



EPIPHANY
LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

FAMILY HANDBOOK

2023-2024

Engage + Encourage + Enrich

THE MISSION STATEMENT OF EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

We, at Epiphany, are God's servants, called and committed to Engage, Encourage, and Enrich His family.

ELS PURPOSE STATEMENT:

We prepare learners for life through opportunities for growth in a Christian environment.

ELS VISION STATEMENT:

Our vision for students is to develop learners who are:

- Growing in their faith and discovering God's calling in their lives
- Fostering meaningful connections with Christ and our Epiphany family
- Thinking critically and collaborating with others to overcome any challenge
- Equipped for the future through innovative and educational experiences
- Making a positive impact in our school and the community

ELS CORE VALUES:

- Christ-centered – We help create a cohesive environment where students are immersed in a safe, Christ-centered community so everyone can fulfill their purpose successfully.
- Family – We have a rich family culture founded on respect and grace in every interaction. Students of all ages are connected through family groups and shared campus experiences.
- Student-focused – Our approach to learning allows our team to foster the individual academic, emotional, and spiritual needs of each student.
- Growth – We provide a high-quality education that focuses on growth and discovery in a positive, nurturing, and innovative environment.
- Service – We help our community by preparing students to serve Christ and their neighbor within Epiphany's walls and beyond.

WHAT DO WE BELIEVE?

- God has commanded us to teach, reach out, and disciple.
- A Lutheran school is an effective agency of the Church in teaching God's plan for our salvation to young Christians.
- God's Word in Scripture is our source of truth – our guide.
- A proper use of law and gospel is vital to the nurturing of faith development.
- God values each individual in His creation. We do too.
- People are spiritual beings. Therefore, in order to develop the whole person, meeting spiritual needs must be a part of the education process.
- We care about the effectiveness of the teaching/learning process.
- Professional Christian teachers are important role models for children. They freely witness to God's love.
- A home and school partnership works together for the benefit of the child.

STATEMENT OF BELIEF REGARDING MARRIAGE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY

Epiphany Lutheran Church and School (ELCS) believes and teaches that the Bible is the inerrant word of God. We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, after our likeness, so they may rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move on the earth." God created humankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them, male and female he created them. Genesis 1:26-27

We believe that the term marriage has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture.

Then the Lord God made a woman from the part he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This one at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one will be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." That is why a man leaves his father and mother and unites with his wife, and they become one family. Genesis 2:22-24

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

Flee sexual immorality! Every sin a person commits is outside of the body—but the immoral person sins against his own body. 1 Corinthians 6:18

But because of immoralities, each man should have relations with his own wife and each woman with her own husband. 1 Corinthians 7:2

Marriage must be honored among all and the marriage bed kept undefiled, for God will judge sexually immoral people and adulterers. Hebrews 13:4

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God.

But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these things defile a person. For out of the heart come evil ideas, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. Matthew 15:18-19

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! The sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, passive homosexual partners, practicing homosexuals, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, the verbally abusive, and swindlers will not inherit the kingdom of God. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

We believe that to preserve the function and integrity of ELCS as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the ELCS members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by ELCS in any capacity agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality.

In the same way, let your light shine before people, so that they can see your good deeds and give honor to your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:16

Stay away from every form of evil. 1 Thessalonians 5:22

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

Because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and thus has righteousness and with the mouth one confesses and thus has salvation. Romans 10: 9-10

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity, and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of ELCS.

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second is: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these. Mark 12:30-31

Treat others in the same way that you would want them to treat you. Luke 6:31

Although ELCS does not require parents or families to personally agree with Epiphany's foundational statements of belief regarding marriage, gender, and sexuality, ELCS does require parents and families to agree that their children will be taught according to Epiphany's foundational statements and avoid being vocally or openly in opposition to Epiphany's foundational statements.

Parts taken from Protecting Your Ministry: A Legal Guide for LCMS Congregations, Schools, and Ministries

ACCREDITATION

Epiphany Lutheran School is accredited by the Texas District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS), the National Lutheran Schools Accreditation (NLSA), and a member of the Texas Private Schools Association (TPSA).

Epiphany is administered according to the State of Texas's required standards of elementary education. Teaching personnel are state certified, and all teachers follow our plan for continuing education. Qualified, Christian teachers teach God's Word together with a prescribed course of study leading to readiness in entrance into high school. We have a School Action Plan that also contributes to our strategic plan. This is part of the accreditation process.

ADMINISTRATION

Epiphany Lutheran School is a ministry of Epiphany Lutheran Church, a congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The congregation elects a chairman of the School Board, and members of the School Board are appointed by the chairman. The congregation delegates much of its authority, relative to developing policies and procedures for the operation of the school, to the School Board for efficiency. The School Board is responsible to the congregation. The School Board in turn delegates responsibility for implementing the school policies to the principal.

ADVANCED MATH CLASSES

Students who are significantly ahead of their peers can take advanced math classes. To qualify initially, students in second through sixth grade must score at the 95th percentile on MAP testing, demonstrate good work ethic, and have parental support for advancement. Students entering seventh and eighth grade must have teacher recommendation to advance.

Students who qualify will attend math class with students who are a grade ahead of them. To continue qualifying for this advanced class a student must maintain at least an 85% in the class and demonstrate good work ethic by turning in assignments on time. The first academic quarter serves as a probationary time during which the student may return to his/her regular math class. After the first quarter a student must remain in the class and accept the grade earned.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

In addition to our sports programs, Epiphany hosts a variety of After School Activities for our students. Information on how to sign up will be available at the beginning of each school year. Please contact school office with all questions. Some activities will require payment from families to the specific group. Note: After school activities may be subject to change from year to year. Any group interested in hosting an after school event must be approved by the principal and can contact the school office for more information.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Morning drop-off – Drop off is between 7:45 AM and 7:55 AM. Cars enter the parking lot from the West Rd entrance. Drivers have two choices:

- Drive under the covered walkway and let students exit the vehicle.
- Park your vehicle in the designated area (see Parking Map) and walk with the student using the crosswalk. Do NOT allow your student to walk across the parking lot by themselves.

