

Epiphany Catholic School



Parent Student
Handbook
2026-2027

INDEX

SECTION I – GENERAL POLICIES

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION	1
1. Mission Statement	1
2. Admission Policy	2
3. Admission to Kindergarten and First Grade	2
4. Attendance	3
5. Curriculum	5
6. Discipline	5
7. Detention Policies and Procedures	6
8. Dress Code	6
9. Fire Drills	13
10. Homework	13
11. Private Tutoring, Coaching or Lessons	13
12. Parental Rights in Case of Separation	14
13. Financial Obligations – Billing and Collection Procedures	14
14. School Policy and Principal's Right to Amend	16

SECTION II – GENERAL INFORMATION

PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES	17
1. Altar Server	18
2. Athletics	18
3. Extra Curricular Activities	18
4. Automobile Drop Off/Pick Up	20
5. Cafeteria	21
6. Clinic	21
7. Communication	21
8. Emergency Information	21
9. Faculty Meetings	21
10. Field Trips	21
11. Honor Roll	22
12. Lost and Found	22
13. Parent Organization	22
14. Report Cards	23
15. School Day	24
16. School Notices	24
17. School Safety	24
18. School Telephone	24
19. Text Messaging/Phone Calls	25
20. Student Checkouts	25
21. Technology Use	25
22. Covid-19 and Related Items	27
23. Visitors and Parents	28

SECTION III – SPECIFIC POLICIES

1. Anti-Bullying Policy	29
2. Artificial Intelligence	30
3. Child Protective Investigations	31
4. Community Service Activities	31
5. Conduct	31
6. Communicable Diseases and Related Items	32
7. Confidentiality Statement	32
8. Drug and Alcohol Policy	32
9. Electronic Acknowledgments	33
10. Financial Obligations	33
11. Fundraising	33
12. Harassment And Discrimination	33
13. Immunizations	34
14. Medications Guidelines	34
15. Notification Of Rights Under FERPA	35
16. Open Admission Policy	36
17. Parental Cooperation	36
18. Participation in Co-Curricular and Extra-Curricular Activities	36
19. Private Tutoring, Coaching or Lessons	37
20. Public Display Of Affection	37
21. Safety in Private Spaces	37
22. School Sponsored Events	38
23. Search and Seizure Policy	38
24. Section 504-Policy Statement	38
25. Sexting	39
26. Smoking/Vaping	39
27. Testifying in Divorce or Custody Proceedings	39
28. Threats of Violence	39
29. Transportation Arrangements	40
30. Undocumented Students	40
31. Use of Photos	40
32. Weapons	41
 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM	 42

SECTION I – GENERAL POLICIES

INTRODUCTION

We are blessed and honored to welcome you as a valued member of Epiphany Catholic School. To answer some of your questions concerning the school's policies, the school has prepared this Parent-Student Handbook. Please read it thoroughly and retain it for future reference. The policies stated in this handbook are only guidelines and are subject to change at the sole discretion of the school, as are all other policies, procedures, or programs of the school. From time to time, you may receive updated information concerning changes in policy. However, the school has the right to add, delete or revise any school policy or procedure with or without notice. This handbook is not a contract, express or implied, and none of the policies or provisions should be construed as such. If you have any questions about the school's policies, please ask the principal for assistance.

1. MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Epiphany Catholic School is centered on the Eucharist, aimed at academic excellence, and focused on outreach through service. Inspired by the Magi following the star toward Jesus, we educate our diverse learners to think critically, work collaboratively, and act globally.

In accordance with our mission, there is a non-negotiable, mutual understanding that every family in Epiphany Catholic School attends mass every weekend in Epiphany Catholic Church. Any family that does not adhere to this understanding or to our mission may be asked to leave Epiphany Catholic School.

We dedicate ourselves to the teaching mission of the Church through devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary who leads us to a deeper understanding of the Gift of the Eucharist. We commit ourselves to:

- Nurturing a spiritual environment through private and communal prayer and proclaiming in word and action the Good News of Jesus Christ to all persons as expressed in the daily lives of the members of our community which draws and welcomes people into our way of life.
- Respecting and motivating students of varying backgrounds, interests, and abilities to fulfill the potential in each of them.
- Offering an academic, social, and physical curriculum that provides life-long learning.
- Fostering an awareness and understanding of social and global concerns that requires responsible leaders.
- Providing varied opportunities for faculty and students to serve one another and encouraging service to local, national, and world communities.

Being Christ-like role models for our students and their families, instilling in them the desire to witness, by word and action, to the God who lives within all.

2. ADMISSION POLICY

Epiphany School is accredited by the Florida Catholic Conference and the National Council for Private Schools and is a member school of the Archdiocese of Miami and the National Catholic Education Association. Epiphany School is a parish school for the children of Epiphany parish.

Open Admission Policy

The school has an open admission policy. No person, on the grounds of race, color, disability or national origin, is excluded or otherwise subjected to discrimination in the receiving of services. Nor does the school discriminate in hiring, promotion, discharge, pay, fringe benefits, job training, classification, referral and other aspects of employment on the basis of race, color, disability, age, gender, or national origin.

Admission is based on the following requirements:

1. The parents/guardians desire a Catholic education for their children.
2. Families attend church every Sunday at the Church of the Epiphany.
3. The parents and children cooperate with and uphold all school regulations.
4. The parents/guardian pay the stated annual tuition and fees.
5. The parents cooperate with the faculty in supervising the home study of the children and foster in their children a respect for all persons and property.

Undocumented Students

A student's enrollment and/or graduation from school does not confer a legal status nor does it serve to regularize an undocumented student. Although the Archdiocese of Miami may assist with the completion of an I-20 form, the school does not guarantee or confer any privileges or rights available to documented legal residents. Parents should consult with immigration legal counsel if they have any questions as to immigration status.

3. ADMISSION TO KINDERGARTEN AND FIRST GRADE

Admission to Kindergarten is accomplished in the following manner:

1. Pre-registration and successful performance in the pre-admission test.
2. Presentation of all necessary forms.
3. These forms include:
 - a. General information sheet
 - b. Baptismal certificate
 - c. Physical examination form
 - d. A medical report indicating that the child has been immunized against diphtheria, polio, tetanus, 2 doses of measles vaccine and German measles. All booster shots are required.
4. Florida State law requires that a child be 5 years old by September 1 for Kindergarten entrance and 6 years old by September 1, for entrance into first grade.
5. If there are available spaces in grades 2-8, these may be filled by brothers and sisters of students in Epiphany, and students who qualify through pastoral approval and successful entrance examination.

6. To enter seventh grade all students need the Hepatitis B Series (this takes 6 months to complete)

4. ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance is of the utmost importance. Failure to attend classes regularly significantly impacts a student's success. Absences can be marked excused, unexcused, half absence or early release depending on the reason for the student's absence. Make-up procedures for all missed work and/or assessments are based on the marked reason for the absence.

Attendance for the full school day (more than 3.5 hours a school day) is a legal requirement, and an obligation of parents, students, and school staff to enable every student to learn at his/her best. After School Care does not count towards regular school attendance. Epiphany Catholic School takes these policies seriously. The marking of attendance, late arrivals, and early dismissals is a **legal** requirement and mandatory for the school, noting that the student is under the care of the school or with the parent/guardian. Students are expected to attend school the entire day. Excessive absence or tardiness may be cause for non-acceptance or re-registration may be denied.

- Students who are absent, either excused or unexcused, may not attend or participate in any after school events or activities (i.e games, tryouts, practices, clubs, etc.) on that day.

On the day a student is absent:

- It is the parents' responsibility to notify the school's reception office by 9:00 a.m. in order to report their child's/children's absence.
- When returning from an absence, each child brings a note to the teacher from parents explaining the absence. Students absent for 3 days or more must bring a doctor's note to be admitted to return to school. This practice also informs the school that the parents were aware of their child's absence.
- Students are responsible for work and tests missed.
- No child is allowed to leave the campus or school building during school hours without permission from the principal, granted only upon presentation of an emailed or written request of the parents. No student will be dismissed after 1:30PM. Students scheduled for early pick-up may wait in the reception office for a maximum of **30 minutes** past the arranged pick-up time. If a parent or guardian is more than 30 minutes late and has **not contacted the school** to inform us of the delay, the student will be returned to class. Once returned to class, the student **will no longer be eligible for early release** and must be dismissed at the regular end-of-day time.

Pleasure trips or vacations while school is in session are strongly discouraged and parents and students take full responsibility for make-up work, tests, and missed assignments upon returning.

Excused & Unexcused Absences

Generally accepted excuses for absence, tardiness or early release:

- Illness of the student: Upon the return of the student to school, a doctor's note is required for the attendance to be excused. No late doctor's notes will be accepted.
- A confirmed family emergency
- A confirmed court appearance
- Participation in an approved school-sponsored activity (requires written permission from the principal)
- Death in the immediate family
- Internal or external suspension from school
- Consultation/interview with civil authorities
- Other documented student absences that are beyond the control of the student or parent(s) as determined and approved by the building principal.

Generally accepted non-excused absence, tardiness or early release:

- Vacation
- Babysitting/care for younger siblings
- Personal services
- Non-school events (e.g. athletics, arts, etc.)

Absentee Policy

1. Students who arrive after the bell, 7:45 a.m., but prior to 11:00 a.m. are marked tardy.
2. The latest a student may be dismissed on regular school days is 1:30 p.m. and on early dismissal days it is 11:30 a.m. Any student leaving early will be marked as "early release." (Note: Early release will reflect as a tardy on the report card.)
3. Students in grades K-8 arriving on or after 11:00 a.m. will not be admitted to school unless the school is provided with a Doctor's note or an official document. Preschool students arriving on or after 9:00 a.m. will need a Doctor's note or official document to be admitted to school. No parent notes will be accepted. Any student in grades K-8 arriving on or after 12:00 p.m. will NOT be admitted to school. Students in Preschool arriving on or after 9:30 a.m. will not be admitted to school.

