learn
- Be respectful to any adult on campus
- Respect your rights and the rights of others
- Ask for help
- Be compassionate towards others
- Demonstrate strong character
- Obey school and classroom rules
- Be honest and trustworthy

These expectations are not intended to be a comprehensive list. It is merely a guide to help parents and students understand general expectations for conduct. Each behavior will be ultimately judged as to its gravity on an individual basis, taking into account the specific circumstances, age, and development of the student. Students who choose to settle differences in a physical way will receive appropriate consequences at the discretion of the School administration.

#### 3.2.1.1 Additional Student Expectations

- Students are expected to contribute positively towards school culture and environment. Acts which injure, degrade, disgrace, or threaten the safety, privacy, and respect of others will not be tolerated.
- Students will not sell items on campus except specific instances approved by ECS.
- Students will not bring toys, dolls, games, electronic devices to school unless approved by teacher or School administration.
- Cell phones are not allowed, and restricted use is a privilege. The School strongly recommends that cell phones are left at home. Cell phone use during the school day is prohibited unless explicit permission is granted by the School. All phones should be turned off during the school day and left in student lockers. If a phone is on, rings, or seen by school personnel, the phone will be confiscated by School and held in Principal's office. On the second occurrence, parents must set up an appointment with Principal to retrieve the student's phone.
- Carbonated drinks, caffeinated drinks, drinks with high amounts of sugar, and energy drinks are prohibited and should not be brought to campus.

#### 3.2.2 Unacceptable Behavior

##### 3.2.2.1 Academic behavior that is unacceptable, but is not limited to:

- Copying or allowing one to copy another student's work
- Using any method to receive or provide quiz, test, or assignment information outside of parameters
- Copying information from a source without citation
- Misrepresenting one's own work

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. All forms of test procedure violation, cheating, and plagiarism are prohibited. Violations of academic honesty policies will be disciplined on a case-by-case basis depending on the severity of the violation, prior violations, and other factors determined by School administration. Disciplinary measures for academic dishonesty may include but are not limited to:

- Receiving a zero on the assignment
- Re-doing the assignment
- Sport or extra-curricular ineligibility
- Detention
- Suspension
- Expulsion

3.2.2.2 Behavior that is unacceptable, but is not limited to:

**Bullying and Harassment:**

Harassment including bullying, is considered a severe infraction. The result of such behavior in or outside of school hours will consist of the student being sent immediately to School administration. Therefore, consequences up to and including expulsion, shall be taken against any person who engages in any type of harassment including electronic harassment (cyber bullying – see below). Harassment, including bullying, consist of but is not limited to the following:

- Unwelcome and/or persistent behavior that makes a person feel threatened, humiliated, uncomfortable, or unsafe
- Verbal conduct such as racial slurs, the use of vulgar or obscene language, derogatory jokes or comments, social ostracizing, or personally damaging statements made about others
- Behavior that is sexually or lewd in nature, including sexual advances, physical contact, and other verbal, physical, or visual conduct of a sexual nature
- Behavior that is intimidating, including but not limited to, threatening gestures, assault, unwanted touching, and blocking of normal movement that interferes with another’s work, study, or play.

**Cyber-bullying**

Cyber-Bullying is defined as the use of the Internet, cell phone or other electronic device to send or post messages, comments, texts, and/or visual images intended to hurt or embarrass another person. Cyber-bullying includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Cruel instant computer messaging or threatening emails
- Mean, repeated cell phone text or app messaging
- Creating a website or online posts for the purpose of mocking community members
- Posting “photo-shopped” or digitally modified images of community members
- Forwarding private photos, videos, or texts to other individuals
- Pretending to be someone else electronically

### 3.3 Behavioral Notification

Students may receive two types of notifications of rules infractions.

SMALL FORMS are given for minor infractions of school policy or classroom/school rules. Examples may include excessive talking, dress code violation, unkind words or actions, etc. These infractions may or may not be assigned a formal consequence at the discretion of school staff and administration.