In the event of rain, we encourage all families to drop off students under our covered walkway.

Late Arrivals – Must be dropped off at the school office entrance to receive a tardy slip.

Afternoon pick-up -- Classes will be dismissed at 3:20 PM. Students will be picked up the under the covered walkway.

Normally, only adults listed on the school registration form can pick up students from school. Parents may give permission for other adults to pick up their child by providing written notice to the office and teacher by 2:00 PM.

Please refrain from using your mobile phone while driving in the parking lot.

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is essential to the progress of every student. School work begins upon arrival, so punctuality increases learning and decreases the disruption of the other students' learning. Parents are expected to work with their children to ensure that they are present and on time for school. Attendance is included on each student's report card to help parents see how consistently their child has been in school.

When a student is absent for any reason, parents are asked to notify the school office no later than **9:00 a.m.** If no notification is received, parents will be called to verify the absence of any child missing from school. Parents must send a written note (or email) to the school explaining the reason for a student's absence upon returning to school. A doctor's release may be required in cases of serious or contagious illness. Parents are encouraged to schedule medical and dental appointments outside of school hours whenever possible. If a student must leave school for an appointment, the teacher and the office should be notified in advance.

If your student will be absent for a period of time, parents of elementary students may email their homeroom teacher to request daily assignments. These assignments may be picked up at the school office during office hours. Middle school students may email their teachers accordingly.

Students are on time if they are inside the classroom by 7:55 AM. Students who are tardy five (5) times in a quarter will be marked absent for a day. A student who accumulates ten (10) absences in a school year will be asked to meet with the teacher and/or principal to work on a plan moving forward.

Note: Students unable to attend school due to illness (including leaving school early) are not to participate in or otherwise attend afterschool functions. For example, a student leaving at noon with a fever is not to show up at a sporting event or after school event that day.

BACKPACKS AND BAGS

We work to help students stay organized evaluate what they really need to carry from school to home. That results in a bare minimum of material needing transport. All backpacks and bags brought to school must be able to fit in a standard locker.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Students enrolled in Epiphany are automatically enrolled in the before and after school care program. The rules and procedures are very similar to that of a classroom setting. Both before and after care programs charge \$8 per hour. Before care runs from 7:00 AM to 7:45 AM. The after-care program runs from 3:20 PM to 6:00 PM. A late charge of one dollar per minute is applied for any student picked up after 6:00 PM sharp.

CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students may bring cell phones or other electronic devices to school, but these **must be put away and out of sight in the backpack or locker during the school day (7:45-3:20)**. Students may not use their devices without permission from a staff member. Students may use the school office phone to call parents if needed. We request that parents refrain from communicating with their student on these devices during the school day.

CHAPEL SERVICES

An age-appropriate chapel service is held on Wednesdays from 12:45 to 1:15 PM. The children learn from these chapel services how to properly conduct themselves in the House of God. The lessons are Gospel oriented with proper distinction of Law and Gospel. The children's offering is directed to missions and charitable organizations. Parents are invited and encouraged to join us for this weekly worship experience.

CITIZENSHIP

Students will daily recite the pledges to the American, Texas, and Christian flags. Instruction will be given relating to the freedoms and responsibilities that we enjoy as Americans and as Christians. Students will be given opportunities to use their talents and gifts in service to others.

CLASS CELEBRATIONS

A parent may bring a class treat for a child's birthday. Please schedule with the teacher. Invitations to out-of-school birthday celebrations and parties may not be distributed at school, unless the entire class is invited. This simple courtesy will prevent many hurt feelings.

Epiphany Lutheran School recognizes three celebrations per year: Christmas Parties, to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, Valentine's Day parties, to celebrate God's love for us, and Easter celebrations, to celebrate our Risen Christ. For the three celebrations per year, the room parent will purchase or delegate the purchase of items needed. Parents who wish to donate items for the party should do so with the permission of the room parent and the teacher to ensure that the items to be donated are within the scope of the party.

COMPUTER, NETWORK, AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

The continuing importance of technology in our society and its use in education present many exciting opportunities for students and teachers at Epiphany. These opportunities present themselves with many responsibilities as well. The goals of internet and intranet connections are for educational purposes to expand research and communication, to encourage technological innovation, and to allow worldwide interaction with other institutions. Students will have access to:

- computers, printers, and other peripheral hardware
- information/research from universities, government sites, museums, and schools
- newsgroups on science, history, math, and literature

With access to computers comes the responsibility of maintaining them in the best possible condition. Students must be good stewards of the equipment that they use and will be held responsible for breakage or tampering of any kind.

Along with the access to people virtually all over the world also comes the availability of material that is offensive to anyone of good conscience and especially unsuitable for children. Although Epiphany takes precautions to restrict the access to such materials, it is impossible to control all materials. The responsibility is therefore upon the student to use good judgement, follow all student expectations, and avoid questionable sites. Any misuse of an electronic device or not following the student expectations will result in consequences for that student.

We believe that the valuable information and interaction available on the internet far outweighs the possibility that students may seek or stumble upon materials which are inconsistent with the spiritual and educational goals of Epiphany or its representative families.