Excessive Absences

Any excessive absence, as deemed by the principal, may result in indoor suspension. A student who is absent from school more than 18 days in a year (or 9 days per semester) will confer with the Archdiocese to determine if the student may or may not be promoted to the next grade, unless the principal grants an exception and determines a way in which the student may receive additional instruction. If a child is on an athletic team and is absent from school, they may not participate in any practice or games the day the absence occurs.

Chronic absenteeism may result in loss of any scholarship monies awarded to families.

Tardiness

Excessive tardiness, as deemed by the principal, may result in a detention . Students are expected to arrive at school on time every day, 7:45 a.m. When a student arrives on or after the 7:45 a.m. bell has rung, the student is to receive a late slip giving him/her permission to enter the class. Three tardies will equal 1 absence. It is the responsibility of the parents to

have the children seated in class by 7:45 a.m. every day. Parents may be contacted by the Administration when the student is consistently tardy. Other disciplinary action may be incurred at the Administration's discretion.

When there is excessive lateness, defined as more than three (3) in a quarter, the Principal may require a conference with parents and may have an action plan created. Excessive lateness or absence may be cause for students not being able to participate in different student activities (i.e. Student Council, National Junior Honor Society, clubs, sports, ect.) and/or disciplinary action up to probation and/or denial of re-registration. Students who may be on scholarships may or may not have their funds revoked if there is an issue with Attendance.

Transfers

When transferring from Epiphany, parents should:

1. Notify the teacher at least two days in advance so records can be completed.
2. Return all library books and textbooks.
3. Submit a Transcript Request Form to the school office.

5. CURRICULUM

Epiphany Catholic School adhering to the curriculum of the Archdiocese of Miami includes instruction in the following major subjects: Religion, Social Studies, Language Arts, Reading, Mathematics, and Science. The minor subjects are: Handwriting, Art, Music, Physical Education, Computer, and Spanish.

6. DISCIPLINE

Epiphany Catholic School strives to create a strong sense of community and assist students with relationships and how they interact with and treat one another. All children should work at being open to others and accepting and tolerant of others. Hopefully, the students of Epiphany may recognize the uniqueness of others, and learn that differences enrich us. Community is that sense of belonging and the living by a common set of behavioral standards. The Coordinator of Discipline may meet with the student who exhibits constant disruptive behavior.

Cooperation with Legal Authorities:

It is the practice of the school to cooperate with any local, state, or federal investigators or law enforcement officers that contact the school in the course of any criminal investigation. The school may attempt to notify the parents of any student sought to be interviewed in the course of a criminal investigation on the school premises, unless directed by an investigator or law enforcement officer to the contrary, which is usually the case in investigations involving sexual or physical abuse. The school may attempt as well to have a representative present during such an interview unless this is not permitted by the investigators, which is often the case in investigations involving sexual or physical abuse.

7. DETENTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following rules shall apply to student detentions:

1. If a student is given a detention by different persons or by one person at different times in a week then the student should serve each detention separately over a period of weeks.
2. If a child has detention on the day of an afterschool activity, the student first serves the detention and then reports to the practice or game if time allows.
3. A student who does not report to detention or arrives late receives a second detention.
4. A record of all detentions is kept on file.
5. For students in grades 6-8, detention is held every Tuesday from 2:45-3:45 p.m. **An indoor suspension may be given to a student who receives more than three Tuesday detentions.** Also, outdoor suspension may be given for more serious offenses at the discretion of the principal.

8. DRESS CODE

Appearance of students contributes to an attitude toward learning and behavior that is commendable. The following dress code is expected of all students beginning the first day of school and continuing until school closes. Students who attend Epiphany School are required to wear the complete official school uniform at all times. On the following pages are the new 2024-2025 school uniform guidelines.

Uniform Requirements

Unless otherwise indicated, all items must be ordered from Flynn O'Hara

Girls and Boys Uniform Grade PK
Uniform Item
Dark Navy short sleeve jersey knit dress with school logo (<i>girls</i>)
Navy elastic waist walking short (<i>boys</i>)
White short sleeve polo shirt with school logo (<i>boys</i>)
Blue short sleeve polo shirt with school logo (<i>boys</i>)
White long sleeve polo shirt with school logo (<i>boys</i>)
Blue long sleeve polo shirt with school logo (<i>boys</i>)
PE: Gold short sleeve t-shirt with school silkscreen (<i>boys and girls</i>)
PE: Gold short sleeve t-shirt with school silkscreen (<i>boys and girls</i>)
PE: Gold long sleeve t-shirt with school silkscreen (<i>boys and girls</i>)

PE: Navy jersey knit shorts with school silkscreen (<i>boys and girls</i>)
Navy ¼ zip performance fleece pullover with school logo (<i>boys and girls</i>)
Navy full-zip fleece jacket with school logo (<i>boys and girls</i>)
White quarter socks with ECS logo or plain white quarter socks (<i>girls only</i>) <i>Must cover the complete ankle</i>
Navy quarter socks with ECS logo (<i>boys only</i>)
Shoes/Sneakers: any velcro sneakers, NO slip-ons Dominant color of the sneaker is gray, navy, white or black with minimal accents of color. Both shoes must match in color and style. NO FLUORESCENT SNEAKERS.

Girls' Uniform Grades K-3
Uniform Item
Navy, green, & white plaid drop waist jumper (no more than 2" above the knee)
Navy, green, & white plaid 2 pleat skort
White ladies' fit short sleeve polo shirt with school logo
Dark navy ladies' fit short sleeve polo shirt with school logo
White long sleeve polo shirt with school logo
Dark navy long sleeve polo shirt with school logo
PE: Graphite wicking t-shirt with school silkscreen
PE: Graphite long sleeve wicking t-shirt with school silkscreen
PE: Navy micromesh gym shorts with school silkscreen
Black Mary Jane shoes
Burgundy children's brush leather loafer
Burgundy women's penny loafer
Navy ¼ zip performance fleece pullover with school logo (<i>boys and girls</i>)
Navy full-zip fleece jacket with school logo (<i>boys and girls</i>)
White quarter socks with ECS logo or plain white quarter socks (<i>girls only</i>) <i>Must cover the complete ankle</i>
Sneakers: Velcro or tie on sneakers for PE, NO slip-ons (<i>K and 1 only</i>) Tie on only - NO slip-ons (<i>Grades 2-8 only</i>) Dominant color of the sneaker is gray, navy, white or black with minimal accents of color. Both shoes must match in color and style. NO FLUORESCENT SNEAKERS. (<i>all grades</i>) Please note that sneakers may not be used as the school uniform shoe.

Girls' Uniform Grades 4-5	
Uniform Item	
Navy, green, & white plaid pleated skirt with elastic waist (no more than 2" above the knee)	
White ladies' fit short sleeve polo shirt with school logo	
Dark navy ladies' fit short sleeve polo shirt with school logo	
White long sleeve polo shirt with school logo	
Dark navy long sleeve polo shirt with school logo	
PE: Graphite wicking t-shirt with school silkscreen	
PE: Graphite long sleeve wicking t-shirt with school silkscreen	
PE: Navy micromesh gym shorts with school silkscreen	
Black Mary Jane shoes	
Burgundy children's brush leather loafer	
Burgundy women's penny loafer	
Navy ¼ zip performance fleece pullover with school logo (<i>boys and girls</i>)	
Navy full-zip fleece jacket with school logo (<i>boys and girls</i>)	
White quarter socks with ECS logo or plain white quarter socks (<i>girls only</i>) <i>Must cover the complete ankle</i>	
Sneakers: Tie on only - NO slip-ons Dominant color of the sneaker is gray, navy, white or black with minimal accents of color. Both shoes must match in color and style. NO FLUORESCENT SNEAKERS. Please note that sneakers may not be used as the school uniform shoe.	

Girls' Uniform Grades 6-8	
Uniform Item	
Navy, green, & white plaid pleated skirt with elastic waist (no more than 2" above the knee)	
White short sleeve oxford shirt with school logo	
White short sleeve oxford blouse with school logo	
White long sleeve oxford shirt with school logo	
White long sleeve oxford blouse with school logo	
Navy fine gauge v-neck sweater vest with school logo	

PE: Graphite wicking t-shirt with school silkscreen
PE: Graphite long sleeve wicking t-shirt with school silkscreen
PE: Navy micromesh gym shorts with school silkscreen
Burgundy children's brush leather loafer
Burgundy women's penny loafer
Navy ¼ zip performance fleece pullover with school logo (<i>boys and girls</i>)
Navy full-zip fleece jacket with school logo (<i>boys and girls</i>)
White quarter socks with ECS logo or plain white quarter socks (<i>girls only</i>) <i>Must cover the complete ankle</i>
Sneakers: Tie on only - NO slip-ons Dominant color of the sneaker is gray, navy, white or black with minimal accents of color. Both shoes must match in color and style. NO FLUORESCENT SNEAKERS. Please note that sneakers may not be used as the school uniform shoe.