LONG FORMS are given for more serious offenses, as well as when 3 small forms have been given to one student within a school year. When a student receives a Long Form, the student will be sent to the school administration and a consequence will be assigned, at the discretion of the School administration. Examples of infractions that constitute an immediate Long Form may include: fights, bullying, stealing, cheating, vandalizing school property, smoking, weapon possession, etc.

### 3.4 Consequences

The School reserves the right to assign appropriate consequences at the discretion of the School administration. Three Small Forms equals a Long Form and an appropriate consequence will be assigned. Additionally, consequences may be assigned for any infraction which will be documented through a Short Form or Long Form at the discretion of the school administration. Consequences may include:

- Silent lunch
- Recess Detention
- End of lunch duty
- In-School Isolation
- In-School Suspension
- Ineligibility
- Suspension
- Expulsion

Suspension – It is the philosophy of this school that every child should be privileged to attend classes every day of the school year in order to receive thorough instructions in all subject areas. However, under certain circumstances, it may become necessary to suspend a student from school attendance. When a student is suspended, he/she will receive a zero in every class for each day of suspension. He/she will be allowed to make up tests and quizzes. A student who has been suspended may not participate in any school or extra-curricular activities during his/her suspension. Furthermore, a student who has received major disciplinary action may not be allowed to hold Student Council office.

Expulsion – Expulsion is an extremely serious matter. Expulsion may take place for the following infractions, but not limited to:

- Possession of controlled substance
- Possession of any type of weapon
- Drinking or any possession of alcohol

- Parent behavior or actions that cause a disruption to the school and/or appropriate delivery of curriculum
- Violation of harassment policies
- Accumulated suspensions
- Behavior deemed unacceptable at the discretion of the School administration.

### 3.5 Lockers and Backpacks

The School reserves the right to view the contents of student lockers, cubbies, and backpacks without prior notification. Similarly, the school reserves the right to conduct unannounced checks of student laptops and student use of the Internet and all that this implies.

### 3.6 Care of School Property

All buildings, equipment, supplies, materials, and books are considered to be the property of Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School. Students who cause damage to such property will be assessed all costs to cover repair and/or replacement, at the discretion of School administration. Students may also be subject to disciplinary action in addition to fee charged.

### 3.7 Drugs and Controlled Substances

The use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful.

A student on school property or attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity is subject to removal from class, suspension, expulsion, and/or referred for prosecution if he/she:

- Uses a chemical substance, possessing for consumption, sale or dispensing of illegal drugs and narcotics (hard or soft drugs; alcohol, inhalers, marijuana, or a controlled substance).
- Acts under the influences of an illegal drug, alcohol, narcotic, marijuana, or a controlled substance.
- Misuses or overdoses on prescription or over-the-counter medication

Upon the discovery of a drug-related situation, the Principal reports the incident to the superintendent, and notifies parent/guardian immediately, and requests a conference. After the conference with the parent/guardian and student, the student is subject to removal from class, suspension, expulsion, or referral for prosecution. A recommendation to the parents/guardians is made for evaluation and possible treatment for the student.



### 3.8 Weapons & Firearms

The unlawful possession, and/or use or concealment of a weapon/firearm is prohibited. A weapon is any instrument which may produce serious bodily harm or death. A student on school property or attending a school-sponsored or school-related activity may be subject to removal from class, suspension, expulsion, and/or referred for prosecution if he/she possesses, uses, or conceals a weapon/firearm.

Upon discovery of a weapon/firearm, the Principal will immediately confiscate the weapon, remove the student from class, and notify the parent/guardian and the proper authorities as warranted.

## **4 INSTRUCTION, GRADING, & COMMUNICATION**

### **4.1 Instructional Program**

The core curriculum of Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School complies with the time allotment and subject requirements of the Texas Education Agency (TEA), Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department (TCCB ED), and the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. Various education and athletic opportunities are available to our students as electives are extracurricular activities.

### **4.2 Communication & Conferences**

All available school resources shall be utilized to promote student success. Lines of communication will be kept open to inform parents of student's progress in all areas. Concerns about a student will be addressed initially by the classroom teacher and parent. In the event concerns continue, referrals for additional assistance and resources may be pursued through the school counselor or School administration.

