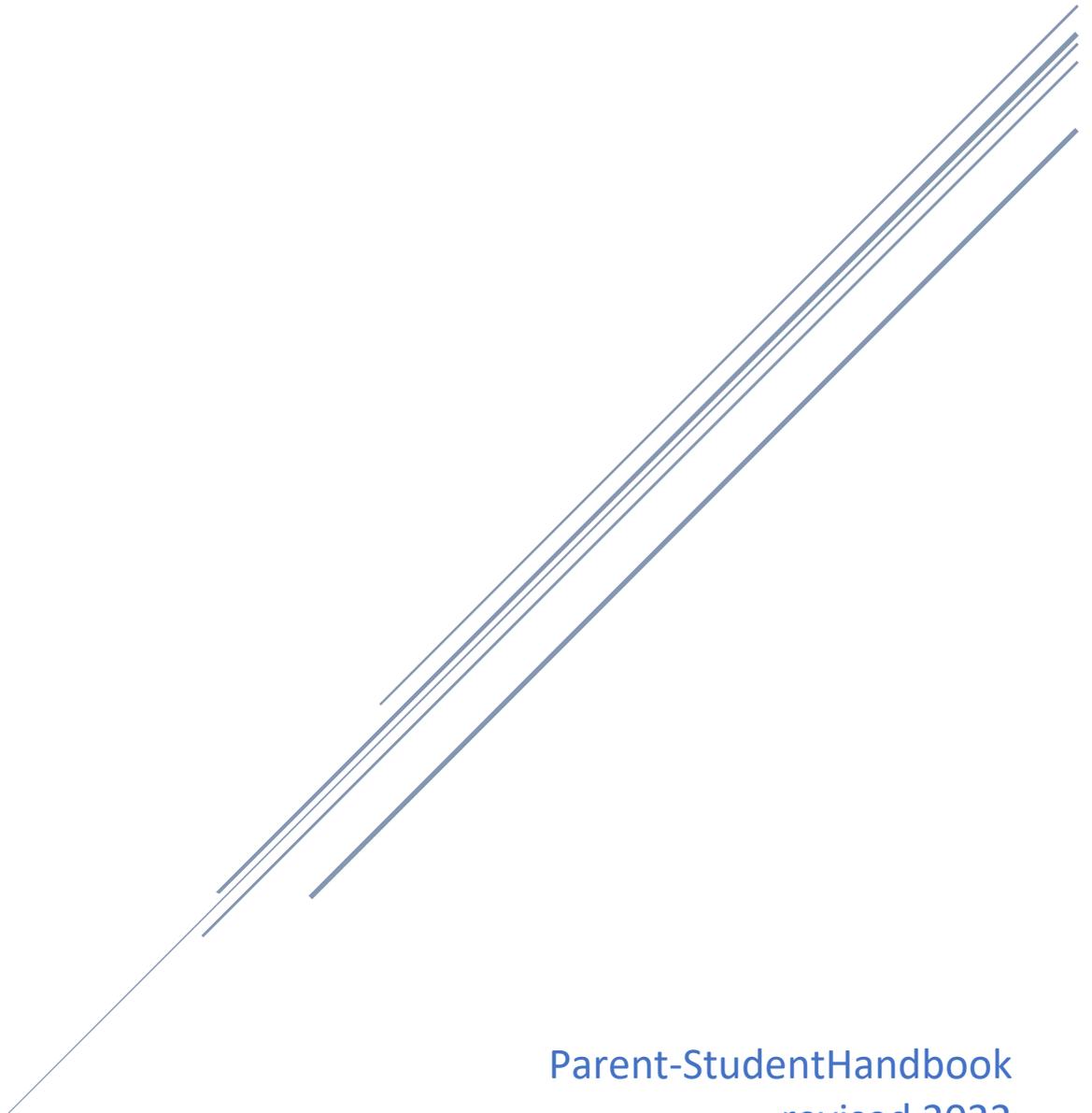


# ERIE FIRST

## Christian Academy



Parent-Student Handbook  
revised 2022

PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK



## FOUNDATIONAL INFORMATION

### Mission Statement

The mission of Erie First Christian Academy is to partner with parents to deliver educational excellence for tomorrow's leaders in developing a world-view that is distinctively Christian.

*Partnering in Reaching the Heart, Teaching the Mind with a Biblical Worldview*

### Vision Statement

Every student, having received academic excellence, will respond to life with a Biblical world-view perspective.