Boys' Uniform Grades K-3
Uniform Item
Navy boy's twill walking shorts with school logo
Navy boy's performance fabric walking shorts with school logo
Navy boy's performance fabric pant with school logo
Navy men's performance fabric pant with school logo
Navy twill pants with school logo
White short sleeve polo shirt with school logo
White long sleeve polo shirt with school logo
Blue short sleeve polo shirt with school logo
Blue long sleeve polo shirt with school logo
PE: Graphite wicking t-shirt with school silkscreen
PE: Graphite long sleeve wicking t-shirt with school silkscreen
PE: Navy micromesh gym shorts with school silkscreen
Black/brown reversible leather belt
Black children's penny loafer
Black men's penny loafer

Black Merrel moc slip-on
Navy or black quarter socks with ECS logo or plain Navy or black quarter socks <i>(boys only) Must cover the complete ankle</i>
Sneakers: Velcro or tie on sneakers for PE, NO slip-ons <i>(K and 1 only)</i> Tie on only - NO slip-ons <i>(Grades 2-8 only)</i> Dominant color of the sneaker is gray, navy, white or black with minimal accents of color. Both shoes must match in color and style. NO FLUORESCENT SNEAKERS. Please note that sneakers may not be used as the school uniform shoe.

Boys' Uniform Grades 4-5
Uniform Item
Navy boy's performance fabric pant with school logo
Navy men's performance fabric pant with school logo
Navy twill pants with school logo
White short sleeve polo shirt with school logo
White long sleeve polo shirt with school logo
Blue short sleeve polo shirt with school logo
Blue long sleeve polo shirt with school logo
PE: Graphite wicking t-shirt with school silkscreen
PE: Graphite long sleeve wicking t-shirt with school silkscreen
PE: Navy micromesh gym shorts with school silkscreen
Black woven military web belt
Navy ¼ zip performance fleece pullover with school logo <i>(boys and girls)</i>
Navy full-zip fleece jacket with school logo <i>(boys and girls)</i>
Black children's penny loafer
Black men's penny loafer
Black Merrel moc slip-on
Navy or black quarter socks with ECS logo or plain Navy or black quarter socks <i>(boys only) Must cover the complete ankle</i>
Sneakers: Tie on only - NO slip-ons Dominant color of the sneaker is gray, navy, white or black with minimal accents of color. Both shoes must match in color and style. NO FLUORESCENT SNEAKERS. Please note that sneakers may not be used as the school uniform shoe.

Boys' Uniform Grades 6-8
Uniform Item
Navy boy's performance fabric pant with school logo
Navy men's performance fabric pant with school logo
Navy twill pants with school logo
Navy men's classic pants with school logo
Blue short sleeve oxford shirt with school logo
Blue long sleeve oxford shirt with school logo
Navy/gold striped tie with school crest
PE: Graphite wicking t-shirt with school silkscreen
PE: Graphite long sleeve wicking t-shirt with school silkscreen
PE: Navy micromesh gym shorts with school silkscreen
Black/brown reversible leather belt
Navy ¼ zip performance fleece pullover with school logo (<i>boys and girls</i>)
Navy full-zip fleece jacket with school logo (<i>boys and girls</i>)
Black men's penny loafer
Black Merrel moc slip-on
Navy or black quarter socks with ECS logo or plain Navy or black quarter socks (<i>boys only</i>) <i>Must cover the complete ankle</i>
Sneakers: Tie on only - NO slip-ons Dominant color of the sneaker is gray, navy, white or black with minimal accents of color. Both shoes must match in color and style. NO FLUORESCENT SNEAKERS. Please note that sneakers may not be used as the school uniform shoe.

Optional Items for Students (weather permitting)
Navy or Black heavyweight sweatpants (<i>only cold days</i>) Navy or Black Leggings may be worn <i>UNDER</i> the uniform
Navy and/or white turtleneck (<i>only cold days</i>)
Navy, green, and white headband

Dress Code Due to Injury

Students requiring long term use of “sneakers” due to medical conditions, must provide a doctor’s to the classroom teacher.

Only the school approved “sneaker” for use during the school day may be used.

Only the school’s Navy micromesh gym shorts may be worn.

Dress Code For All Students

- Students may wear a watch, and one religious medal or cross on a thin chain under the uniform shirt, no bracelets.
- No smartwatches are permitted.
- No PE uniforms on Mass days for students in grades 1-8.
- Students who disregard the hairstyle code will be sent to the office and the parent(s) will be called.
- No gum chewing is permitted anywhere on campus.

Girls

- May only have one ear piercing
- Absolutely **NONE** of the following are permitted:
 - Dangling, double loop, huggies or hoop earrings. **Post earrings ONLY.**
 - fake eyelashes, extensions, or makeup of any kind.
 - dyeing, bleaching, or coloring of hair for **all** students
- Hair must be neatly styled. Excessive hair adornments are not allowed.
- PreK-5th grades may not wear nail polish.
- No long nails. Also, only light or pale colored nail polish is permitted in grades 6-8: light or pale pink, white, and nude. (NO metallic colors or chrome colors) If you choose to use Funny Bunny, only two coats are permitted.
- Uniform skirts must be no more than 2 inches above the knee.

Boys

- Hairstyles:
 - Hair must be neatly styled, cut 1 inch above the ears and collar, and not cover the forehead.
 - No irregular multi-layered or fad haircuts, such as, but not limited to, blowouts, fades, etchings, or mohawks will be permitted.
 - No gel or spray may be used to disguise the hair length.
 - Only traditional or crew/business style haircuts are allowed.
 - Hair is to be of natural color. Absolutely no dying, bleaching, or coloring of hair.
- Facial hair is not allowed and the students are expected to be clean-shaven and well groomed. The school holds the right to send a student home for the infraction.
- Earrings are not permitted.

* Rolling backpacks are permitted in Grades 2nd and 5th **only**. NO Zuca backpacks allowed.

ALL UNIFORMS ARE TO BE PURCHASED THROUGH:

***Flynn O'Hara
8653 Southwest 124 Avenue
Miami, FL 33183
(239) 379-4612***

Uniform Infractions

To be consistent with the school's uniform regulations a student may be issued a uniform infraction whenever he /she is not in compliance. After the student has received two (2) uniform infractions the next violation may result in detention.

9. FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are required by law and are an important safety measure. It is essential, at the sound of the alarm, that **EVERYONE** obey the rule of promptly leaving the building as quietly and as quickly as possible. Fire drill routes are displayed in each classroom. The last person out of the room should turn off the lights, and close the doors. Students who are not in the classroom when the alarm is sounded may leave the building by the nearest exit. **SILENCE DURING A FIRE DRILL IS MANDATORY.**

10. HOMEWORK

Written and study homework assignments are based on matter already taught in class periods. Homework may include: written assignments, oral assignments, projects, book reports, etc. Parents should check the home study assignments and written work of the children. Recommended times:

Grades 1 and 2: 30 to 45 minutes
Grades 3 and 4: 30 to 60 minutes
Grades 5 and 6: 45 to 90 minutes
Grades 7 and 8: 60 to 120 minutes

If a student is absent, parents may call the main office or email the teacher for homework before 9:30 a.m. Student work can be picked up from the reception office at dismissal. This arrangement is to minimize classroom distraction and interruptions. Homework is posted on the school website: www.ecsmiami.org

11. PRIVATE TUTORING, COACHING OR LESSONS

Except as specifically noted in this Handbook, the school does not sponsor, oversee, or

otherwise provide private tutoring, coaching, therapy or other similar private lessons or services. Parents who engage school staff members for the provision of these services do so at their own risk and expense and are hereby advised that such services are outside the scope of the staff member's employment with the school. **Parents, by executing the acknowledgment of receipt of this Handbook HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Archdiocese, and their corporate members, officers, employees, affiliates, and agents from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to the provision of private tutoring, coaching, therapy or other similar private lessons or services, regardless of where they may occur.**

12. PARENTAL RIGHTS IN CASE OF SEPARATION

Epiphany School, in accordance with Florida Statute 61.13 (3) may make school records and in- person conferences available to both parents unless a court order specifically revokes this right, in which case it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the court order to the school.

13. FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS – BILLING AND COLLECTION PROCEDURES

This policy has been developed and adopted by the Epiphany School Finance Council. It should be understood by all involved in Epiphany School that this is a Catholic School, one which assists the parents in teaching their children about their Faith. The School is an effort by this Community of Faith to assist the parents who are the first and primary teachers of their children. No one is excluded from Epiphany School on the basis of inability to pay tuition, but each of the families should also accept their individual and collective responsibilities to assure that Catholic Education in the Epiphany Community continues to be available for all members of this Community who desire it.

All of us share in this overall responsibility. Each of us shares in this concern for our individual families. We should assure that all families accept that responsibility so that the burden is not shifted to others to assume what we ourselves can and should provide. This is our duty as a Christian people--to be responsible members of our Faith Community; that is, to build up the Body of Christ. At the same time, we stand always vigilant to assist those among us who seek the support of the community.

With these ideas in mind, the following procedures are now in effect in order to assure acceptance of responsibility to this community by all seeking a quality Catholic education for their children:

Financial Obligations

The satisfaction of all financial obligations to the school, including tuition and fees, constitutes a material condition for continued enrollment in the school. The school may disallow students from taking quarterly, semester, or final examinations if the parents or legal guardians fail to meet any financial obligation to the school. In addition, the school may withhold the issuance of transcripts or any other student records and/or disallow participation in or access to school activities, and/or administratively withdraw the student if any financial obligations are not met.

In the event of a natural disaster, disease outbreak, or any other circumstances which in the judgment of the school administration make it unfeasible, unsafe, or otherwise imprudent to continue campus-based education, school educational programs shall resume as soon as practical by way of distance learning and/or other methods adopted by the school administration and faculty. Due to the school's continuing financial obligations related to its operations, there may be no suspension, reduction, or refund of tuition in these circumstances.

Any child in preschool through 7th grade whose tuition is not paid in full may not receive his/her report card at the end of the year. Any 8th grade student whose tuition is not paid in full may not receive his/her diploma at the time of graduation.