Appointments with the administration and/or with teachers need to be scheduled in advance. A teacher attempts to return phone calls and emails within 24 hours during the school week. Please note that messages left for teachers may not be retrieved until the close of the school day.

**WEDNESDAY FOLDERS** – Students in Grade PreK-5 will bring home a school folder on Wednesday of each week. The folder will contain communications from the office, weekly, reports on progress and behavior, and student's work. Please review this with your child. Parents are required to provide a signature as acknowledgement and return the folders on Thursday.

#### **4.2.1 Parent Conferences**

Your child's progress is important to us. Teachers are available to discuss issues during the regular school day by appointment only. Contact the school office, send a note with your child or email the teacher to request a phone call or a conference. Teachers will attempt to return calls or email within 24 hours of receipt of the message during the school week. Mandatory parent/teacher conferences are held twice a year, once before school starts and the second in the fall. An optional conference is scheduled in the spring as needed or requested by either the teacher or parent. Students in grade 4-8 are expected to attend these conferences with parents.

#### **4.2.2 Intervention Conferences**

Parents of students who are experiencing academic, social, and/or behavioral problems may be asked to conference with the team of teachers and administrators who work with the students daily. The student may be asked to attend the conference when appropriate.

### **4.3 Reports**

Formal progress reports and report cards for all grades will be made available electronically at the midpoint and quarter ends appropriately. Report dates are indicated on the school calendar.

PreK students will only receive quarter end reports

Kinder – 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will receive progress reports and quarter end reports

Students success can only be attained through cooperation between parents and educators. If it is determined that the school's resources cannot meet the needs of a student or if parents/guardians fail to act on the school's recommendations for remediation or diagnostic evaluation, the Principal may request withdrawal of the student or deny admission for the following year.

#### 4.4 Grading & Report Card

The school year is divided into 4 nine-week quarters. As much as possible, every grade given, both academic and conduct will be the result of an honest and careful evaluation of all phases of the student's work and effort.

All students will receive report cards at the end of each quarter. These dates are noted on the school calendar.

##### Grading Scale (2<sup>nd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade)

100 – 93	A
92 – 86	B
85 – 78	C
77 – 70	D
Below 70	F

##### Skill Set (PrK – 1<sup>st</sup>) & Character and Work Habits Scale

EE	Exceeds Expectations
ME	Meets Expectations
BE	Below Expectations
N/A	Not Applicable – Objective not taught yet

##### 4.4.1 Number & Weight of Grades (2<sup>nd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>)

For Grades 2-5, subjects that are taught daily a minimum of two grades per week must be recorded in the gradebook. Subjects that are taught every other day must have at least 10 grades during the 9 weeks.

Teachers have 1 week to grade assignments and post them to the grade book.

Grades 2-4:

- 40% Major Grades: Tests, Projects, etc. (minimum of three per nine weeks)
- 30% Daily Grades: Classwork, quizzes (minimum of 10-12 per nine weeks)
- 10% Homework (minimum of 8-10 per nine weeks)
- 20% Participation Grades (minimum of 5-6 per nine weeks)

Grades 5-8:

- 50% Major Grades (minimum of three per nine weeks)
- 25 % Minor Grades (minimum of 5-6 per nine weeks)
- 15% Daily Grades (minimum of 5-6 per nine weeks)
- 10% Homework/Participation (minimum of 5-6 per nine weeks)

Grades 6 – 8 will take Mid-Term and Final exams. Because these exams are typically days before the Christmas or Summer breaks, exams may not be taken after the exam date. Exceptions and alternative plans may be made on a case-by-case basis between family and school administration.

For Elementary and Middle School, in the subjects of Art, Health, PE, Music, Spanish, and STEM the average grade is based on a minimum of one grade per week.

Teachers will not give extra credit without approval from school administration.

#### 4.4.2 Homework and Assignment Submittal

##### Classwork:

Classwork must be completed and submitted for grading within the allotted time as assigned by teacher. Any classwork not submitted within the allotted time will be scored with a maximum score of 50. If/when classwork is considered late is at the discretion of the teacher and school administration.