### Statement of Purpose and Philosophy of Education

We recognize that God has ordained the home as primarily responsible for the training of children, and the purpose of Erie First Christian Academy shall be to complement the home by partnering with and not taking the place of parents in this training. Our teachers seek to be proper role models so that the home and school reinforce each other.

Erie First Christian Academy's educational philosophy is based upon a God-centered view of truth as it is presented in the Bible. The Scripture explains man's fallen nature and the need for regeneration through the acceptance by faith of Jesus' redemptive act upon the cross. The entire process of Christian education is seen as a means used by the Holy Spirit to impart to each student a Biblical world view, to bring the student into fellowship with God, and to develop a Christ-like attitude toward all things.

It is our desire that each individual student grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18). As educators, we challenge them to ask, "What is God's purpose for my life?" At EFCA our purpose is to provide each student with the opportunity to develop and excel spiritually, intellectually, socially, culturally, and physically through a quality educational program to help the student answer that question.

### Core Values

Partnering with parents is the best means to support the educational advancement of each student.

### EFCA C.A.R.E.S

- **Christianity** – Christianity is a vibrant relationship with Jesus Christ – a life rooted in Him, nurtured by prayer and governed by God's Word.
- **Acceptance** – Each student is a valued, unique, developing image bearer of God.
- **Relationship** – Team Building is an outgrowth of healthy relationships within the total organization.
- **Excellence** – Intentional improvement toward academic excellence is God's will.
- **Servant** – Servant leadership is to be characterized by Christ likeness.

## Goals

We believe that Christian education involves the spiritual, intellectual, social, cultural and physical development of the student. Striving to provide conditions where each student may reach his God-given potential, primary goals are established for each of these areas.

- **Spiritual**  
To provide a spiritual climate that encourages and enables the student to successfully integrate Christian truth into every area of living. Walk with students on their journey to get to know Jesus in a greater way.
- **Intellectual**  
To provide an academic climate conducive to spiritual growth and academic success.  
To learn skills necessary for meaningful civic engagement.  
To provide a strong foundation for future educational pursuits
- **Social**  
To teach/demonstrate to students how to sufficiently Love Their Neighbor.  
To stimulate an adequate understanding and appreciation of others.
- **Cultural**  
To promote a genuine Love for Jesus.  
To encourage the students to appreciate diverse ethnicities, races and cultures.
- **Physical**  
To provide opportunities for growth in physical performance skills

## Statement of Faith

We believe the following truths:

**We believe** the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative, inerrant Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:21).

**We believe** there is only one God, eternally existent in three persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Genesis 1:1, Matthew 28:19, John 10:30).

**We believe** in the deity of Christ (John 10:33); His virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:35); His sinless life (Hebrews 4:15, 7:26); His miracles (John 2:11); His vicarious and atoning death (1 Corinthians 15:3, Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 2:9); His resurrection (John 11:25, 1 Corinthians 15:4); His ascension to the right hand of the Father (Mark 16:19); and His personal return in power and glory (Acts 1:11, Revelation 19:11)

**We believe** in the absolute necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit for salvation because of the exceeding sinfulness of human nature, and that men are justified on the single ground of faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ, and that only by God's grace and through faith alone we are saved (John 3:16-19, Romans 3:23, 5:8-9, Ephesians 2:8-10, Titus 3:5).

**We believe** in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost, that they are saved unto the resurrection of life, and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation (John 5:28-29).

**We believe** in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, Galatians 3:26-28).

**We believe** in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit who's indwelling the Christian enables Him to live a godly life (Romans 8:13-14, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19-20, Ephesians 4:30, 5:18).

**We believe** that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male and female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:12-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

**We believe** that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4).

### **A MORE EXCELLENT WAY FOR STUDENTS, PARENTS AND STAFF:**

We always have a more excellent way of demonstrating Christ, honoring one another and serving. We encourage our students to pursue a more excellent way in their academics, character and leadership. As educators, parents and administration, we too champion our students forward on this more excellent journey by honoring our responsibilities.

#### **A. RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS:**

1. Accept each person as an individual human being and promote intercultural and group relations and understanding.
2. Apply abilities and interests to the improvement of a knowledge base and to further the development and application of learning skills.
3. Recognize and function within the policies established by school officials.
4. Attend school for the purpose of obtaining a biblical, quality and meaningful education.
5. Demonstrate self-control by showing forth character that is honorable.
6. Contribute cooperatively toward the improvement of the learning setting and strive for godly conduct.
7. Maintain respect for school officials, other students and exhibit conduct reflecting self-control, Godly love and servanthood.