Computer Use Policies

- Computers are to be used only by permission or under supervision of a faculty or staff member for school related purposes.
- Students are to save files only on personal media storage devices or in a location designated by their teacher.
- Students should not make unnecessary printouts.
- Students are not to engage in activities that are intended to hinder another's ability to do his/her work.
- Students are not to misuse or abuse hardware and will be responsible for repairs or replacements which will result from such mishandling.
- Students are not to change or manipulate software or operating environments.
- Media storage devices brought from home must be scanned for viruses before use on any computer on the Epiphany network.

- Students are not to try to repair computer malfunctions or breakdowns. Malfunctions should be reported to the teacher when identified.
- The computers are not for the use of social networking or music.

Network Use Policies

- Network users are to use their own passwords. Passwords may not be shared.
- Users may not knowingly go into or read a file which has been opened under another user's password, or which is not accessible to them under their own password.
- Students who attempt to use a computer and find it open to a file or program that they do not have access to should immediately report the situation to the teacher.
- Students are not to use software indicated for faculty or staff use only.
- The network is to be used for educational purposes only and not for financial or commercial gain.
- Software copyright guidelines are to be respected and followed.

Student Expectations

- We expect good judgment in all situations. Behave in a way that will make you and others proud and reflect well on the school.
- Know and follow the school's policies on electronic communications.
- Always treat others in a respectful, positive, and considerate manner
- "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear." Ephesians 4:29
- "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way." 8th Commandment and Meaning.
- To ensure your safety, be careful about the type and amount of personal information you provide.
- Avoid talking about personal schedules or situations.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Students, parents, teachers, and administrators are encouraged to work in partnership toward the common goal of excellence in Christian education. This requires a climate of respect, understanding, and tolerance. When questions or conflicts arise, they should be addressed courteously and directly with the individual involved. The Biblical directive for conflict resolution is found in Matthew 18:15-17.

It is clear from Scripture that a parent is to discuss concerns regarding a teacher's decisions or actions directly with the teacher. After meeting with the teacher, and in the event that a concern or conflict cannot be resolved directly with the teacher, parents may request a meeting with the principal and the teacher regarding the conflict (See Parent's and Student's Rights in Discipline section).

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT

Epiphany Lutheran School has implemented a Continuous Enrollment policy. From the first accepted application, your child will be enrolled at Epiphany Lutheran School throughout their education to graduation unless the parent notifies the school in writing otherwise. Through continuous enrollment, parents are making a commitment to attend for the upcoming school year. Any family that withdraws, prior to the start of or at any time during the school year will not receive a refund for any tuition installments already paid. Written appeals will be considered by Epiphany Lutheran School governance.

CURRICULUM

We emphasize that the reason for the existence of Epiphany Lutheran School apart from the public school system is a spiritual one. The Christian instruction through the use of God's Word is provided in all grades. Each day opens and closes with prayer. We provide a solid education in all basic areas of learning within the Christian framework. Curriculum maps are used in every grade level to show how we use the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) as our standards. We work to enhance these standards to make sure our students are well-rounded, good citizens, and can share their love of Jesus.

DISCIPLINE

Epiphany is committed to educating the whole child—spiritually, academically, socially, and physically. This requires a learning environment in which disciplinary standards are understood, supported, and followed by the school community as a whole. As a Christian institution for the education of children, every attempt is made to maintain Christian discipline at all times. Teachers make every effort to treat all children justly in accordance with God's Word. Teachers are the parent's representatives in the school and should be respected as outlined in the fourth commandment. Everyone contributes to the creation of a safe and positive climate where learning can take place.

Teachers, students, parents, administrators, and the church must work in a partnership of mutual support and respect with the ultimate respect for God and His commandments. All discipline action or consequences given at Epiphany Lutheran School is grace-based and done with the purpose of teaching young people to grow in their attitudes toward God, others, and themselves.

Grace-based discipline is all about admission of wrong-doing, being forgiven, understanding consequences, and moving forward with a different, God-focused, and God-honoring plan. It is understanding God's grace in our lives. We are thankful to have the opportunity to focus on Biblically based discipline at our school!

School Rules and Procedures

Procedures are routine actions that occur within the school. They are directed at accomplishing tasks and provide for order to provide a safe learning environment. Classroom teachers will establish procedures appropriate for their rooms. In addition, some procedures apply to all students within the school and are listed within this handbook or are posted in the school.

School-wide rules include:

- Walk quietly in the school building
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself
- Items deemed a distraction by school personnel should not be in school
- Gum chewing is not permitted
- Cell Phones and other electronic devices are put away and out of sight in the backpack or locker
- Show respect to adults, other students and guests
- Honor God in all you do and say

Bullying and Unkind Behavior

Bullying is not consistent behavior with Jesus' commandment to love one another and will not be tolerated at Epiphany. This can be subtle or aggressive behavior that is intentional and that can involve an imbalance of power or strength. Typically, it is repeated over time. An individual who is the recipient of unkind behavior can have a challenging time defending himself or herself.

This type of negative activity can take many forms:

- Physical (such as hitting or punching)
- Verbal (such as teasing or name calling)
- Nonverbal or emotional (such as intimidation using gestures or social exclusion)

- Cyber or through note writing (such as sending insulting messages or sending insulting notes to others in the classroom)

Our expectation is that any student who observes bullying will communicate with a teacher as soon as possible without fear of retaliation. Unfortunately, some students confuse a failure to get their way with being bullied, thinking everyone should give in to their desires. Others have learned that a claim of bullying is a quick way to gain attention. Therefore, reports of bullying will be lovingly and carefully examined to determine the truth. The school will work with parents on both sides of the issue to follow our mission of building Christian leaders.