##### Homework:

Homework must be completed and submitted for grading within the allotted time as assigned by the teacher. Any homework not submitted within the allotted time will be scored with a maximum score as shown below:

On time—100

1 day late —85

2 days late—75

3 days late—50

4<sup>th</sup> day—0

## 4.5 Promotion & Retention

A student is promoted if, considering his/her abilities, he/she satisfactorily completed the work of the current grade. Promotion from Early Childhood shall be based upon accomplishing the required essential curriculum elements as well as progress made in social, emotional, and physical growth.

### 4.5.1 Retention

A student may not be retained more than twice from grades K-8 and no more than once in the same grade. The School should make every effort, within the capabilities of the School program, to provide alternative programs or adjust the regular program for children with special needs.

If a student receives a cumulative grade below 70, the student fails the subject. If a core subject is failed, the student may be recommended for retention. Parents must be informed of the likelihood of a student's academic failure and possible retention before the end of the school year.

If all avenues have been explored, and the school is unable to meet the needs of the student, or the parent/guardian has not acted on the School's recommendations regarding diagnostic evaluation and/or treatment/intervention, the School has the right to request withdrawal of the student (if currently enrolled) or to refuse re-admittance.

#### 4.6 Homework Policy

If a student is unable to come to school due to illness, the parent/guardian is expected to notify the school office and request homework assignments by 9 a.m. for grades 1 -5. It is the student's responsibility in grades 6-8 to obtain notes for missed class time. Homework assignments for middle school should be accessed on ParentsWeb or Google Classroom. Absences of more than three days should be communicated to school administration.

Epiphany Catholic School (ECS) policy does require homework which includes both written assignments and review/study of material presented in class. There is no absolute minimum or maximum length of time per evening, as each student's needs and ability will dictate the amount of time needed to complete home assignments or study projects and maintain or master basic skills. Assignments may be given which are due over a period of time. It is the student's responsibility to plan for adequate progress on a continual basis thus avoiding last minute completion.

Each student in grade 2-5 is given a planner/assignment book to record his/her daily assignments, tests, and projects. Many parents verify completion of homework by initialing the planner/assignment book.

All students are expected to have homework completed and turned in on time.

Frequent failure to complete homework assignments will seriously affect the student's grade and a parent-teacher-student conference may be requested.

#### 4.7 Record Request

Parents/Guardians who wish to send records to another school or to a physician's office must sign a Record Release Form in the front office. All records request must go through the front office.

#### 4.8 Record Viewing

All parent/guardian wishing to view student records must make the request in writing 24 hours in advance.

Epiphany Catholic School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order and/or divorce decree.

#### 4.9 Standardized Testing

All students, 1<sup>st</sup> grade and up attending Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston participate in the Iowa Assessment in the late Spring of each year. These scores are used to assess our academic programs plus drive and small group, extension, and re-teaching opportunities the following academic year.

## 5 PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

### 5.1 Expectations of Parent/Legal Guardian

The education of your child is a collaboration between parent/guardian, the child, and the School. ECS is committed to employing certified, professional, and dedicated teachers who have the training and skills to provide an education which is centered on Catholic values, healthy character, and academic development.

In order to demonstrate your commitment, full support and cooperation with the faculty and staff of Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School in this partnership, we request that you meet the following expectations:

- Be a supportive partner with the School and provide assistance and support to your child(ren) as needed for academic and social success, and hold your child(ren) responsible for his/her own actions.
- Understand and support the spiritual mission and identify of the school.
- Read all communication from the school and request clarification when necessary.
- Participate in all parent-teacher conference dates and requests.
- Obey all classroom rules, guidelines, and procedures and encourage your child(ren) to do so as well.
- Discuss concerns or problems with the appropriate School personnel, rather than other community members.
- Follow Line-of-Authority procedures (see below) when a problem or question arises.
- Demonstrate thoughtful stewardship by being actively involved with the life of the school.
- Understand all students, families, and community members are responsible for the good name of the school. Inappropriate behavior outside of school is not acceptable and may have consequences within school.
- Honor financial obligations to the school and participate in School Development events.
- Arrive on time each day for morning and afternoon carpool.
- Monitor your child(ren)'s use of TV, computers, video games, social networking sites and other media.
- Sign in at the front office and wear badge while visiting the school.
- Refrain from bringing any device on campus that would threaten school and student safety, such as a firearm or knife.
- Refrain from calling, texting, or messaging students in any form during the school day.
- No one may use school name, logo, or motto on any type of social media or in any other form.
- All volunteers must be Safe Haven certified.
- Trust that the School is doing everything in their power to facilitate your child(ren) to reach their potential.