#### **B. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS:**

1. Exemplify an enthusiastic and supportive attitude toward staff and education.
2. Build a good working relationship between themselves and school personnel.
3. Teach their children the fruit of the spirit, a desire for godly living, respect for others and the property of others, and accountability for actions.
4. Insist on prompt and regular attendance.
5. Encourage their children to take pride in their appearance.
6. Cooperate with the school in jointly resolving school-related situations.
7. Become an EFCA Champion.
8. Help their children develop strength to withstand negative peer pressure.
9. Provide a place conducive for study and the completion of homework assignments.
10. Motivate their children to develop a keen interest in learning.
11. Review the Student Handbook as a family, being especially aware of attendance, discipline policies and high school service-learning projects.
12. Make sure that their children are in good health (mental, emotional, psychological etc). Good health is essential to ensure effective classroom performance and maintain steady attendance.
13. Learn all they can about the curriculum and curriculum activities.
14. Attend parent/teacher conferences, parent/teacher organization meetings, and special events sponsored by the school.
15. Be aware that they are responsible for their children's financial obligations. These include, but are not limited to, lost books, fines, mission trips and damage of property.

### **C. RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS/STAFF:**

1. Promote a climate of mutual respect, healthy relationships and dignity which will strengthen the student's self-image.
2. Cultivate a culture in classrooms where ALL students feel safe, seen and heard.
3. Utilize godly wisdom, speech, strategies and techniques that contribute to ALL student's success.
4. Teach students the skills to become responsible citizens and live Christ centered lives.
5. Honor "Time on Task." This helps tremendously in preventing most discipline problems.
6. Stay close enough to students to be available for assistance.
7. Always stand outside your doors to greet students, and to say goodbye to them.
8. Reflect a personal enthusiasm for teaching and learning as well as a genuine concern for the individual student's accomplishment.
9. Guide classroom activities in a well detailed manner.
10. Use the word of God to exhort and guide students on a more Excellent Way.
11. Help students to cope with negative peer pressure.
12. Be sensitive/aware of changing behavioral patterns with your students.
13. Assist students and administrators in developing a climate in the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and growing.
14. Report immediately to the Dean of Students any student who may jeopardize his/her own safety, the safety of other students, the safety of teachers, or who seriously interferes with the instructional program of the classroom as required by the Student Code of Conduct.
15. Serve as surrogate parents/guardians in matters of behavior, discipleship/discipline and academics.
16. Interpret and review the discipline policy with students in class/advisory period.
17. Be just, honorable to God and demonstrate Godly conduct.

### **D. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ADMINISTRATORS:**

1. Promote a climate of mutual respect and dignity which will strengthen the building culture and staff relationships.
2. Reflect a personal enthusiasm for leading and a genuine concern for the school's success.
3. Develop procedures which reduce the likelihood of student/staff misconduct or unsafe learning environment.
4. Make sure that all incidents are carefully and thoroughly investigated.
5. Provide the opportunity for students, staff, and parents to approach the administrator directly for grievances they have.
6. Develop close, cooperative relationships with parents for the educational benefit of students.
7. Utilize all appropriate auxiliary staff and community agencies to help parents and students identify problems and seek solutions.
8. Be fair and steady in all decisions affecting students, parents, and staff.
9. Demonstrate by word and personal example, respect for biblical guidance and order, self-discipline, and a genuine concern for all persons.
10. Strive to walk out biblical character.
11. Assume responsibility for the discipline policy and conversing with parents.
12. Comply with code of conduct regarding suspensions and the rights of students.
13. Support teachers and parents in their effort to see students succeed.

## **Accreditation and Affiliation**

Erie First Christian Academy meets the academic requirements set forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, is registered as a nonpublic school operated by a religious body, and is fully accredited by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSACS).

## **ADMISSIONS INFORMATION**

Admission in Erie First Christian Academy (EFCA) is a privilege and not a right. In that EFCA is a "discipleship school", we seek to enroll students who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who come from a Christian home, who regularly attend a Christ-centered church, and who support the mission of the school. If at any time a student's conduct, academic progress, or cooperation with the school administration of faculty is not acceptable, the school has the right to dismiss the student from enrollment at Erie First Christian Academy.

### **Non-Discriminatory Policy**

Erie First Christian Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, educational programs, or athletics/extracurricular activities. In addition, the Academy is not intended to be an alternative to court or administrative agency-ordered or public school district-initiated desegregation.