Registration Fee

The registration fee is payable at the time of registration. Registration of the child at Epiphany School is not complete without payment of the registration fee. A child cannot be placed on any class list until registration is complete. The registration fee is to be paid by May 15th. The registration fee is non-refundable under any circumstances. The child may not be allowed to class if this fee is not paid.

Book/Supply/Instructional Fee

The book and supply fee and instructional/supply fee is to be paid by May 15th. If this fee is not paid by the due date, the child may not receive his/her books.

Tuition Billing and Collection

Tuition is payable each month. The first payment is due on August 1st. Payment is to be made in accordance with the policy determined by the school including the use of a third party agency.

Tuition Relief

It is recognized that in any Faith Community there are families who genuinely need assistance so that their children may have a Catholic education. The Archdiocese of Miami has mandated that all schools use the services of an independent third party organization to review

The financial information submitted by each family requesting financial assistance from the school. This third party organization is FACTS; a nationwide company that collects all the necessary information from the family; performs an analysis of the information provided and recommends an amount of assistance for the family. FACTS conducts a detailed analysis of all expenses identified by the family in the application. Each expense is evaluated as **Core** (necessary) or **Discretionary**. Discretionary expenses are not used to determine the FACTS Calculated Need. In order to be considered for financial assistance by Epiphany Catholic School the family is to apply and complete the on-line application process by **May 31**.

Conclusion

These procedures have been placed into effect in order to allow all families in Epiphany School to assume their appropriate responsibilities for the education of their children and to protect those also wishing a quality Catholic education from being burdened unnecessarily by others

who are seeking a private education for their own advantage.

These procedures may be enforced in all cases, but no child may ever be denied a Catholic education in this Community for lack of genuine ability to pay tuition.

14. SCHOOL POLICY AND PRINCIPAL'S RIGHT TO AMEND

Any student action that is not in keeping with the philosophy/objective of Epiphany School is subject to the review of the administration and may lead to withdrawal from school.

Since situations can arise that were not foreseen at the time of writing this Handbook, the school reserves the right to initiate, change or modify the policies as needed.

The Principal and/or Pastor are the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rules for just causes at his/her discretion.

SECTION II – GENERAL INFORMATION

PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES OR ORGANIZATIONS

The school recognizes the following sports, activities and clubs:

1. School Clubs:
 - Debate Club
 - Cooking Club
 - Social Etiquette Club
 - Yearbook Club
 - Faith in Action Club
2. Major School Activities:
 - National Junior Honor Society
 - Student Council
 - Altar Servers
 - Choir and Chorale
3. Athletics:
 - Soccer
 - Basketball
 - Volleyball
 - Track and Field
 - Cross Country
 - Softball
 - Baseball
 - Flag Football

Parents acknowledge that participation in these sports, activities, or clubs may be inherently dangerous, and the school cannot ensure the safety of all students involved in its activities and programs.

Prior to participation in any sport, each parent must have completed the Parent Consent and Release of Liability form and a physician's certificate to the effect that the student is physically fit for participation in the sport. Participation includes pre-season conditioning, open gym, tryouts and practice. Parents, by executing this acknowledgement of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Archdiocese of Miami, and their corporate members, officers, employees, and agents, from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to participation in any sports, leagues, clubs or activities, or volunteer service-hour-programs.

For purposes of this handbook, a club is defined as a group of individuals dedicated to a particular interest or activity and a league is defined as a group of teams or individuals participating in an athletic activity.

The school is not responsible for student participation in any sports, leagues or clubs not identified above. Parents hereby acknowledge that students who participate in any such program or activity do so at their own risk. Parents further acknowledge that the school does not control or sanction any such program or activity and that it shall not be held liable for any injuries or damages sustained by students or others arising from participation in such program or activities.

1. ALTAR SERVERS

The privilege of becoming an altar server is extended to male and female students in grades 7th and 8th. After initial training sessions, the group meets periodically at which time they receive schedules. Each student is responsible to keep his/her appointments or, when necessary, to obtain his/her own substitute.

2. ATHLETICS

Once a student has gained team membership, he/she fills out a parent/teacher permission form and this form is to be signed by the parent. Prior to tryouts, a student submits an updated Plus Portal printout to the Athletic Director. This printout includes all subject areas. No student may watch a home game or practice unless accompanied by an adult.

Students participating in the school athletic program are expected to maintain consistent attendance and punctuality in both classes and team-related activities. Excessive absences or tardies not only impact academic performance but also disrupt team cohesion and preparation. To ensure fairness and uphold the integrity of the program, students with recurring attendance issues may be subject to removal from the team. If there are extenuating circumstances affecting attendance, we encourage open communication with school staff to address these concerns proactively.

3. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

All activities involving students of Epiphany School are offered to enhance the religious, academic, social and physical growth of students, recognizing their special heritage as children of God.

All participants are expected to accept responsibility for their actions so that they may learn the value of accountability as an aid in their personal development. Students who do not exhibit a responsible attitude, both behaviorally and academically, may be deprived of involvement in activities, such as but not limited to, athletics, honor societies, or clubs. Students interested in participating in school activities, clubs, and athletics will need to submit a progress report to the athletic director prior to and during the season. Students are required to have a C or better to participate in school activities.

Procedures regarding accountability are as follows:

A. Academic

1. Any student athlete who receives an Insufficient Progress Report grade or a Progress Report or Report Card indicating a grade of "D" or "F," which amounts to an average of "69" or below in any subject becomes an inactive member. **If a student is deemed ineligible, it is the student's responsibility on a bimonthly basis to show their updated grades to the Athletic Director.**
2. Effective immediately, an inactive member may not participate or attend any practices, games or competitions for two full weeks, beginning Monday and ending the second Friday.
3. If at the end of the second week (Friday), the student athlete has improved his/her grade, he/she may be reinstated to active status.
4. If no improvement is shown at the end of the second week (Friday), the student athlete remains inactive until his/her trimester average improves to a "70" or above.
5. In the event that there is a practice, game or competition over the weekend, and the student athlete does not receive reinstatement at the end of the week (Friday), he/she is not permitted to participate or attend that weekend activity.

All suspensions and reinstatements should channel through the Athletic Director, so that communication between the teachers and coaches is effective.

B. Personal Discipline

1. Teachers may inform the Athletic Director of a serious discipline problem.
2. A decision concerning disciplinary steps to be taken may be made jointly by the administration, teacher(s), and Athletic Director.
3. Disciplinary steps include:
 - a. a student may be deprived of participation in the program for two weeks
 - b. Reinstatement in the program may be at the discretion of the administration, teacher(s) and Athletic Director.
 - c. A student who exhibits a lack of self-discipline over a period of time may be permanently dismissed.
4. Inappropriate conduct during a game may result in disciplinary action.

C. Participation Rules

1. Students with excessive tardiness and/or absences as deemed by the principal may not be allowed to participate in the sports program for a specific amount of time.
2. Any student who arrives after 9:00 a.m. and does not provide official documentation (i.e. Doctor's Note, Court Documents, etc.) may not be permitted to participate in that day's practice or game.
3. Students sent home due to illness may not return to participate in after school activities, clubs, or athletics. This includes tryouts.

Regulations regarding preparation for games are as follows:

(The observation of these regulations is a matter of self-discipline).

1. Practice for primary teams begins at 2:45 p.m. and practice for JV and Varsity teams begins at 3:00 p.m.
2. Home games are always scheduled for 3:30 p.m.
3. Away games which necessitate traveling a distance require permission from the principal for an early dismissal. In these very rare cases, time for dismissal may be announced over the P.A.
4. Sports practice is over at 4:30 p.m. Coaches may not remain after 4:30 p.m. to take care of students. Please be here before 4:30 p.m.
5. If it is impossible for you to make arrangements to pick up your children by 4:30 p.m. on practice days and 5:30 p.m. on game days, then it would be in the child's best interest if you did not enroll him/her in the Athletic Programs.

4. AUTOMOBILE DROP-OFF/PICK-UP

Epiphany Catholic School is a closed campus, thus students may not leave the campus without proper authorization.

1. All students arriving at or leaving school by automobile are to use the drop off areas.
2. Students wait for parent pick-up at the assigned stations in the carpool and singles areas.
3. **ABSOLUTELY** no drop off or pick up of students on any of Epiphany School's surrounding areas, including but not limited to 57th avenue, 84th street, road connecting Lourdes Academy to Epiphany, or the teacher parking lots.
4. No student is permitted to go to a parking lot area to meet his/her ride.
5. Morning drop off is before 7:45 a.m.
6. Please do not leave a car unattended or park in the carpool or singles lines during arrival or dismissal time. If your child is not out at his/her assigned dismissal time, a teacher will require you to exit the campus and re-enter the dismissal line following proper dismissal procedures.
7. Cars may enter the school **5 minutes** prior to their assigned dismissal time. Anyone arriving earlier than 5 minutes will be asked to leave and return at the correct time. **See section 15: School Day for dismissal times.**
8. All families are asked to have their school issued Dismissal Sign visible on the vehicle dashboard upon entering the campus in their assigned pickup area.
9. No limousine or buses are allowed on campus during dismissal.
10. Students in Preschool that have a sibling dismissed at 2:30 on regular days and 12:30 on early release days or later **MUST** be picked up at 2:00, exit the campus and return at the family's assigned dismissal time. All students are to be picked up by 3:10 p.m. In the interest of safety, any students that have not been picked up by 3:10 p.m. are taken to the Reception area to wait.
11. All families are assigned a pickup time. This assigned time is the **only** time one may enter the campus to collect their child(ren) regardless of the circumstance. **No exceptions will be made.**

5. CAFETERIA

All students in PK through 8th grade eat lunch in the cafeteria. Tuition for each student is inclusive of lunch for each student.