We acknowledge we are not the school for every child or every family. We will exercise the right to ask families to withdrawal prior to expulsion if any of the above expectations are gravely breaches, at the discretion of School administration.

## 5.2 Line of Authority & Appeals Process

- If a serious discipline problem arises which calls for consequences for your child, you as parent/guardian will be notified.
- Day-to-day classroom situations must be handled with the teachers first. The parent should contact the teacher first when redressing any matter.
- If the matter cannot be satisfactorily settled with the teacher, the parent has recourse to the Assistant Principal, and finally to the Principal.

Appointments with the teacher can be made by emailing the teacher, or calling the office and leaving a message. All matters will first be discussed with the teacher. The Assistant Principal will only conference with the parent after a meeting with the teacher is held. The Principal is the final authority.

## 5.3 School Advisory Board

The School Advisory Board (SAB) consist of at least seven people who are appointed by the Pastor after a discernment process. The purpose of this group is to advise the Pastor and the Principal in areas dealing directly with general policy, budgeting, and finances of the school.

Scheduled meetings are found in the annual school calendar. Parental attendance is always welcomed and encouraged. Parents wishing to speak must contact the Chairperson at least one week prior to the meeting in order to be added to the agenda. Guests speaking to SAB will not receive a response during that meeting, but will receive a written response within 10 business days of the meeting.

## 5.4 Parents Association

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School recognizes that volunteers are valued members of our school community. The Parents Association (P.A.) is the parent volunteer service organization of the school which assists the school in activities during the year. The P.A. Welcome Coffee is generally held during the first week of school and volunteer sign-up opportunities are available.

## 5.5 Annual Fund Drive

Parents are selected to chair the annual Magi Fund for a two-year period. The chairs actively seek contributions from all parents of the school as well as parishioners and community members. It is the goal of Epiphany Catholic School to achieve 100% school family participation in Annual Fund Drive. In order to encourage support, classes which attain 100% participation are listed in the school newsletter and awarded a special party.



## 6 TECHNOLOGY & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

### 6.1 Technology Acceptable Use Policy Agreement (for Parents & Students)

Epiphany Catholic School (ECS) offers students access to technology resources for educational purposes, which may include computer hardware and software licensed to the school. To gain access to the technology resources, all students must obtain parental permission as verified by the signatures on the Permission for Internet Usage, Media Release, & Parent-Student Handbook Acknowledgement located on the last page of this handbook. Should a parent prefer that a student not have internet access, use of the computer is still possible for more traditional purposes such as word processing. However, all students without parental permission will not be able to go to the computer lab nor participate in projects which require research. Research will have to be done outside of school hours.

### 6.2 Internet Access

Internet access will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, museums, and other repositories of information and to exchange personal communication with other internet users around the world. Families should be aware that some material accessible via the Internet may contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive. While the purpose of the school technology and Internet access is for constructive purposes, students may find ways to access other materials. The school has a firewall that prevents students from entering inappropriate sites and is continuously updated. The school believes that the benefits to students from access to the Internet outweigh the disadvantages. However, ultimately the parents/guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. Therefore, the school supports and respects each family's right to decide whether to allow for access.

### 6.3 Expectations

Whether occurring within or outside of school, when a student's use of technology jeopardizes the safe environment of the school, staff or students, or is contrary to Gospel values, the student can be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences including the expulsion of the student.

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computer network just as they are in a classroom or anywhere on campus. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communication apply. It is expected that users will comply with Archdiocesan standards and the specific rules set forth. The use of technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the school's technology resources. The students are expected to never access, keep, or send anything that they would not want their parents or teachers to see.

Electronic Communication – Students may not use electronic communication in a way that jeopardizes the safe environment of the school, staff, or students or is contrary to Gospel values.