### **Admissions - NEW (K-5) Policy and Procedure:**

#### **Policy**

The following policies will be used in determining whether a student is admitted to Erie First Christian Academy in grades K-5:

- Parents are expected to read, understand, accept and support EFCA's statements of Mission, Vision, Purpose and Philosophy, Faith and Core Values.
- Administrators are given the authority to admit qualified students in grades kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Every student in kindergarten through fifth grade may be given an enrollment assessment to determine if EFCA is the best fit academically.

#### **Procedure**

The process of enrollment to EFCA prior to final acceptance shall include, but is not limited to the following:

1. Submission of properly completed application forms and non-refundable registration fee. A copy of immunization records and birth certificate must be included. If the student has attended another school, previous records are to be transferred to EFCA.
2. Entrance test may be given to all students entering kindergarten through fifth grade.
3. An interview with the parent(s) and student(s) with an administrator (principal) is required prior to acceptance. The administrator will ensure that the parents desire a Christian education for their child, and that the family beliefs and practices are consistent with the standards, doctrines and values of the Academy.

4. Family financial tuition commitment is detailed and gone over with the finance secretary. Following completion of the enrollment process, official acceptance is mailed to the family. We reserve the right to deny admission to any child who may have special needs that we may not be able to meet.

## **Admissions - NEW (6-12)**

### **Policy**

The following policies will be used in determining whether a student is admitted to Erie First Christian Academy in grades 6-12:

- All local students in grades 6-12 are expected to have made a personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ. All international boarding students are expected to have an understanding of and open to Christianity.
- Students and parents are members or actively involved in a Bible-teaching church.
- Students have maintained at least a “C” average (2.0 Grade Point Average on a 4.0 system) during the most recent academic year and grading period.
- Students have a satisfactory citizenship record in the school they are presently attending.
- Students must have a desire to attend EFCA and are willing to comply with the school’s code of conduct as printed in the handbook.
- All local students applying must provide reference forms from the student’s church and a current teacher.
- All local students applying **must** show documented proof of required immunization, previous academic records and standardized tests before acceptance can be granted.

The final step for acceptance will come after a completed application and related documents are received, testing (if determined by administration as needed) is completed for grades six through eleven, and an interview has been held. After all of the steps are completed, the admissions committee can make the final determination for acceptance.

### **Procedure Students (9-12)**

The process of enrollment to EFCA prior to final acceptance shall be as follows:

Submission of properly completed application forms and non-refundable registration fee. A copy of immunization records and birth certificate must be included. If the student has attended another school, previous records are to be transferred to EFCA.

1. Entrance test may be given to students entering High School.
2. An interview with the parent(s) and student(s) with an administrator (principal) is required prior to acceptance. The administrator will insure that the parents desire a Christian education for their child, and that the family beliefs and practices are consistent with the standards, doctrines and values of the Academy.
3. Family financial tuition commitment is detailed and gone over with the finance secretary.
4. A personal testimony shall be provided describing how the student became a Christian and describing daily Christian experience.
5. Following completion of the enrollment process, official acceptance is mailed to the family. In our desire to establish a more excellent way we will strongly encourage families to seek entities with resources available to students with needs that surpass our capabilities to assist with.

## Admissions – RETURNING Students (Grades 1-12)

### Procedure

The process of re-enrollment of all returning students is as easy as returning four forms:

1. Form #1 – **Registration** (Salmon sheet) – Open enrollment for the coming school year begins the night of Open House. All completed registration forms submitted along with the non-refundable registration fee of \$50 on the night of Open House will receive a \$300 family scholarship. The Registration form along with non-refundable fee secures placement on the class roster provided forms 2, 3 & 4 are completed and turned in to the school office by closing hours the last day of school.
2. Form #2 – **Tuition Payment Contract** (Gold sheet) – Submission of properly completed tuition payment contract to the finance secretary. This form must be completed and turned in to the school office by closing hours the last day of school.
3. Form #3 – **Emergency Form** (Blue sheet) – Updated emergency information must be done each and every year. This includes physical and email addresses along with persons to whom the student may be released. This form must be completed and turned in to the school office by closing hours the last day of school.
4. Form #4 – **Act 195 & 90, Photo Release, Church Affiliation, and Parent's Acceptance of Handbook** (Green sheet) – This form must be completed and turned in to the school office by closing hours on the last day of school.

## Financial Policy

### Registration

Fees are payable annually and will guarantee class placement. Enrollment will be processed on a first-come, first-serve basis. This fee is non-refundable and must accompany all paperwork. Once classes are filled, names will be put on a waiting list.