Good manners are expected at all times in the cafeteria. Proper eating habits, moderate voice level and courtesy are part of the cafeteria environment.

6. CLINIC

1. The school clinic is located in room 224.
2. Parents may be contacted to pick up students who are sick and should sign the early dismissal register in the reception area.
3. It is important that each student have an up-to-date emergency information.

7. COMMUNICATION

If any parent wishes to speak with a teacher, please send a note or email to the teacher or call the office and the secretary may get a message to the teacher to contact you. If there is a problem involving a teacher, we ask that you speak to the teacher directly before asking to meet with the principal or vice-principal. At no time should a parent come into the classroom before or after school without an appointment.

8. EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Emergency information is kept on file in the school at all times. Parents may be called in the event of accidents, fever, or serious illness. Parents should be sure emergency telephone numbers and other information are kept current. It is important that a change of address/phone number be presented to the teacher and the office when a change takes place.

9. FACULTY MEETINGS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Faculty Meetings are held on the First Friday of each month resulting in students being dismissed early. These times are listed in section 15: School Day.

10. FIELD TRIPS

Field trips which are educational in nature supplement instruction, and are, therefore, desirable and worthwhile.

Requirements:

1. Signed parental permission slip is submitted to the student's Teacher prior to the trip.
2. Transportation to and from field trips may only be allowed on approved school buses.
3. School uniform should be worn unless the nature of the trip requires other appropriate attire. Attire is decided by the teacher.
4. Good personal behavior (students who do not exhibit appropriate classroom behavior may not be permitted on field trips).
5. No siblings allowed.

Since a field trip is a learning experience, the time spent is considered a normal school day. Students who do not participate may be asked to report to school.

11. HONOR ROLL

First Honors criteria:

- All A's /O's in major subject areas: Religion, Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Reading and Science.
- All B's/G's (or above) in minor subject areas: Art, Music, Physical Education, Computer and Spanish.
- All B's /G's (or above) in Conduct and Effort

12. LOST AND FOUND

Parents are requested to mark articles of clothing and lunch boxes with students' names. Articles found are placed in the Lost and Found. Articles not claimed after 30 days may be given to a charitable organization.

13. PARENT ORGANIZATION

The ESAC (Epiphany School Advisory Council) is to inform parents about school programs and concerns. It also serves to advise the pastor and principal as well as to act as a forum for parents to raise questions and voice opinions.

HOME AND SCHOOL

Home and School general meetings are held at the beginning of each school year. These meetings are mandatory for all families, new and returning.

ECS PARENT'S GUILD

The Parent Guild will be a dynamic organization dedicated to fostering a closer relationship between parents, teachers, and the school administration to enhance the educational experience for our children and provide parents with opportunities to become involved.

The primary goals of the Parent Guild include:

1. **Enhancing Communication:** Providing a platform for parents, through involvement in committees, and other such opportunities, to voice their ideas and suggestions regarding operational improvement and help champion them by being actively involved in our school community while serving as ambassadors of our school.
2. **Supporting School Events:** Assisting in the organization and execution of school events, fundraisers, and special programs to enrich our students' school life and our Catholic identity.
3. **Fostering Community Spirit:** Continuing to support the school and faith community through social events and activities that bring families together.

4. **Promoting Volunteerism:** Encouraging parents to volunteer their time, talents and resources to support various school initiatives and programs.

The Parent Guild will work together with the administration and faculty to help carry out the mission of Epiphany within our community - thinking critically, working collaboratively and acting globally. Ensuring it reflects the values and culture of our school and our Catholic identity, the Epiphany Catholic School Parent Guild will work to always represent our school with integrity and a steadfast commitment to Catholic principles.

All parents involved with the Parent Guild must be in good standing with their Virtus requirements, as per the Archdiocese of Miami.

14. REPORT CARDS

In order to match the developmental needs of the students, the Archdiocese of Miami has created four report cards. They are (a) Pre-Kindergarten, (b) Kindergarten through Second Grade, (c) Third Grade through Fifth Grade, and (d) Sixth Grade through Eighth Grade.

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten through Second Grade

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten through Second Grade may not receive a percentage grade. The student may be evaluated on a Performance Scale with 4 as the exceeding expectations level and 1 as emerging skills level. The scale is as follows:

4	Exceeding grade level standards
3	proficient in meeting grade level standards
2	Development in meeting grade level standards
1	Emerging in the development of grade level standards

The goal is for every student to reach a level 3 to be a proficient learner in grade level standards by the end of the school year.

The standards (under each subject) and Active Learner may be measured by:

+	Area of strength
S	Satisfactory performance
-	Area of weakness
NA	Not assessed this quarter

Grades Three through Five and Grades Six through Eight

Grades Three through Eight may receive a percentage grade. The grading scale is:

A	100-90
B	89-80
C	79-70
D	69-60
F	59

Students receive a percentage grade in all subjects, both core subjects (Religion, English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies) and enrichment subjects (Art, Music, Physical Education, and World Language).

The standards (under each subject) and Active Learner is measured by:

- + Area of strength
- S Satisfactory performance
- Area of weakness
- NA Not assessed this quarter

15. SCHOOL DAY

Epiphany School begins at 7:45 a.m. for all students in grades PK3-8. Students who are not in their classrooms by 7:45 a.m. are considered late. Students are dismissed as follows:

- Grades PK3 and PK4 are dismissed at 2:00 p.m.
- Grades K to 2nd are dismissed at 2:15 p.m.
- Grades 3-5 are dismissed at 2:30 p.m.
- Grades 6-8 are dismissed at 2:45 p.m.

On the First Friday of every month, students are dismissed early. The times are:

- Grades PK3 and PK4 are dismissed at 12:00 p.m.
- Grades K to 2nd are dismissed at 12:15 p.m.
- Grades 3-5 are dismissed at 12:30 p.m.
- Grades 6-8 are dismissed at 12:45 p.m.i.

16. SCHOOL NOTICES

On the Epiphany website, the school publishes a monthly Calendar which attempts to keep parents informed of all news concerning Epiphany School. Parents also receive Kings Corner on Sunday evenings detailing important information and dates from the school principal.

17. SCHOOL SAFETY

Teachers and staff members accept the responsibility for the safety of each child as a sacred trust. Cooperation of parents with the safety program is mandatory. As part of the Epiphany Safety Plan, students are not permitted to open external doors of the cafeteria for visitors or parents. Students are supervised by teachers during the school day from 7:30 a.m. - 3:10 p.m. Students who leave the classroom to go on a message, visit the nurse, or for personal reasons, are accompanied by a "buddy." They have been instructed never to walk alone.

18. SCHOOL TELEPHONE

Please limit calls to the school office. The office staff may take only emergency calls. Messages to and transportation arrangements for students should be given to students before school. **Students may not be permitted to use any cell phones, including but not limited to, the school telephone except in case of emergency.**

19. TEXT MESSAGING/PHONE CALLS

The school may use text messages and automated telephone calls to alert parents/guardians of important information related to the school's mission, operations, and activities. Parents/guardians acknowledge and consent to the receipt of these messages when providing their telephone numbers.

20. SCHOOL CHECKOUTS

- Students are not permitted to leave school without permission from the principal's office.
- **Any parent needing to take their child from school before the end of the day is to send notice via email or note to the teacher in the morning requesting the time needed for early dismissal. The latest checkout time is 1:30 p.m.** As stated in Section 4: Attendance Policy, students scheduled for early pick-up may wait in the reception office for a maximum of **30 minutes** past the arranged pick-up time. If a parent or guardian is more than 30 minutes late and has **not contacted the school** to inform us of the delay, the student will be returned to class. Once returned to class, the student **will no longer be eligible for early release** and must be dismissed at the regular end-of-day time.
- If you need to pick up your preschooler early for an appointment, please note that the PreK3 cannot be released between 11:30 and 1:15 and the PreK4 cannot be released between 12 and 1:15.
- Students are expected to be in school on all school days. We discourage leaving early for trips.

For the protection of our students, we may request identification from any adult checking out a student. Only the persons listed on the emergency card may be allowed to check-out a student, unless we receive a written authorization from a parent or guardian, granting permission otherwise.

21. TECHNOLOGY USE

Cell phones, Smartwatches, radios, iPads (non-school issued), MP3 players, Nintendo DS, cameras, etc., are not allowed to be used during class unless otherwise approved by a teacher and/or administration for special events. If these items are visible, the administration or designee will confiscate them and return them at the end of the school day to the student's parents only.

Cell phones, Smartwatches, Air Pods, and headphones are **NEVER** to be used during school time, 7:30 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. Cell phones are to remain OFF and turned into the Homeroom teacher during the school day.

The school may provide its administrators, faculty and students with access to technological devices (e.g. computers, tablets, etc.) various information technology resources including email and Internet access in order to enhance the teaching and learning environment of the school and to improve the school's operations. Students should use these resources in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the mission of the school and Catholic teachings.