This policy applies to all forms of electronic communications or depictions whether they occur through the school's equipment or connectivity resources or through private communication.

Personal Safety and Personal Privacy – Student will not post personal contact information about themselves or others unless otherwise indicated in the user agreement and parent permission form. Personal contact information includes their address, telephone, school address, etc. This information may not be provided to an individual, organization, or company, including websites that solicit personal information.

Social Networking – Accessing social networking websites and/or applications, except those used for educational purposes and as directed, are off-limits on school property. The use of circumventors to get around school network security is prohibited.

Illegal Copying – Students should never download or install any commercial software, shareware, or freeware onto network drives, external devices or cloud-based storage. Nor should students copy other individual's work or intrude into other individual's files. The download/upload of any material in violation of any U.S., State, Board, Archdiocesan, or school policy is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted materials, threatening, violent, obscene material, or material protected by trade secret.

Inappropriate materials or language – No profane, abusive, slanderous, bullying, or impolite language or images should be used to communicate, nor should materials be accessed which are not in line with the rules of school behavior. Use of technology resources for anything other than educational purposes is also prohibited. Should students encounter inappropriate materials by accident, they should report it to their teacher immediately. A good rule to follow is never view, send, distribute, or access materials or images, which you would not want your teachers and parents to see. Use of any electronic device to transmit unacceptable language, images, and/or photos that are harmful to self or others is prohibited.

### **Succinct Advice**

These are guidelines to follow to prevent the loss of technology privileges and/or disciplinary measures at the school.

1. Do not use technology to harm self, other people, or their work.
2. Do not damage the network or any technology resources in any way.
3. Do not interfere with the network or computer operation by installing any form of software or permitting the spread of computer viruses.
4. Do not violate any copyright laws.
5. Do not view, send, distribute, or display offensive or bullying messages or images.
6. Do not share your passwords/personal information or obtain/share another persons' password/personal information.
7. Do not waste technology resources such as storage space or printing supplies.
8. Do not trespass in another's folders, work, or files.
9. Notify an adult immediately, if by accident, you encounter materials, which violate the Rules of Appropriate Use.
10. Do not attempt to circumvent network filters or security in any way.
11. Be prepared to be held accountable for your actions and for the loss of privileges if the Rules of Appropriate Use are violated.

## 7 Athletics

### 7.1 SCHOOL ATHLETIC PROGRAM

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School sponsors interscholastic athletic programs for our 5th - 8th grade students directed by employed coaches.

It is our philosophy that athletics should teach fair play, sportsmanship, and an understanding and appreciation of teamwork.

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School participates within the Galveston-Houston Catholic Athletic Association (GHCAA) and administers the policies set forth by its governing body.

### 7.2 GALVESTON-HOUSTON CATHOLIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

All affiliated schools agree to the following goals:

- To build a community which strives to image Christ.
- To develop Christian spirit, school spirit, team spirit, and personal acceptance.
- To instill Christian sportsmanship in the lifestyles of the participants.
- To teach the participants the proper attitude towards winning, losing, and competing with dignity.
- To develop an acceptance and appreciation of others.
- To train and instruct in athletic rules.
- To develop the student's physical abilities and coordination.
- To help form well-rounded students by fostering good and healthy habits.
- To provide a Christian environment and outlet for youthful energy.
- To teach the positive value of athletic participation.
- To show the necessity of practice, work, and management of time.

These goals are founded upon the principle of the infinite worth of each person because he/she is created in the image and likeness of God.

### 7.3 ATHLETIC POLICY

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School Athletics are offered to student-athletes as an enhancement to the academic environment of the school. It is an extension of the curriculum. Decisions concerning the athletic program will be the responsibility of the administration and coaching staff. Parent involvement or participation will be at the discretion and with the approval of the administration and coaching staff.

The ECS Athletic Department may offer the following sports depending on participation numbers:

Fall Season: Soccer (Co-ed); Cross Country (Boys and Girls); Cheerleading; and Volleyball (Girls)

Winter Season: Basketball (Boys and Girls)

Spring Season: Track (Boys and Girls)

Student-athletes are allowed to participate in ONLY ONE school sport per season. Each coach expects full commitment to the school team each season. Outside sports, including Parish sports and club sports, are not school-sanctioned activities and are expected to be a secondary priority.