Next Steps and Consequences

Each class has a system to address potential distractions to the educational process. If a student continues to disrupt the classroom beyond the system put in place, then he or she affects the learning of other students. When a student disregards school or classroom rules on a given day for any teacher, a next step or consequence will result. Next Steps and Consequences may include:

- Address the situation with appropriate apologies given
- Verbal reminders or warnings
- Loss of privileges: (recess, free time, etc.) or time out/away from classmates (in the classroom, hallway, lunch, etc.)
- Visit to the school office/principal
- Parents contacted
- Lunch detention
- After school detention referral

Consequences are assigned at the discretion of the classroom teachers or administrators. If a student chooses to exceed the warnings built into the classroom system or in any way endangers other students, that student will be sent out of the classroom or to the office. The next step may result in a meeting involving the teacher, the principal, the student, or the student's parents. The goal of this meeting will be to develop a strategy to prevent this behavior from ever happening again. When all parties come together in this way, the probability of success is greatly enhanced. If the situation or behavior is deemed to be of a severe nature, administrators may assign a consequence that does not follow the order from the above list.

Corporal Punishment

Epiphany does not employ corporal punishment.

Detentions

Detentions are one form of consequence for inappropriate decisions or behavior while on campus or at any school related function. There are two types: 1) Lunch, and 2) After school. Lunch Detentions may be assigned by teachers or administrators, and After school Detentions are assigned by the administrator. When assigned an After school detention, the administrator will provide the student with a form which will indicate the reason for the decision and the assigned date and time. This form must be taken home and signed by a parent. On the assigned detention day, the student must present his/her signed detention form. Failure to present the form or to be in attendance on the assigned detention day, arriving late or leaving early, may result in additional detentions or other appropriate consequences. A student must serve the detention on the contracted time and date. There is no option out of detentions unless it is approved by the administration. The principal will meet with the student and parents (teachers may be involved) to discuss the misbehavior and strategies that may be used to follow school rules and procedures in the future.

Suspension

Suspension (either an in-school or out-of-school) may be imposed on any student for any of the following reasons:

- Leaving the school grounds without permission
- Skipping school
- Fighting
- Possession of tobacco on school grounds

- Stealing
- Possession of a weapon
- Sexual exposure
- Continuous misbehavior and disrespect
- Causing bodily injury to another person

It should be noted that situations involving inappropriate language or disrespectful behavior would warrant sending the child home during the school day. All work or assignments missed during the suspension must be completed. Before a suspended student may return to school or the classroom, the student will be required to attend a conference with the parent(s) or guardian and the principal (teachers may be present) to discuss the behavioral problem, ways to correct the behavior, and put a Behavior Agreement in place. This meeting will be documented using the parent/teacher conference form. This will be completed, signed, and returned to the teacher or principal within three days. The principal will discuss all aspects of the Behavior Strategy Agreement with the teacher. The School Board will be informed of any suspension given to a student.

- First Offense: A minimum of one-day suspension
- Second Offense: A minimum of three-day suspension
- Third Offense: A suspension up to five days or expulsion will be considered (Persistent or repeated misbehavior would warrant dismissal of the child from Epiphany Lutheran School)

Expulsion

The following procedures will be used in dismissal of a student:

1. When previous team efforts outlined in the Behavior Strategy Agreement and other consequences have not improved discipline problem(s), the principal will consider the documentation and consult with the teacher(s) to make the decision to expel the student. The School Board will be informed of any decision to dismiss a student.
2. Upon reasonable cause to suspect illegal behavior(s), the principal will call the Harris County Sheriff, the parents, the Board chairman, and the Pastor(s).
3. The Principal will hold a meeting with the student, parents, and teacher(s) to inform the parents of the misbehavior, how it does not follow the Behavior Strategy Agreement, and the student's dismissal from Epiphany Lutheran School.

Weapons

Weapons are not permitted at school. "Weapons" include any object, material, or substance which in the manner it is used, designed to be used, or intended to be used, can produce death or serious bodily injury. This also includes any object which is generally used for non-violent or non-dangerous purposes, but which can be considered a weapon under this policy because of its use or intended use. A replica or facsimile of a weapon is also considered under this policy. Examples of objects that can be considered a weapon under this policy are: Firearms, rocks, ball bats, cigarette lighters, knives, bottles, ropes, brass knuckles, sling shots, cans, water pistols, chains, and cap guns. The possession or use of any "weapon" as defined, on school grounds or at a school sanctioned event may result in immediate suspension and/or expulsion of the student involved. This action will be taken by the principal with the School Board Chairman being informed of the decision.

Possession/Use of Illegal Drugs

For possession or use of any illegal drug:

- First Offense: Automatic five-day suspension with the stipulation that the offender be enrolled in a counseling program.
- Second Offense: Automatic school year expulsion.

Parent's and Student's Rights

If parents have questions concerning the education of their child, a classroom procedure, or a discipline matter they should contact the child's teacher. If an unsatisfactory situation continues, parents must make an appointment to meet with the teacher and the principal. If the problem continues to exist, parents may ask a Pastor to be present at a conference including the teacher and the principal. Lastly, a parent may use the following steps for any unresolved situation:

1. Contact the School Board in writing requesting to be placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled board meeting.
2. The School Board will contact the parent to confirm that the issue is on the agenda of the board meeting. The School Board will let the parent know if the appeal is to be submitted in writing or in person at the next School Board meeting.
3. The School Board will follow up with the parents after the board meeting concerning the issue that was brought to the board.

Teachers, staff members, and School Board members keep all disciplinary matters, next steps, and consequences confidential.

Due Process

Students may be suspended up to eight school days in a semester if the principal determines either:

- The student's presence in the regular classroom presents a danger of physical harm to the student or others
- The student has engaged in serious or persistent misbehavior that violates the previously communicated school rules and procedures.

Before suspending a student, the principal will consider reasonable alternatives, including appropriate discipline management techniques and consequences listed above. If the principal determines a suspension is the most appropriate alternative, no other disciplinary action needs to precede the suspension. The principal shall determine the length of suspension and the type (in-school or out-of-school).