### Tuition Payments

- Option 1- Single Payment - due postmarked by June 30 of current school year.  
\$100 full payment scholarship will be given toward the Tuition only if the deadline is met.
- Option 2 - Two Payments – ½ tuition due postmarked by June 30.  
Remaining ½ tuition postmarked by December 1.  
10% procrastination fee will be charged for unmet deadlines.  
**NO EXCEPTIONS!**
- Option 3 - FACTS Monthly Debit – Two options available  
Tuition budgeted over 10 months July thru April.  
Tuition budgeted over 12 months July thru June.  
Non-refundable, application fee of \$43.00 applies.  
Returning FACTS families will be electronically re-enrolled.  
New families enrolling for this option must contact the School Finance Secretary @868-4876 x277 to complete the FACTS contract.  
Payments may be withdrawn on either the 5th or 20th of the month.  
FACTS Credit Card Plan- convenience fee also applies.

In circumstances of early withdrawal from enrollment, families are required to pay tuition through the end of the quarter that the student is active in. **There will be NO tuition refund after 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter.**

Adjustment to fees - since we have an obligation to our employees, students are considered enrolled for the entire school year. Tuition is calculated on the basis of the entire year; therefore, no deductions shall be made on tuition for absence during the school year, regardless of the cause of such absence.

**All accounts must be paid in full for the year in order for report cards or transcripts to be released. This includes all tuition charges, late fees, book fees, lunches, student activities, athletics, damaged materials charges, etc.**

# STUDENT INFORMATION

## Academics

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania recognizes Erie First Christian Academy as a non-public, licensed day school for the education of children. It is further recognized that the school uses courses of study which meet all the requirements for a superior Christian education.

Our elementary curriculum for grades K-5 includes Bible, language arts (reading, composition, spelling, phonics, grammar, and handwriting), science, math, social studies, music, art, health/physical education, Spanish, and computer instruction.

Our middle school curriculum for grades 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup>, consists of Bible, English (grammar, vocabulary and composition), reading, science, math, social studies, computer, Spanish, music, art, and health/physical education.

Our high school curriculum for grades 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>, offers an academic college preparatory program. Students must complete a minimum of 27.5 credits over four years of high school that are distributed as follows: Four credits in Bible, English, social studies, math, and science; 6 credits electives; one and a half credits in physical education and health.

Students who transfer from other high schools will receive graduation credit at EFCA for any courses in which a final grade of at least 65% was earned. However, NCAA and other educational institutions may not recognize these credits if they were not considered passing by the other school's standards. In such cases, it may be in the student's best interest to take a credit recovery class to make up failed classes.

Grades earned at other high schools are NOT included in the student's GPA at Erie First Christian Academy.

## Academic Testing

- Terra Nova tests will be administered in the spring of each year in grades K-11. These tests are a tool to aid in interpreting a child's academic achievements. Parents will be notified of the student's scores. The Terra Nova tests are norm-referenced tests and must be given in a classroom setting for accurate results.
- PSAT and ACT are tests that are offered and encouraged for our 11<sup>th</sup> grade students. The PSAT and ACT measures critical thinking skills that are important for success in college. These tests can be used to get feedback about critical academic skills, seek information from colleges, enter scholarship competitions, and practice for the SAT Reasoning test.

## Academic Awards

EFCA will maintain an honor roll for students. Those who achieve excellence will be recognized by being awarded:

- **High Honor Roll** – A student who receives an “A” average as a final grade (92% or greater). This also includes the Specials/Electives Classes on the report card.
- **Honor Roll** – A student who receives a “B” average as a final grade (82%-91%). This also includes the Specials/Electives Classes on the report card.

## Adaptations

RATIONALE - In an effort to enable students to participate and succeed in Erie First Christian Academy's classrooms and to fairly assess their competence, effort, and progress, it is sometimes necessary to make certain adaptations in curriculum and/or instruction. These measures are taken according to the following guidelines. adaptations only occur following a meeting with the child's parents and consent is given.