## 7.4 RESPONSIBILITIES

7.4.1 The Athletic Director is responsible to the Principal and:

- Manages all operations of the athletic program including but not limited to hiring coaches with
- Principal approval, scheduling practices, games, referees, and transportation for all sports teams.
- Works with the faculty and administration to ensure that the programs are consistent with the goals of Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School.
- Coaches are responsible to the Athletic Director and are expected:
- To set guidelines for the particular sport, of which the athlete will be made aware at the onset of the season.
- To provide accurate and timely information concerning practice and game dates and times to parents/guardians, the Athletic Director and the Principal.
- To provide a learning environment for skill acquisition and progression of skill development.

7.4.2 Players are responsible to the Coach and are expected:

- To be representative of ECS while participating in an interscholastic event and to conduct themselves in a manner commensurate with the guidelines set forth by the coach and the Student-Parent Handbook. In the event a player cannot live up to these responsibilities he/she may be asked to withdraw from the sport.
- To be on time for practices and games, to behave in a sportsmanlike manner, to exhibit leadership qualities, and to exercise self-control.
- To be respectful of him/herself, his/her team, and the coach, and to be supportive of them.
- To be held accountable for his/her actions on the playing field while representing ECS.
- To check with the coach before leaving the practice/game site.

7.4.3 Parents/legal guardians are expected:

- To be supportive of each player, team, and coach.
- To limit “stand-talk” to positive comments.
- To dialogue with players after games, not during.
- To make an appointment to dialogue with a coach about problems rather than to speak to him/her at a game site.
- To attend a parent meeting at the beginning of each season.
- To ensure that their child has transportation to and from away games when necessary.

## 7.5 CODE OF CONDUCT

The conduct of a student-athlete at Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School is closely observed in many areas of everyday life. It is important that the actions of the student-athlete are above reproach at all times.

In the area of athletic competition, the student-athlete must be gracious in defeat, modest in victory, maintain complete control of him/herself at all times, never use profanity, and never resort to fighting or illegal tactics.

The student-athlete should set forth the example for all students by following the policies set forth by the school, the administration, and individual teachers. The behavior pattern is also expected in the hallways, in the locker room, on the playground, in the parking lot, etc.

It is expected that the student-athlete and spectators will adhere to the rules and regulations as may be established by the school and that the student-athlete will respect the rights, privileges, and property of other members of the school community.

At athletic events, the student-athlete represents himself/herself and the Epiphany of the Lord Parish and School Community as a whole. It is expected that all concerned, coaches, athletes, parents/guardians, siblings, and all fans/visitors will behave in an acceptable manner.

Student-athletes are responsible for their own conduct, and violation of established rules and regulations may subject them to disciplinary measures or dismissal from the athletic team.

Discipline is the responsibility of the head coach and the athletic director; however, it is imperative that all policies of the school administration be strictly followed.

## 7.6 ATTENDANCE

Student-athletes are expected to attend all practices, games, meets, tournaments, and team meetings. All team events are considered standard and mandatory. Exceptions may be made on an individual basis by the coach and the athletic director.

Other absences from team events are considered unexcused unless he/she is absent from school.

If the student-athlete misses the practice the day preceding competition without an excuse, he/she should not expect to participate in the competition the next day. Only doctor's appointments will constitute an excused absence.

Excessive absences can result in dismissal from the team. A student-athlete will receive a warning prior to dismissal.

The student-athlete's priority is being a student. Student-athletes should always be present and on time to school. The student-athlete must be present for at least four hours of school to be eligible for competition on that day (in attendance by 11:30 am).

## 7.7 ELIGIBILITY

Parent athletic meetings will be held at the beginning of each sports season on an individual team basis. Attendance of at least one parent/guardian is mandatory. This requirement must be met prior to the student-athlete participating in competition. Parents/legal guardians unable to attend meetings may request an appointment with the coaching staff only under extenuating circumstances.

An athletic fee for each sport is required for a student-athlete to participate on an athletic team: the fees vary and are non-refundable. The fee must be paid before teams are formed.