The principal will conduct a meeting at which:

- The student is informed of the misbehavior
- The student is given an opportunity to explain his or her version of the incident

A student's parents shall be notified of the suspension immediately. A written summary will be documented in FACTS and sent to the parent and student. Parents of a student who has been suspended out-of-school will be advised that it is their responsibility to provide adequate supervision for the student during the period of suspension. All work or assignments missed during the suspension must be completed. Before a suspended student may return to school or the classroom, the student will be required to attend a conference with the parent(s) or guardian and the principal (teachers may be present) to discuss the behavioral problem, ways to correct the behavior, and put a Behavior Agreement in place. This meeting will be documented using the parent/teacher conference form. This will be completed, signed, and returned to the teacher or principal within three days.

A student may be expelled for repeated violations of the rules, breaking a civil law, and/or/after other avenues of discipline have been tried. A student may also be dismissed from school due to the inappropriate behavior of his/her parents. When a student is dismissed, the parent has the right to appeal to the School Board following the steps above. The School Board will have the final authority in any conflict with a student dismissal.

DRESS CODE

Our primary objective is to have students dress neatly, modestly, and in such a manner that does not attract attention to the individual but encourages a climate conducive to learning.

The following helps keep in mind how we can cooperate to promote this objective:

- It is the student's responsibility to wear proper clothing.
- It is the parent's responsibility to verify that their student follows the dress code and monitor apparel, keeping it neat and clean.
- It is the faculty's responsibility to advise/remind students of dress code requirements, refer students to the school office when there is a dress code violation or concern, and communicate with parents if there is a dress code violation or concern.

Epiphany Lutheran School has chosen Flynn O'Hara as our official uniform provider. Please visit flynnohara.com for all accepted uniform needs. Their clothing will set the model for our dress code and clothing colors.

Parents will have the option to purchase non-logo items from other vendors. **Any item purchased outside of Flynn O'Hara must match our official colors and styles from Flynn O'Hara.**

Shirts: May be oxford or polo, must have a collar, must have no insignia (other than the Epiphany logo), must be properly fitted, and must be solid white, navy, or gold (The gold color **must only be purchased** from Flynn O'Hara).

Pants, skirts, skorts, shorts, and jumpers: must be of the uniform style, must be khaki or navy in color, and **must come below the fingertips of the student with arms extended down.** Excessively baggy or tight clothing is not allowed. Girls' uniforms featuring a plaid design selected for our school must be purchased from Flynn O'Hara. Only grades K-2 may wear elastic waisted shorts or pants. (This does not include skirts or skorts).

P.E. Uniforms: Students in 5th through 8th grade must wear approved PE clothes and shoes during PE class. The PE uniform includes one of the Kings' Athletics shirts, Navy athletics shorts, and athletic shoes. PE uniform shirts will be purchased through the school office.

On Fridays, students may wear **Long Jeans/Skirt** with a Christian T-shirt, spirit shirt, or uniform shirt. If students choose not to wear jeans, they must wear uniform shorts, pants, or skirts. Jeans must not have **rips or tears (No Jean shorts, Capris, or cutoffs).**

Belts: Solid black/brown belts are required for students in **grades 3 - 8.**

Leggings/Tights: Girls may wear leggings or tights under their skirt, skort or jumper (not under their shorts). Leggings and tights must be solid, one color in white, navy, or black. **Leggings MUST go to the ankle. No Capri leggings. Leggings and tights may NOT be worn as pants.**

Undershirts: Short sleeve undershirts worn under the school polo must be white or navy with no lettering or design. Long sleeve undershirts are not permitted.

Shoes: For the safety of your child, all students are expected to wear appropriate footwear with socks, at all times (athletic shoes are best). Open-toed or open-heeled shoes are not allowed. All students will be required to wear athletic shoes for P.E. classes. No Crocs.

Outerwear: Only Epiphany approved outerwear and outerwear from Flynn O'Hara may be worn inside the classroom and throughout the building. Other coats and jackets may be worn outside but should be removed once inside the building. Solid navy blue sweaters may be worn inside school areas.

Grooming and Dress Standards

Students at Epiphany are expected to adhere to the following personal grooming and dress standards:

1. Boys' hair should be cut above the collar.
2. Boys' and girls' hair should be clean and well groomed, out of eyes. Style and color should not be extreme or distracting. **No colored streaks or spray-in coloring except for special dress days.**
3. Shorts or pants must fit securely at the waist. Belts required for 3rd-8th grades.

4. Girls' skirts, skorts and shorts should be of modest length. Girls may not roll up the waistband of their skirts. Skirt length must come below the fingertips of the student with arms extended down. Shorts should be no shorter than 5" above the top of the knee.
5. Girls' shirts should be fitted so that no skin is showing when arms are raised. Shirts should not be too tight.
6. Hats and caps are **not** allowed inside the building during the school day. Exceptions will be communicated.
7. Appropriate modest jewelry may be worn. Visible body-piercing jewelry other than pierced earrings for girls is not allowed. Boys may not wear earrings. Any accessory item that is distracting to the classroom will not be allowed.
- 8. No visible permanent or temporary tattoos allowed.**
9. Uniforms must be clean, properly fitted and in good repair. Clothing items with holes, torn seams, missing buttons, etc. must be repaired or replaced. School office reserves the right to decide when uniforms need to be replaced.
10. **FREE DRESS DAY GUIDELINES:** The same school guidelines on length of dress, skirts, skorts or shorts applies on free dress days. No spaghetti straps, tank tops, bare shoulders, or midriffs. Leggings are not appropriate as pants. No undergarments can be showing. Regular dress code shoe guidelines must be followed. Clothing should be school appropriate.