CLASSIFICATIONS – Students in EFCA classrooms generally can be conceptualized as learners in one of four categories:

- **Category I** – Students who engage in the school's academic curriculum and meet the school's regular standards with no accommodations.
- **Category II (Best practices)**- Best practices are NOT considered accommodations and therefore do not require meetings or **documentation** on report card or on student file. Minor adjustments to the typical classroom environment, to the curriculum, or to the presentation of the material but meet the school standards.
- **Category III** – Accommodations are implemented when needs exceed best practices to the typical classroom environment, to the curriculum, or to the presentation of material and have significant difficulty in meeting the school's standards.
  - \*Please refer to the Erie First Christian Academy Curriculum/Instructional Accommodations Checklist.
  - These students who have received a complete psycho-educational evaluation by the school psychologist and who have the diagnosis of specific learning disabilities or borderline learner.
  - These students who have been diagnosed by a qualified physician to have a hearing impairment, visual impairment, attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), or other disabilities that interfere with their learning.
  - These students who have received a recommendation for accommodations and/or modifications from the Pupil Services' staff, the BLST (Building Level Support Team), or another appropriate involved agency.
- **Category IV** – Students who have significant difficulty in meeting the school's standards and have been identified eligible and in need of Special Education Services. These students will be eligible for BLST services
  - Services should not be duplicated.
  - Adaptations are determined on a year-to-year basis.
  - Modified Program notation must be made on the Academy report card.

The Academy's Classroom Curricular/Instructional Adaptations Checklist supersedes the Academy's Supplemental Progress Report.

Notification and Consent – To ensure that parents understand why their children are receiving accommodations and which accommodations they are receiving, a written agreement of accommodations will be printed on letterhead and signed by the parents, Dean of Students, and the teachers responsible for enacting the accommodations. When appropriate, the student may also sign the agreement. The original agreement is placed in the student's file and a copy is given to the parents.

## Student Champion Initiative

Our Student Champion initiative is to break through the barriers that are interrupting a student's ability to engage in learning activities and/or remain in the learning space. Some students need that extra assistance and we have developed a process for our students who are believed to require more resources by way of the Student Champion Initiative.

Grades 1<sup>st</sup> grade – 5<sup>th</sup> grade: Champ Chart, Meetings (contingent upon the discretion of the teacher), Follow-ups and recommendations.

6<sup>th</sup> grade – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade: Students will do check in's with Dean of Students or Guidance Counselor based on recommendation of the Guidance Counselor.

There are 3 tiers to Student Champion Initiative:

1. **(Champion) Proactive for Pupils:** Proactive universal support to enhance academic, social-emotional and behavioral outcomes with ALL students. All students are champions and can earn Lunch Bunches, prizes, Homework passes etc.
2. **(Channel) Taking Steps Forward:** Focused on the root causes of interruption in the child's ability to learn. Once a child is identified, the Elementary or Secondary team begins to discuss what needs to be addressed and what are the possible strategies needed. This is for students who may have minor concerns and just require a few check in's/conversations to shift their emotions etc.
3. **(Challenge) Plan of Action:** Connect with parent(s)/Guardian for meetings, sharing what conclusion has been reached for the student, should outside resources be needed we will assist with connecting Parents/Students to those resources. We identify the behavior as the challenge not the child.

Action is taken for students who:

- Receive 3 write ups for behavior that is destructive/concerning.
- A suspension for behavior that creates an atmosphere where the student or other students cannot learn. Families will be encouraged to connect with agencies for resources prior to child's return with a release of information signed to open the line of communication for school and entity.

## Cumulative Records

A cumulative record will be kept for each student which includes yearly grades, attendance information, and standardized test scores along with demographic information. Records are maintained in accordance with the regulations governing confidentiality and parental access. A parent may request access to their child's record by contacting administration.

Any request for providing records to outside agencies must be accompanied by an official release form.

## Textbooks and Curriculum

The EFCA administration recognizes its responsibility for the monitoring and improvement of the educational program. To this end, the curriculum shall be evaluated, adapted and developed on a continuing basis and in accordance with a plan for curriculum growth. The administration shall develop and administer guidelines and procedures for curriculum development and improvement process which:

- Are consistent with EFCA philosophy, vision, mission, and core values.
- Will establish a regular cycle for review, revision, development, adoption, and implementation in all curricular areas.
- Is based on student needs and evaluated by student performance.
- Is consistent with state requirements and reflects Christian school community and workplace expectations.
- Provides for student performance data to be systematically collected, reported and used as a basis for future program improvements.
- For the purposes of this policy, **curriculum** shall be defined as the planned instructional program that is to be delivered to the students.
- The only textbook not supplied is the Holy Bible. All students, first through twelfth grade, are required to have The New International Version Bible.

## Lost and Damaged School Materials

Textbooks, workbooks, and library books issued by teachers are the student's responsibility. If a student destroys or loses any of these items and/or other school materials or property, a replacement cost will be charged. All student text books should be in their locker or with the student.