All student-athletes will be required to receive a physical exam prior to the first day of school, valid within a year. He or she will not be allowed to participate or try out until all forms are returned to the athletic office.

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School Athletics are offered to student-athletes as an enhancement to the academic environment of the school. It is an extension of the curriculum. Decisions concerning the athletic program will be the responsibility of the Administration, Athletic Director, and the Coaching Staff.

Each student participating in an extracurricular activity is expected to meet the minimum academic and conduct standards of ECS. Students may be ruled ineligible for athletics if they fail to meet any of the following criteria:

- A student-athlete may not have any more than two D's (70%-77%) in any subjects.
- A student-athlete may not fail (69% or below) any subject.
- A student-athlete may not have a conduct grade of two N's or one U in any subject

Additionally, serious infractions in academics and conduct may lead to immediate removal from the team as determined by the administration.

Eligibility criteria will be checked throughout each season. Student-athletes who fail to meet eligibility criteria will not be subject to ineligibility after meeting with administration. Length of ineligibility will be determined on a case-by-case basis by school administration.

Student-Athletes may regain eligibility once the minimum criteria are met.

## 7.8 TEAM SELECTION/PRACTICE/GAME DAY POLICY

Team selection will be conducted by the coaches for each sport.

Practice schedules are prepared by the head coach. Student-athletes are expected to be on time to all team events. Student-athletes who continually miss practices may be dropped from the team. Playing time is determined by the coaches.

Coaches are instructed to be honest with parents/guardians and student-athletes regarding the following:

- Ability

- Positive response to coaching
- Learning opportunities
- Playing time

Student-athletes who are selected for a team should not expect to participate in competition simply based on making a team. Playing time will be based on practice, participation, and performance at the coaches' discretion.

### **Failure to Complete a Season**

If a student-athlete leaves a sport of his/her own will, after being selected for a team, it will be noted on file and considered in future tryouts. Making a team means making a commitment to the overall athletic program.

The ECS Athletic Department understands unforeseen circumstances and will determine the following as acceptable reasons to leave a team:

- Failing grades
- Illness
- Extended absence

All other reasons will be reviewed by the coaching staff and administration.

## **7.9 EQUIPMENT**

Epiphany of the Lord Catholic School is responsible for providing the facilities and equipment needed for practices and games. Additional or special equipment for personal needs should be purchased on an individual basis.

School-issued uniforms and equipment are to be used for all ECS athletic events. The wearing of athletic uniforms in physical education classes is unacceptable. Equipment and uniforms should only be worn for the specific athletic event. They must be returned in good condition at the end of the season, or the student-athlete will be assessed a fee to replace the damaged (or lost) uniform or equipment. Student-athletes are responsible for furnishing their own shoes, knee pads, shin guards, and socks. Individual teams may request a separate fee to purchase team packages which may include some of the preceding items and including warm-ups, bags, or other team-identifying equipment.

## **7.10 GRIEVANCE**

The ECS Athletic Department encourages open communication between parent/guardian, student-athletes, and coaches. The coaching staff welcomes comments and questions concerning athletic teams. If a parent/legal guardian would like to meet with the coaching staff of a particular sport, the athletic director and coaching staff will be present.

Parents should wait 24 hours after an incident occurs to approach the coaching staff. Coaches will not discuss an incident before, during, or after competitions. Parents should contact the athletic office to schedule a meeting with the appropriate coaching staff.

## 7.11 TRANSPORTATION

Parents/legal guardians are expected to transport student-athletes to and from athletic events. At times, the school may provide bus transportation for athletes to and/or from games. Parents/legal guardians who are continually late should make arrangements, in advance, to have their child picked up on time. If a parent/legal guardian is late more than twice a season and has been warned by the head coach, his/her student-athlete may be suspended from the following competition date. Extenuating circumstances will be determined by the head coach and the athletic director.

## 7.12 PARISH SPORTS PROGRAM

Athletics at ECS begin in the early grades through a parish-wide sponsored program coached by volunteer parents. All volunteer coaches must be Safe Haven certified. This program, generally available through the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, attempts to maximize participation for our young people from our entire parish.