Therefore, students are required to print and sign the Technology Contract as well as abide by the following general rules of conduct:

1. Respect and protect the privacy of others:
 - a. Use only assigned accounts and passwords;
 - b. Do not share assigned accounts or passwords with others;
 - c. Do not view, use or copy passwords, data or networks to which you are not authorized;
 - d. Do not share or distribute private information about yourself or others.
2. Respect and protect the integrity, availability, and security of all electronic resources:
 - a. Observe all network security practices;
 - b. Report security risks or violations to the school principal;
 - c. Do not vandalize, destroy or damage data, networks, hardware, computer systems or other resources;
 - d. Do not disrupt the operation of the network or create or place a virus on the network;
 - e. Conserve and protect these resources for other students and Internet users.
3. Respect and protect the intellectual property of others:
 - a. Do not infringe on copyright laws including downloading or copying music, games or movies;
 - b. Do not install unlicensed or unapproved software;
 - c. Do not plagiarize.
4. Respect the principles of the Catholic school:
 - a. Use only in ways that are kind and respectful;
 - b. Report threatening or discomforting materials to the school principal;
 - c. Do not access, transmit, copy or create materials that violate the school's code of conduct (such as indecent, threatening, rude, discriminatory or harassing materials or messages);
 - d. Do not access, transmit, copy or create materials that are illegal (such as obscene, stolen, or illegally copied materials or messages);
 - e. Do not use the resources to further any other acts that are criminal or violate the school's code of conduct;
 - f. Do not use the resources for non-educational purposes such as visiting chat rooms, social websites or networks;
 - g. Do not send spam, chain letters or other mass unsolicited mailings;
 - h. Do not buy, sell, advertise, or otherwise conduct business or political campaigning without prior written approval from the school's principal.
 - i. Do not engage in any form of cyberbullying.

Supervision and Monitoring

The school and its authorized personnel may monitor the use of information technology resources to help ensure that users are secure and in conformity with this policy. The school reserves the right to examine, use, and disclose any data found on the school's information networks or on any technological devices used by students on campus in order to further any administrative concern. It may also use this information in disciplinary actions and may furnish evidence of a crime to law enforcement.

Unacceptable Use of Outside Technology

The school expects students to use information technology and social media (including, but not limited to, the Internet, email, instant messaging and text messaging) in a responsible and ethical fashion in compliance with all applicable laws and with Christian moral principles, both in and out of the school setting. Accordingly, students may not post, place, upload, share, or communicate any images, photographs, statements or inferences relating to or including profanity, vulgarity, indecency, illegal use of drugs, illegal use of alcohol or other illegal or illicit activities. Additionally, students may not use information technology for the purpose of defaming, threatening, teasing or harassing any other student, staff member, parent, faculty member, or other person. This includes, but is not limited to, texting and communications on social networks. In addition, this rule applies to communications both during the school year and while students are on vacation or summer breaks. Students are responsible for all materials and communications made on personal websites and on social media, and the materials and communications should be consistent with Christian moral principles, including any materials or communications posted on their sites by other individuals. Moreover, any unauthorized use of the school's name (or common names associated with the school) or any likeness or image of the school or its employees or agents is strictly prohibited.

Consent

Many technological devices used at school have the capacity to generate audio recordings, video recordings, photographs, and other similar reproductions of images, likenesses, and/or sounds. The use of any such recordings and reproductions is governed by school policy. **Parental/guardian execution of this Handbook constitutes an express consent and waiver as to any such recordings and reproductions incidental to the use of any technological devices on school property or at school events.**

Consequences for Violations

A violation of these rules may result in disciplinary action, including the loss of a student's privilege to use the school's information technology resources and any additional consequences at the principal's discretion including administrative withdrawal.

22. COVID-19 and Related Items

Attendance at school and participation in school activities poses some risks including the transmission of COVID-19 and exposure to related variants. Although the school has taken various measures to reduce the risks of transmission, the possibility of infection from COVID-19 or other communicable diseases is nonetheless present. Parents expressly assume such risks by allowing their children to attend school and participate in school activities and/or by coming onto the school campus and attending school activities themselves.

In the event of a natural disaster, disease outbreak, or any other circumstances which in the judgment of the school administration make it unfeasible, unsafe or otherwise imprudent to continue campus-based education, school educational programs shall resume as soon as practical by way of distance learning and/or other methods. There may be no suspension, reduction, or refund of tuition in these circumstances.

23. VISITORS AND PARENTS

- All visitors and parents are required to report to the Reception area, to sign in and gain entry into the school.
- Parents/teacher conferences may be arranged by either directly contacting the teacher via email or by requesting an appointment through the school office.
- Parents may not be granted impromptu conferences.
- In trying to teach and instill responsibility and accountability to all our students, please refrain from bringing items the children forgot at home. No student may receive any delivered items. **ALL items left at home stay at home!**
- It is extremely important that classroom activities be interrupted as seldom as possible.
- At no time, should a parent disrupt a classroom during the school day.

SECTION III – SPECIFIC POLICIES

1. Anti-Bullying Policy

The school is committed to promoting a safe, healthy, caring, and respectful learning environment for all of its students. As such, bullying is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Therefore, this policy prohibits any unwelcome verbal or written conduct or gestures directed at a student by another student that has the effect of:

- (1) physically, emotionally, or mentally harming a student;
- (2) damaging, extorting or taking a student's personal property;
- (3) placing a student in reasonable fear of emotional or mental harm;
- (4) placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or
- (5) creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or the Catholic mission of the school.

1. Definition

- a. **Bullying** is the willful and repeated harm inflicted upon another individual which may involve but is not limited to: teasing, name-calling, slurs, rumors, jokes, false accusations, intimidation, stalking, innuendos, demeaning comments, pranks, social isolation, gestures, cyber-bullying or other verbal or written conduct. Cyber-bullying includes the following misuses of digital technology: teasing, intimidating, or making false accusations about another student by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital images or website postings (including blogs and social network sites). Bullying reflects a pattern of behavior, not a single isolated incident.
- b. This definition includes students who either directly engage in an act of bullying or who, by their behavior, support another student's act of bullying.

2. Scope

- a. This policy prohibits bullying that occurs either:
 - i. on school premises before, during, or after school hours;
 - ii. on any bus or vehicle as part of any school activity; or
 - iii. during any school function, extracurricular activity or other school-sponsored event or activity.

3. Reporting Complaints

- a. Each student and parent has a duty to report any bullying to the school immediately. If a student experiences (or a parent witnesses or learns of) any incident of bullying, the incident must be promptly reported to the school principal. The principal will provide the student/parent with the Bullying Complaint Report Form which must be completed, dated and signed by the complaining party so that the school may initiate further inquiry, when appropriate.

4. Disciplinary Action

- a. Any student found to have violated this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, which may include: temporary removal from the classroom, loss of privileges, detention, counseling, parent conference, suspension, administrative withdrawal, and/or notification to appropriate authorities. The disciplinary action may be unique to the individual incident and may vary in method and severity based on the principal's discretion.

False reports or accusations of bullying also constitute a violation of this policy and may subject the offending party to appropriate remedial action which may include, but is not limited to, the assessment of costs incurred by the School in its investigation and review of any reports deemed to have been made in bad faith.

Bullying/Harassment Investigation Disclosures. While the School generally prohibits the nonconsensual disclosure of information contained in educational records, limited exceptions apply including for the disclosure to victims of bullying or harassment when disciplinary sanctions or other measures relate directly to the victim. Parents hereby consent and acknowledge that the School may, pursuant to this exception, disclose to the victims of harassment or bullying, and to their parents, any information related to disciplinary sanctions and/or bullying at issue regardless of whether the matters disclosed are part of an educational record.

2. Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence refers to systems that simulate human decision-making processes without direct human intervention. These systems include chatbots, machine learning algorithms, and automated tools. Generative Artificial Intelligence refers to technology that creates content including text, images, video, and computer code by identifying patterns in large quantities and training data, and then creating original material that has similar characteristics. These AI tools have great potential but also have potential risks and ethical implications. Epiphany Catholic School recognizes the growing impact of AI on education and this policy aims to guide our students in the responsible and ethical use of AI within our community.

Before using AI, students should engage in three steps: (1) Consultation. Students should always consult with their teacher prior to using any AI tool to determine if the task, assignment, or assessment can be completed with AI assistance. (2) Documentation. If granted permission to use a Generative AI tool, students must document their interaction with it by cutting and pasting the conversation into a separate document that can be shared with their teacher. (3) Citation. Where its use is permissible, students must cite the use of the Gen AI tool.

AI tools may not replace a student's work and students should be mindful to engage in ethical practices when using AI, carefully consider the validity of any AI generated content, and ensure their work product reflects their original thought and understanding. The presentation of AI generated content without a teacher's approval will be considered academic dishonesty and will result in disciplinary consequences.

3. Child Protective Investigations

Florida law provides that any person who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver or other person responsible for the child's welfare must report such knowledge to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). The school will cooperate with all child protective investigations by DCF or the local law enforcement agency. Reports should be made to Florida's Department of Children and Families by calling the Abuse Hotline at: 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873).

In addition to contacting DCF, abuse may be reported to the Safe Environment Office of the Archdiocese by calling 305-215-6635 or emailing abuserreporting@theadom.org.

Child protective investigations by DCF or local law enforcement agencies sometimes include interviews of students at school and may occur without advance notice. When it is reasonably possible, the school will seek to notify the parents that their child has been asked to participate in a child protective investigation. The school may also request the presence of a school staff member during investigative interviews on school property. However, please note that, under Florida law, DCF and local law enforcement have the discretion to conduct unannounced interviews and to disallow school staff member's presence during these interviews.

4. Community Service Activities

Community service activities are not school activities and Epiphany Catholic School does not mandate or direct any specific location or locations in the community where these services are to be performed. Students are free to select the location where they wish to perform community service so long as the location and the activity meet the requirements of the school. Epiphany Catholic School does not operate or control the locations where students choose to perform community service and consequently the school, its agents, and affiliates do not assume responsibility for any injuries, damages, or losses incurred in the course of performing these services in the community. Students perform these services at their own risk.