NOTE: Label all uniform clothing with student's Name or Initials.

If in doubt about any of these dress standards, please ask in advance. Administration will have final say.

Failure to abide by the Dress Code will result in violations in the following order:

- 1) A dress code violation notice will be sent home.
- 2) A call to the parent to bring appropriate clothing will be made by the school office.
- 3) If multiple violations occur, further action may be taken at the discretion of the principal.

Any work missed due to dress code violations will be made up on the student's own time. At the teacher's discretion, the student may be directed to stay out of class while the parent is bringing approved clothing. If a parent or student is in doubt as to whether something would be appropriate, it's best to check first with the teacher.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Epiphany follows local rules concerning emergency drills and evacuation procedures. Fire, lockdown, intruder, and tornado drills are conducted on a regularly scheduled basis.

ESPORTS CLUB AND TEAM

The Kings Esports Club is an extracurricular activity offered by Epiphany Lutheran School. This group engages members and helps them grow in their fine motor skills, problem-solving strategies, group dynamics, and more. Our goal is to provide a platform that encourages players to learn how to win and lose as part of a team. Students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade have the option to join our Club (competes with other Epiphany students on campus) and our Team (competes with students from other schools online).

FACTS FAMILY PORTAL

FACTS is a web program that provides information for parents. Lesson Plans and grades on assignments, homework, and the average for the quarter are available there. FACTS is also our billing and payment processor. You can access all transactions, make payments, and view your scheduled payment plan when logged in. For assistance with FACTS, you may contact the school office or call FACTS directly at 866-441-4637. Our school code is ELS-TX

FIELD TRIPS

During the school year, field trips will be taken by the classes. These trips are meant to enhance classroom learning. The teacher is in charge of organizing and planning the details for these field trips. Parents may be invited to go on field trips as supervisors who help the teacher. All children are expected to participate as this is a part of the educational program. The only children allowed to attend are the students in the class. Students are asked to wear specific uniform items as directed by the teacher for each field trip.

Other details:

- Teachers most often utilize parents to drive on field trips
- On occasion, Epiphany's bus will be used
- Child-safety seats will need to be made available, per state law
- Those who drive will be asked for specific information – name of driver, vehicle insurance provider and policy #, vehicle license # and driver cell phone
- A specific, school-wide form will be utilized at all grade levels
- There is typically a nominal cost involved in these events

GRADING

Class work, homework, quiz, and test grades are reported on the work itself and in FACTS and averaged for recording on report cards and permanent records. All grading is done in a timely manner and available for viewing on FACTS. Report cards are posted on FACTS at the end of each 9-week grading period. Parents may expect classwork/homework grades to be posted within two days and tests/projects grades within a week.

The grading scale for Elementary grade skills is:

E	Excellent	S	Satisfactory	N	Needs Improvement
---	-----------	---	--------------	---	-------------------

The grading scale for 1st - 8th grade is:

A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	75 - 79
D	70 - 74
F	0 - 69

Middle School enrichment classes may use a Pass/Fail grade format. Late work will receive a lower grade per each teacher's policy. For work three or more days late, the teacher will communicate with the student and the parents to develop a plan to prevent future late work.

Students in grades 3 – 8 will be recognized for academic achievement. Recognition will be given using the earned grades for each subject in a 9-week grading period. To be eligible for the Honor Roll Award each quarter, students must meet this requirement: an "A" (90-100) in every subject. At the end of the year, students who achieve the Honor Roll all four 9-week grading periods, and who have fewer than 8 absences for the year, will be included on the Epiphany Academic Excellence list.

****New for 2023-2024 School Year:** Students in grades 3 – 8 will also be recognized for academic growth. For those students not on Honor Roll, they will be considered for the On A Roll Award. To be eligible for the On A Roll Award, students must increase their overall grade point average (GPA), with no failing grades, from the previous quarter. Students will be recognized after the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th quarters in chapel.

HOMEWORK

A strong educational program has always required that some study be done at home, and recent research has continued to reinforce its importance. This is not only necessary for accomplishing the immediate goals, but also for developing helpful habits for future education. The amount of homework depends on the grade level and upon the ability and study habits of the child. Parents can help by providing encouragement and a quiet place for study. Students in Kindergarten through 2nd grade may expect 15 to 30 minutes of homework in an average evening. Students in 3rd through 5th grade may expect about 30 to 50 minutes of homework in an average evening. Students in 6th through 8th grade may expect about 45 minutes to an hour and a half in an average evening.

ILLNESS AND ACCIDENTS

Epiphany Lutheran School does not have the facilities or personnel to offer medical care beyond routine first aid treatment. If a student is injured or becomes ill at school, office personnel will comfort the child and contact a parent or guardian to pick him up. It is expected that the parent will do this within an hour of being contacted. Parents are responsible for keeping their emergency contacts up to date. In the unlikely event of a medical emergency, an ambulance may be called before the parent is notified. Our primary concern is for the health and safety of the child.

We will ask parents to pick up a child if any of the following are observed:

- fever of 100 degrees or higher
- vomiting or diarrhea
- excessive coughing
- a significant rash
- head lice or scabies
- ongoing complaints of pain
- any injury that appears serious
- recurring or heavy yellow or green nasal discharge
- Pink Eye

Children with contagious diseases must remain at home until a doctor releases them to return to school with a note. Fever free without medications for 48 hours prior to returning is the general rule. Although it is inconvenient to keep a sick child home, the well-being of the child, his classmates, and his teachers must take first priority.

Epiphany Lutheran School does not provide any health/accident insurance for your child in the event your child is injured at school or in any school-related event. Parents must provide adequate insurance for their student through the parents' group or individual health insurance plan.