## **Grading System**

Each teacher is responsible for evaluating the achievements of each student in each subject. The following standardized grading scale will be used by all teachers in all subjects:

A-92-100	The work is of superior quality and shows mastery of the subject matter.
B-82-91	The work is of excellent quality and shows a thorough knowledge of the subject matter.
C-71-81	The work is of average quality and shows general knowledge of subject matter.
D-61-70	The work is below average, but shows some evidence of growth.
F-60 or below	The work is unsatisfactory, with little growth taking place, showing lack of interest and attention.

Elementary students may also receive skill grades of O (Outstanding), S (Satisfactory), or N (Needs Improvement).

## **Grade Point Calculation Policy**

- GPA's are computed based on final grades (i.e. final semester grade for semester length classes or the final grade for year-long classes).
- Some challenging high school classes receive credit on a 4.5 scale, and Advanced Placement and dual enrollment courses will receive credit on a 5.0 scale for grades of "C" and above. Not every course is offered every year.
- Erie First Christian Academy will only compute and report a student's GPA based solely upon their work completed at EFCA.
- Valedictorian and Salutatorian criteria are based on GPA and three years' enrollment at EFCA.

## **Homework**

Homework is an important and integral part of the educational program at Erie First Christian Academy. It usually falls into one of three categories: Practice, Preparation, and/or Extension. It is an extension of daily instruction for the purpose of reinforcement, enrichment, and application of skills and concepts developed in the classroom. Homework may include, but is not limited to, reading a book for information, doing a project, interviewing a resource person, visiting a local historical site, writing a story or research report, or watching an educational program. These kinds of assignments can be exciting and aid in classroom discussions.

Homework should not be busy work or punishment. It is geared to the achievement level of the student and may be individualized as needed. Homework assignments should be completed when due. If assignments are inadequate or missing, a parent can view your home portal (INOW) for updated grading information. In an effort to promote quality family and devotional time, homework will be limited on Wednesday evenings and weekends. When homework is assigned, it should

average one half hour per night in grades 1 – 3 and one half to one hour per night in grades 4 – 8, one to two hours maximum and no more than twenty minutes per class in grades 9-12.

### **Library**

The library is open from 8:30 am – 3:30 pm., Monday thru Friday. The library is open to both class and individual use during the school day as long as there is supervision.

All library books, except those designated as reference, reserve, and non-circulating may be checked out for a period of one week. Students may not check out additional library materials if they have overdue materials on record. Payments for lost materials will be based on replacement costs.

### **Parent / Teacher Conferences**

Parents are urged to attend the Parent/Teacher Conferences scheduled at the end of the first quarter and mid-term of the third quarter. Additional Parent/Teacher Conferences may be scheduled at any time throughout the school year. Parents are requested to make appointments with teachers to discuss concerns.

### **Promotion / Retention**

The decision to promote or retain an elementary child at the end of the school year will be based on the child's ability to function adequately at the next higher grade level. Aspects to be considered will include academic progress (especially in reading, language, and math), presence of any learning disabilities, and social maturity. All efforts will be made to inform the parents of possible retention no later than the end of the third quarter. The final decision for retention will be made by a team consisting of the classroom teacher, head of school, dean of students, and other professional staff members. If continued non-achievement is evident, the child will be reevaluated by the appropriate professionals.

Secondary students are required to make up all failed classes during the summer months.

### **Special Services / Act 89 / Title 1**

Special services are available at EFCA through the state of Pennsylvania Auxiliary Funds Program. A school nurse visits the school on a regular basis. The Pupil Services Center under Act 89 provides the services of a school psychologist for K-12. The psychologist addresses academic problems and/or social issues within the home, school or both. Referrals for consultation may be made by parents or teachers. After the consultation form is processed, a professional from the Pupil Services office will visit the appropriate setting or settings; consultation will begin, and further psycho-educational evaluations will be done if deemed necessary. Should the parent decide to take the child for a private evaluation, a copy of the results must be forwarded to the school office. Formal referrals will require the parent's informed consent.

Students identified with learning disabilities are eligible for consultative services through the Act 89 Program, with a learning support specialist.

Title 1 Reading and Math support programs are available for students who qualify under Federal Guidelines.

Auxiliary math, reading and speech services are also available through the Act 89 Program. Certified teachers are provided by the Northwest Tri-County Intermediate Unit #5. The Act 89 teachers may "push-into" the classrooms to support and reinforce instruction delivered by the classroom teacher. If parents have any objection to their child(ren) receiving help in this way, they are asked to notify the school office in writing.

Classroom teachers may recommend students for individualized or small group instruction with the Act 89 specialist. Before this type of instruction is begun, a consent form called an "Informed Parental Permission for Instruction" must be signed.