5. Conduct

Epiphany Catholic School is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and disciplined learning environment. In order to uphold these standards, the school administration is empowered to fully investigate allegations of student bullying, misconduct, threats of violence, and other concerns that may impact the school community. As part of this process, school administrators may conduct inquiries, review relevant information, and interview students as necessary. Students are expected to cooperate fully with any investigation. The school may also involve parents or guardians at its discretion. The failure to comply with an investigation or provide truthful information may result in disciplinary action.

In addition, students and Parents are expected to behave consistent with the mission, philosophy and spirit of the school and the moral teachings of the Catholic faith as determined by the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Miami. Because the school cannot anticipate all conduct that violates this policy, it reserves the right to take any form of (1) student disciplinary action, including administrative withdrawal, and/or (2) restrictions against any behavior that violates this policy, even if not specifically stated in this handbook.

6. Communicable Diseases and Related Items

Attendance at school and participation in school activities poses some risks including the transmission of communicable diseases. Although the school has taken various measures to reduce the risks of transmission, the possibility of infection from communicable diseases is nonetheless present. Parents expressly assume such risks by allowing their children to attend school and participate in school activities and/or by coming onto the school campus and attending school activities themselves.

In the event of a natural disaster, disease outbreak, or any other circumstances which in the judgment of the school administration make it unfeasible, unsafe or otherwise imprudent to continue campus-based education, school educational programs shall resume as soon as practical by way of distance learning and/or other methods adopted by the school administration and faculty. Due to the school's continuing financial obligations related to its operations, there will be no suspension, reduction, or refund of tuition in these circumstances.

7. Confidentiality Statement

School officials including teachers, administrators and other paraprofessionals in the performance of their duties will have access to student educational records. **Parents/Guardians by executing the acknowledgment of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY AGREE AND CONSENT** to the disclosure of such records including the nature and existence of a disability, a medical/educational diagnosis, or any associated minor adjustments or accommodations made to such school officials with a legitimate educational interest in the information.

8. Drug and Alcohol Policy

The use or possession of illegal drugs or illegal mood-altering substances, alcoholic beverages, drug-related paraphernalia, or the abuse of prescription or over-the-counter drugs by any student on school property or while attending or participating in any school-sponsored activity or at any time the student is wearing a school uniform is forbidden. Transgression of this rule will result in disciplinary action, which may include administrative withdrawal from the school, even for a first offense.

Any student selling drugs on school property or at school functions may result in a disciplinary response, up to and including administrative withdrawal.

The school is committed to a drug-free environment. This commitment may, under some circumstances, prompt a need for testing of students for evidence of substance abuse. It may also involve the use of drug dogs and other methods in the discretion of the school administration which seek to deter the use and/or distribution of illegal drugs or alcohol.

If a student exhibits the symptoms, or is suspected of substance abuse, the school may require that the student undergo substance abuse testing at the parents' expense. If the results of the test suggest abuse (and the substance was not used on or brought to campus or a school-related activity), the school will normally use this information to help the student seek assistance. Refusal to participate in such a test may result in administrative withdrawal from the school.

At times, the school may choose to conduct random drug testing of the student body at the parents' expense.

A school may conduct random searches as set forth in this handbook.

9. Electronic Acknowledgments

Periodically, the school may require that parents or guardians make electronic acknowledgments confirming the receipt and/or acceptance of various policies, procedures, notices, releases or updates. Any time a parent/guardian makes an electronic acknowledgment by clicking “submit” or “accept” on an electronic document, that individual is agreeing that he/she has read, understood, and agrees to be bound by the contents of the electronic document. Electronic acknowledgments and signatures are valid and binding and may serve as consent to the contents of any electronic communication. Parents and guardians are responsible for reviewing the contents of any electronic document prior to making any electronic acknowledgments. In addition, **Parents/Guardians, by executing the acknowledgment of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY AGREE** to receive and be bound by electronic acknowledgments.

10. Financial Obligations

The satisfaction of all financial obligations to the school, including tuition and fees, constitutes a material condition for continued enrollment in the school. The school may disallow students from taking quarterly, semester, or final examinations if the parents or legal guardians fail to meet any financial obligation to the school. In addition, the school may withhold the issuance of transcripts or any other student records and/or disallow participation in or access to school activities, and/or administratively withdraw the student if any financial obligations are not met.

Parents/Guardians, by executing the acknowledgment of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY AGREE to be responsible for the full balance of tuition and any related fees regardless of any scholarship that may be available. Should such scholarship awards not cover the entire balance due or otherwise not become available, Parents/Guardians agree that they remain responsible for the full tuition amount and fees. Additionally, with respect to these scholarships, any student with a disability does not have an individual right to receive some or all of the special education and related services that the student would receive if enrolled in a public school under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), as amended.

11. Fundraising

No student or family member may solicit funds in the school’s name unless such solicitation has been authorized in writing by the principal.

12. Harassment and Discrimination

The school is committed to providing an environment that is free of discrimination and harassment. In keeping with this commitment, the school will not tolerate harassment or discrimination on the basis of a person’s protected status, such as gender, color, race, ancestry, national origin, age, physical disability, mental condition, marital status, veteran status, citizenship status. All employees, faculty members and students are protected under this policy. In addition, this policy applies to all conduct occurring on school grounds, at assignments outside the school, or at school-sponsored events. All students are responsible for helping to assure that any harassment or discrimination is reported. If a student witnesses or learns of any conduct that violates this policy, the

student must immediately report the incident to his/her principal. If, however, the principal is the individual who is believed to have engaged in the inappropriate conduct, the student should notify the Superintendent of Schools of the Archdiocese of Miami. If an investigation reveals that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the school will take corrective action based on the circumstances.

13. Immunizations

The Archdiocese of Miami requires that, prior to attendance in school, each student present or have on file with the school a certificate of immunization for the prevention of those communicable diseases for which immunization is required by the Department of Health. A Florida Certificate of Immunization (Form DH 680) completed by a health care provider licensed in the state of Florida and participating in Florida Shots is required to document the administration of prescribed immunization doses.

The Archdiocese of Miami does not accept immunization exemption requests based upon religious, philosophical, personal, or other reasons. Medical-related immunization exemption requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Such requests must be made through submission of the Florida Certificate of Immunization (Form DH 680) and signed by a health care provider licensed and located in the state of Florida. Medical exemptions are only approved for legitimate documented medical needs. The Archdiocese reserves the right to not accept any medical exemption request.

Should there be an outbreak of a communicable disease at school, students with medical immunization exemptions may be asked to remain home throughout the incubation period of the disease.

14. Medication Guidelines

Except as authorized by the school, students are not permitted to carry or distribute any prescription or non-prescription drugs or treatments, including aspirin, on the school grounds or at any school function. The administering of medicine to a student outside the doctor's office or a health institution is a parental responsibility and should only be delegated to school personnel when necessary and authorized by the school. Parents should ask their physicians if it is possible to prescribe medication so it can be administered at home. Only when necessary will the school allow the administration of medication on campus, and only under the following guidelines:

1. An authorization form must be completed and submitted by a parent or legal guardian of the student. The name of the medication and dosage should be indicated on the form.
2. Medications to be dispensed at school should be labeled with the child's name and the exact dosage. The name and telephone number of the physician should also be on the label.
3. While the school may monitor a student taking the medication, the school will not remind students to come and take their medication.

Exceptions to this policy may be made for the use, supply and administration of an epinephrine auto-injection (Epipen), or as otherwise authorized in writing by the school. In particular circumstances, the school may agree to administer medication or otherwise provide health care interventions that go beyond a minor adjustment for a particular student. In those cases, Parents hereby release the school, the Archdiocese, and their corporate members, officers, employees, affiliates, and

agents from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to the provision of those health care interventions that are beyond minor adjustments.

15. Notification of Rights under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should complete the Request for Release of Student Records and submit it to the School principal (or appropriate school official) identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the School to amend a record should write the School principal (or appropriate school official), clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person or company with whom the School has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using its own employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5920

16. Open Admission Policy

The school has an open admission policy. No person, on the grounds of race, color, disability or national origin, is excluded or otherwise subjected to discrimination in the receiving of services. Nor does the school discriminate in hiring, promotion, discharge, pay, fringe benefits, job training, classification, referral and other aspects of employment on the basis of race, color, disability, age, gender, or national origin.

17. Parental Cooperation

The school views the education of a student as a partnership between the parents and the school. Parents and students are expected to comply with the school rules and policies, and to accept and support the authority of school officials, whether it be at school events, on or off school campus, or on social media or other public forum. Just as a parent can withdraw a child from the school if desired, the school has the right to administratively withdraw a student if it determines at its discretion that the parent or student partnership with the school is irretrievably broken.

The school recognizes the following co-curricular and extra-curricular activities (including official athletics activities and school dances):

- School Clubs
 - Debate
 - Cooking
 - Social Etiquette
 - Yearbook
 - Faith in Action
- School Athletics
 - Soccer
 - Basketball
 - Volleyball
 - Track and Field
 - Cross Country
 - Softball
 - Baseball
 - Flag Football
- Choir
- Altar Service
- Honor Society
- Student Council

Parents acknowledge that participation in these co-curricular and extra-curricular activities may be inherently dangerous and the school cannot ensure the safety of all students involved in its activities and programs.

Prior to participation in any athletic activity, each student must complete the Parent Consent and Release of Liability form and a physician's certificate to the effect that the student is physically fit for participation in the sport. Participation includes pre-season conditioning, open gym, tryouts and practice. **Parents, by executing this acknowledgement of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Archdiocese of Miami, and their corporate members, officers, employees, and agents, from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to participation in any co-curricular or extra-curricular activities, including all athletics activities and school dances.**

The school is not responsible for student participation in any co-curricular and extra-curricular activities not identified above. Parents hereby acknowledge that students who participate in any such program or activity do so at their own risk. Parents further acknowledge that the school does not control or sanction any such program or activity and that it shall not be held liable for any injuries or damages sustained by students or others arising from participation in such program or activities.