INCLEMENT WEATHER RELEASE

We follow the directions of Cy-Fair Independent School District for weather related school closures. In rare cases the principal may override this automatic decision. Parents will be notified via email and the Remind app for all inclement weather communication.

LIBRARY

The purpose of the library is to provide opportunities for children to pursue individual interests and projects, either as a result and extension of classroom activities, or on the student's initiative. In checking out books, parents assume the responsibility for the books. If a book becomes more than three weeks overdue, it is considered to be lost. Parents must pay the replacement cost for damaged or lost books. If a book is later found, the payment is not returned.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found articles are to be turned in to the teacher or to the school office. Articles not claimed will be donated to a charitable organization. Place your child's name on all articles.

LUNCHES

Epiphany does not provide hot lunches. Students with food allergies must have a doctor's statement on file at school. When packing student lunches, do not pack soft drinks and please recognize that many packaged drinks have as much sugar as included in soft drinks. **No microwaves available.** Parents are welcome to come and eat lunch with their child at any time. Please schedule your visit with your child's teacher and the school office. Be sure to arrive on time. Forgotten lunches must be dropped off at the school office to avoid classroom disruption. Lunch for an entire class must be arranged with the homeroom teacher at least two days prior. Please notify the school office of this arrangement.

The school office must be notified in the morning of any lunches being dropped off via delivery service. Though this is an option for those days when lunch is forgotten, we ask that parents refrain from using these types of services on a regular basis. A cart will be set outside the school office for all drop offs.

LUTHERAN JUNIOR HONOR ASSOCIATION

This organization, which works under the umbrella of the Lutheran Education Association, serves as a Lutheran, Christ-centered honor society at our school. The goal of our Chapter at Epiphany is to recognize our distinguished students and help them grow into the young men and women that God has intended them to be. Membership is available to students in 7th and 8th grades. There are academic and service-oriented requirements that are included in the application process.

MEDICATION

Medication is dispensed only by a designated staff member. A medication permission form for either over the counter or prescription medication must be completed by the parent and turned in along with the medication before it can be dispensed (**No Exceptions**). These forms are available on your FACTS Family Portal. Please note that prescription medications also require the authorized signature of the prescribing physician. All medications must be correctly labeled and, in a prescription or manufacturer's container. In cases of repeated daily doses, parents are responsible for providing a one-week supply in the original container, picking up the empty container at the end of the week, and returning the container with the following week's dosage to the office. These procedures have been implemented with the safety and protection of the students in mind. Parents are encouraged to work with the school to minimize any inconvenience.

Parents must notify the school office or their child's teacher immediately upon a medication change. As partners in your child's education, please be forthcoming with information.

MEDICAL RECORDS AND HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

State law mandates that immunization and health records be maintained on each child enrolled in school. Parents must ensure that all necessary immunizations are up to date and on file with the school office. This includes an Original Exemption Affidavit from the Texas Dept. of Health, if necessary. The affidavit is good for two years. Parents must notify the school of any changes in a child's health status, medications, emergency phone numbers or addresses, or physician and insurance information. This information is confidential.

Epiphany is required to comply with the Texas State Department of Health guidelines concerning immunizations and re-entry to school following contagious diseases and conditions. These include chicken pox, diphtheria, hepatitis, impetigo, measles, mononucleosis, mumps, pink eye, lice, scabies, ringworm, tuberculosis, and whooping cough. When the physician determines that a child with any of these conditions is ready to return to school, the parent should request a release form stating that the child is no longer contagious or infectious. This must be brought to school before the child will be admitted to class.

Audio-visual screenings were mandated in accordance with the Special Senses and Disorders Act of 1983. For the convenience of school families, Epiphany engages a certified screener. Hearing and Vision screening is required for the following: Kindergarteners, 1st, 3rd, 5th, & 7th graders, and any other first-time entrants from out of state. If parents elect to have this screening done elsewhere, it must be performed by a qualified screener and a full, detailed report must be provided to the school.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Epiphany Lutheran School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, athletics, or other school administered programs.

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA) / VOLUNTEERS

Epiphany School depends on the support and involvement of its school parents to enhance the school ministry program. There are opportunities to serve in many different areas for those with a few minutes or a few hours to give. Room

parents are needed to assist every homeroom teacher with parties and special class activities. Please watch for information about specific service opportunities and ask your child's teacher how you can help.

PARENTAL CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

Parents are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is in accordance with our principles as a Christian school. As such, they should only use appropriate language and mannerisms and handle disagreements and disputes amicably and professionally. Parents are also expected to support and follow school rules and policies, thereby modeling this to their children. Parents must bring any issues or complaints regarding other students directly to a teacher or administrator and should at no time address any child other than their own in a negative manner (See Parent's and Student's Rights in Discipline section). Parents are expected to dress in a manner that is appropriate for a Christian School when on school grounds or when involved in any school activity. This means that parents should refrain from dressing clothing that is revealing, has inappropriate slogans or logos, or in any other manner conveys the wrong message to our children. Parents may not come on school grounds dressed in sleepwear. A student may be withdrawn from school due to the inappropriate behavior of his/her parent(s).

PARENT - TEACHER CONFERENCES

Conferences epitomize our partnership in working for the good of students who are enrolled at Epiphany. These important conferences are scheduled after the first and third academic quarters for all school families. They involve the teacher, the parents, and the child. They are increasingly led by the student as age appropriate. Older siblings may come along and wait outside, but younger siblings should have someone to care for them during the few minutes of the conference.

Parents may schedule a conference with the teacher by appointment during the school year to discuss specific issues or concerns (See Parent's and Student's Rights in Discipline section). These conferences are most productive when scheduled rather than impromptu.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD FOR ENROLLMENT

Epiphany admits all new students in a six-week probationary period. Students who meet expectations during these six weeks will be fully enrolled.