For purposes of this handbook, a co-curricular and extra-curricular activity is defined as a group of individuals dedicated to a particular interest or activity, and a league is defined as a group of teams or individuals participating in an athletic activity.

19. Private Tutoring, Coaching or Lessons

Except as specifically noted in this Handbook, the school does not sponsor, oversee, or otherwise provide private tutoring, coaching, therapy or other similar private lessons or services. Parents who engage school staff members for the provision of these services do so at their own risk and expense and are hereby advised that such services are outside the scope of the staff member's employment with the school. **Parents, by executing the acknowledgment of receipt of this Handbook HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Archdiocese, and their corporate members, officers, employees, affiliates, and agents from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to the provision of private tutoring, coaching, therapy or other similar private lessons or services, regardless of where they may occur.**

20. Public Display of Affection

The Catholic school promotes friendship, charity, kindness, love and respect for self and others. However, student inappropriate displays of affection, such as kissing or embracing which connote more than simple friendship, are not permitted in school, at school dances, or at any school event. Those who violate these rules may be subject to disciplinary measures, including detention, suspension or administrative withdrawal. The administration reserves the right to determine what is, or is not, appropriate behavior in a Catholic school.

21. Safety in Private Spaces

Epiphany Catholic School complies with the requirements of §553.865, Florida Statutes, The Safety in Private Spaces Act. Except where facilities are specifically designated as unisex, the school's bathroom and locker room/changing facilities are designated exclusively for use by biological females or biological males. Any student who willfully enters a school restroom or locker room/ changing facility designated for the opposite sex and refuses to depart when asked to do so by any school personnel will be subject to disciplinary consequences as established by the school principal unless a specific statutory exception applies. This handbook provision shall be considered a part of the school's code of student conduct.

22. School-Sponsored Events

The school does not sponsor, oversee, or in any way control parties or social functions at private residences. School-sanctioned events, including all field trips, excursions, or parties, are specifically identified in this Handbook or are identified in the school calendar and/or written notices generated and distributed by the school.

Parents, by executing the acknowledgment of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Archdiocese of Miami, and their corporate members, officers, employees, affiliates, and agents, from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to attendance at parties or social functions at private residences or from participation/attendance at events not identified in the school calendar or in written notices from the school, including field trips, excursions, or parties.

Students engaged in conduct that is contrary to the mission and philosophy of the school may be subject to disciplinary action regardless of whether the conduct occurred at a school-sponsored function.

23. Search and Seizure Policy

The principal and his/her designee has access to any lockers, handbags, electronic devices, cell phones, book bags, desks, cars or any other object that is brought onto the campus of the school or any school-sponsored event, and may remove or confiscate any object which is illegal or contrary to school policy.

24. Section 504 – Policy Statement

Epiphany Catholic School complies with the mandate of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in certain programs and activities. Pursuant to the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act, Epiphany Catholic School will make those minor adjustments that can accommodate students with disabilities to the school's educational programs and activities.

The school's designated 504 Coordinator and contact information are as follows: Dr. LaTonya White, 305-762-1269. Parents with questions regarding the school's disability accommodations or related items should contact the 504 Coordinator. Parents may file a grievance as to any decisions

related to a disability accommodation and request an internal hearing and review by sending a written notice addressed as follows:

Dr. LaTonya White, Associate Superintendent
Office of Catholic Schools
Archdiocese of Miami
9401 Biscayne Blvd
Miami Shores, FL 33138

The internal hearing and review will seek the prompt and equitable resolution of disability discrimination complaints.

25. Sexting

The electronic transmission or receipt from one minor to another of any photograph or video that depicts nudity may constitute illegal sexting. Students engaged in sexting will be subject to serious disciplinary consequences which may include administrative withdrawal from school. In addition, the school administration may report instances of sexting to the Florida Department of Children and Families or local law enforcement for appropriate investigation as to violations of law. The electronic transmission of sexually explicit language by a student may also constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

26. Smoking/Vaping

It is a violation of Florida law for any minor to knowingly possess any tobacco product, nicotine product, or nicotine dispensing device. In addition, the use of tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, and vaping carry known health risks that can be very serious. The use of any tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, and/or vaping in any form is prohibited on school property and at any school events. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary consequences which may include administrative withdrawal from school.

27. Testifying in Divorce or Custody Proceedings

The Catholic Church recognizes marriage as a Sacrament. In the Union of Christian spouses, the sacrament of Matrimony celebrates the relationship of Christ to the Church. Therefore, the school strongly supports the sacrament of matrimony as the foundation of family life and of the domestic Church. In recognition of the importance of the matrimonial sacrament to the Catholic faith, parents agree not to compel the attendance, testimony, or deposition of any school or church employee in any divorce, custody, or other legal proceedings which may in any way involve the dissolution of marriage or the determination of parental/custody rights. A violation of this policy will constitute a breach of the parental cooperation requirement.

In the event that a parent or legal guardian breaches this policy, any school or church personnel who are required to attend legal proceedings may be represented by an attorney. In addition, any and all legal fees and costs incurred by the school will be charged and become the responsibility of the parent or legal guardian.

28. Threats of Violence

The disciplinary consequences for a student whose verbal or written comments, including email messages, that threaten serious bodily harm to another student or member of the faculty or staff or destruction of property, may include, but not be limited to:

1. Immediate suspension from the school;
2. Reporting to law enforcement;
3. Treatment or consultation by a psychologist or psychiatrist at the parents' expense and/or by the school counselor, both of whom may be asked to submit a written evaluation. If it is determined that the child was serious about the threat and has the capacity to carry it out, the child may be administratively withdrawn from the school. If it is determined that the child did not seriously intend to do harm to others, the child may be allowed to return to the school, at the discretion of the school principal.
4. If allowed to return to school, the child may be placed on probation with an indication that, should a similar threat occur, the child will be administratively withdrawn from school;
5. The school should inform the Office of Catholic Schools of these cases. The school may submit an informational report to the police.

29. Transportation Arrangements

Parents hereby acknowledge and agree that the school does not provide or arrange for student transportation to or from school, except as specifically set forth in writing by the school. Student transportation to and from school each day is a parental responsibility. The school does not authorize or endorse any private transportation arrangements. In limited and documented circumstances, a parent may engage a commercial transportation company to transport a student from school; however, any such engagement requires the written authorization of the school and the execution of school documents allowing for such an arrangement. Except upon the written consent of the school, parents should not utilize internet-based transportation services (such as Uber or Lyft) to transport students to/from school and school-sponsored activities.

30. Undocumented Students

A student's enrollment and/or graduation from school does not confer a legal status nor does it serve to regularize an undocumented student. Although the Archdiocese of Miami may assist with the completion of an I-20 form, the school does not guarantee or confer any privileges or rights available to documented legal residents. Parents should consult with immigration legal counsel if they have any questions as to immigration status.

31. Use of Photos

The school reserves the right to use student or parent photos in any school or Archdiocesan publication including but not limited to print publications, videos, or websites including Facebook, Instagram and other social media websites. Any parent who does not want his or her child's picture or video to be used accordingly must notify the school's principal in writing prior to the beginning of the school year. **By executing this acknowledgement of receipt of this Handbook, Parents HEREBY CONSENT, authorize and grant permission to the school, the Archdiocese of Miami, and their**

agents, employees or duly authorized representatives to photograph or videotape students and parents and CONSENT to their publication for any purpose deemed proper by the school, including but not limited to, use on the internet.

Additionally, Parents, by executing this acknowledgement of receipt of this Handbook, HEREBY RELEASE the school, the Archdiocese of Miami, and their corporate members, officers, employees, and agents, from any claims or liabilities that allegedly arise from or are related to the use of student or parent photos.

32. Weapons

Weapons are not permitted anywhere on school grounds or at any school activity. Any student who brings a weapon to any school activity, who is in possession of a weapon, or who threatens others with a weapon may be administratively withdrawn from the school. Any item used to threaten or cause bodily harm may be considered a weapon. In particular, the possession of any instruments or objects that can be used to inflict serious harm on another person or that can place a person in reasonable fear of serious harm will be considered weapons. Included in this category are BB guns, Airsoft guns, and toy or replica guns represented as real guns. Also included in this category is the possession or storage of items which are prohibited at school, including but not limited to ammunition clips, bullets or cartridges, flammable liquids, combustible materials, poisonous substances, mace, pepper spray, and any other items which may result in injury.

APPENDIX: Parent-Student Handbook Acknowledgement Forms



Epiphany Catholic School **2026-2027 Parent-Student Handbook Acknowledgment Form**

I, as Parent or Legal Guardian, acknowledge that I have read the entire contents of the Parent-Student Handbook and understand the consequences of any violations of the rules and policies of the school.

I agree to cooperate with the school in the interpretation and enforcement of the policies outlined in the Parent-Student Handbook. I also understand that the school has the ultimate authority over the administration of the school and the interpretation of the school's rules and policies. Moreover, I further understand that all of the school's policies whether written or verbal are only guidelines and are subject to change at the sole discretion of the school with or without notice.

I also hereby acknowledge that I have read and agree to the terms of the **RELEASES** outlined in the School-Sponsored Events Policy, the Participation in School Athletics or Organizations Policy, and the Use of Photos Policy.

(Print Parent/Legal Guardian Name)

(Date)

(Signature Parent/Legal Guardian)

LIST THE FULL NAMES AND GRADES OF **ALL ENROLLED STUDENTS BELOW:**

1. _____ Grade _____
2. _____ Grade _____
3. _____ Grade _____
4. _____ Grade _____
5. _____ Grade _____