PROMOTION POLICY

Students in Kindergarten are recommended for promotion to first grade based on their overall progress and readiness. Social, emotional, and physical development is considered along with academic and intellectual ability. Teachers and parents should communicate throughout the year to discuss the child's progress. If in the event a student is not promoted to the next grade level, the gift of a little extra time to grow can greatly improve the chance for future success.

Students in grades 1 through 8 are promoted based primarily on their academic performance. Students must attain an average of 70 or above based on the final yearly grades in the core academic subjects (religion, math, science, history, and language arts which include spelling, reading, English, and handwriting). A failing final grade (below 70) in any academic core subject must be made up by following an assigned academic plan by a teacher/administrator or in an approved summer school program in order to progress to the next grade level. Epiphany allows a maximum of two core subjects to be made up over the summer. The parent and student will be required to confer with the principal to agree on an approved plan for the following school year. Evidence of satisfactory completion of the program must be submitted to the principal. Failure to comply will result in repetition of the previous grade level.

REMEDIATION

Parents are encouraged to contact the teacher if a student is experiencing ongoing difficulty with the academic program at Epiphany. Likewise, teachers will contact parents if their child is not experiencing academic success. Open discussion and early intervention are critical in finding an appropriate solution.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Families are expected to purchase all required school supply items based on the provided school supply list for each student for the beginning of school.

SOCIAL MEDIA

In today's world, parents enjoy posting online photos and videos of their children. Often this includes individuals in addition to their children. When this happens, care should be given to obtaining the permission of other students' parents or other adults out of courtesy for their privacy. We expect good judgment in all situations. Please keep online behavior positive that reflects well on the school.

STUDENTS IN FAMILY GROUPS

A major component of the Epiphany experience is being part of our family community. One of the ways we build this atmosphere with our students is within our Family Groups. All students K-8th will be specifically chosen to be included in a Family Group. Each Family Group is led by a teacher and is made up of students from K-8th grades. Family Groups will sit together for chapel and participate in various activities together during the school year.

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Anyone who suspects abuse of a child must notify the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400. If any school family needs assistance with parenting issues or any other difficult personal situation, the church pastors may be contacted for a confidential discussion or referral. The support of families and care for our children is everyone's job at Epiphany.

TUITION, REGISTRATION FEES, AND TUITION ASSISTANCE

Tuition Payments

Payments are collected by a third-party service, FACTS. FACTS collects an Enrollment Fee of \$50 for the use of this service. The parent is responsible for paying this fee which is usually charged in May for the upcoming school year. A convenience fee of 2.85% is charged for using a credit card.

We offer three payment plans* for your convenience:

- Annual payment - tuition paid in full by August 20th for a 5% discount,
- Bi-annual payment - two equal payments due August 20th and Jan. 20th for a 2% discount or
- 10-month payment plan – ten equal installments paid August through May.

**Families who accept Tuition Assistance awards must pay through the 10-month payment plan*

A fee of \$30 is assessed by FACTS for returned payments. A late fee of \$25 is assessed for payments not received in a timely manner. This fee is automatically added to your FACTS account. Academic records will not be released for a student if their accounts are not in good standing and enrollment for future school years cannot be guaranteed unless registration fees are paid in full and any other outstanding financial obligations are satisfied.

Registration Fees

Registration Fee is **\$450** for students in Kindergarten-5th grade and **\$500** for students in 6th-8th grade. **This fee is non-refundable.** Registration fees and Tuition fees for the upcoming school year will be published by December. All reenrolling families will receive their invoice at the beginning of January. Families must have Registration Fees paid in full by the beginning of March to guarantee enrollment for the following year. Invoice amounts will be available in FACTS during this period. All families will pay Registration Fees through FACTS. Payments may be made as a one-time payment or in partial payments (payment date and amount decided by each family) through the due date. Late fees will apply to any amount not paid by the due date.

Tuition Assistance

Epiphany Lutheran School (K-8) offers Tuition Assistance to families demonstrating a genuine financial need. Once applications have been reviewed by FACTS, a recommendation is made for award if the proper criteria are met. Applicants

will be notified of their financial aid status after recommendation is reviewed by the School Board. There is no guarantee that assistance will be approved or continue at the same level each year.

VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN

The highest-ranking academic graduates will be determined by the following method:

- Only those students attending Epiphany for all of seventh and eighth grades will be eligible
- Only the grades from the seventh and eighth grade year will be used to calculate the average
- All classes will be weighted equally
- A straight percentage will be used, except that of an advanced class, such as Algebra 1, will have 5 percentage points added to the average

VISITOR PROCEDURES

Parents are welcome to visit the school. Many parents will perform a variety of volunteer duties that enhance our overall school ministry. For the safety and protection of everyone on the Epiphany campus, parents and other visitors are required to sign in at the office. This process involves showing a driver's license to be scanned for a criminal background check. Upon this check, a badge is issued to be worn. Parents who wish to have a conference with a teacher or administrator should make an appointment.

WATER FOUNTAINS

All K-8th grade students must bring a water bottle to be refilled in our touchless water fountains. Please label your child's name on their water bottle.

HANDBOOK SIGNATURES

All employees, parents, and students in grades 6th, 7th, and 8th, sign a written agreement statement affirming that they have read, agree with, and are willing to abide by the established standards of the school as outlined in the respective handbooks.

Signed statements of agreement are retained as part of the permanent records of students and faculty/staff.

Two disclaimers appear in our handbooks. First, to make clear that no handbook serves to contractually bind the school in any way. Second, note that the handbooks are subject to change without notice by the school's governing body or by Faculty/Staff annual updates.

Please return the attached form to the school office. Thank you!