A licensed speech therapist provides speech therapy for EFCA students. Speech screenings are done early in the fall with all Kindergarten and new incoming students.

### **Statement of Special Needs**

Erie First Christian Academy commits itself to help students whose families wish them to benefit from a Christian education. Today, more families of special students also wish to have their children educated in this Christian tradition. Erie First Christian Academy maintains as a goal the offering of a Christian education and its values to all students, regardless of challenging conditions or special circumstances. In practice, however, some students' special needs exceed the resources of our Academy, and because of this, we are bound in the child's interest and in good faith to guide such students' parents to more appropriate programs. This decision will always be made very carefully and our goal of providing a Christian education to all students, whose families want one, will be pursued whenever appropriate.

### **Transcript Release Policy**

- Erie First Christian Academy will release a transcript only after first securing permission from the Business Office to make sure the account is current.
- If the account is current, a transcript of a former student will be sent, or a transcript of a present student along with a copy of the student's last quarter grades will be sent.
- If the account is not current, no transcript or other written details regarding the student's academic record will be sent.
- If an account is open, EFCA will release by telephone to another counselor courses the student has taken for scheduling purposes.

## School Schedule

### Time Schedule

The schedule of the school day is as follows:

Office Hours .....	8:00 – 4:00
Teachers' Hours .....	7:50 – 3:45
Student Arrival .....	8:15 – 8:45
Student Dismissal .....	3:15 – 3:30

### After Care

Adult supervision is offered before and after school upon request and if space is available. Please call the school office for availability and fees. Parents must sign in their child to before care and sign out their child every evening before leaving and note the time. Children who have not been picked up by 3:30 may be sent directly to After Care and may be charged a "Late Pick-up Fee" of \$3.00 for each ten minutes or part of ten minutes per child. Parents will be billed accordingly. **Only students who are enrolled in these programs are to be in the building after 3:15 p.m.**

### Inclement Weather and School Closing

In the event of inclement weather or disaster, it is possible for school to be cancelled, delayed, or dismissed early. The following are in effect:

- Public announcements or decisions will be communicated via television and telephone (blackboard connect) as the situation requires or permits.
  - In closing schools for inclement weather, every effort will be made to make public announcements prior to 6:00 a.m.
  - During some inclement situations, the school will use a two-hour delay in opening. This will be communicated via television and telephone (blackboard connect).
  - If school is to be dismissed early due to emergency conditions, announcements will be made via television and telephone (blackboard connect) as soon as the decision is reached.
  - Parents should use their best judgment when sending students out in inclement weather.
  - It is very important to watch the television stations in the above situations.
- **WJET-TV Channel 24**
  - **WSEE-TV Channel 35**
  - **WICU-TV Channel 12**

### PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL

#### Early Dismissal

EFCA students will be dismissed from school occasionally at 12 noon. (Please see school calendar for these predetermined days.) All families must make pickup arrangements for your students. There will be NO busing available these on early dismissal days. (See page 29 for Traffic Pattern)

## Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is one of the most important factors for a successful education and has a strong impact on academic progress. Please adhere to our Attendance Policy as its vital to academic success.

### ATTENDANCE

“Attendance” is the presence of a student on days school is in session. “Absence” is the failure of a student to attend school on those days, half days and hours school is in session. Attendance is required of all students enrolled in the school during the days and hours that school is in session, except when the absence is “excused” as set forth below.

The administration here at EFCA requires that school-aged students enrolled in our school regularly attend in accordance with the laws of the state. The educational program offered by our school is predicated upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation. The regular contact of students with one another in the classroom and participation in well-planned instructional activity under the tutelage of a competent teacher are vital to this purpose. The administration believes there is an educational nexus between classroom presence and achievement and that class attendance is relevant to the pupils’ overall performance, achievement and academic success. It is the policy of our school that pupils who are “truant” or have missed class due to unexcused days shall receive no credit for work or tests missed on the unexcused days (unless it is discussed and planned out with the teacher/guidance counselor).

### Attendance Guidelines

- 8:45a.m Warning bell will sound- Students should be making their way to HR. Staff should be outside of the HR door to get their HR students into HR.
- 8:50a.m Homeroom Bell will sound- Students arriving after 8:50 a.m. are considered tardy.
- Students who miss homeroom will be marked as Absent.
- Students arriving after 9:30 a.m. are considered absent for a half-day.
- Students arriving after 12:45 p.m. will be considered absent for a whole day.
- Students leaving before 2:30 p.m. will be considered absent a half-day.

### Excused / Unexcused Absences

Attendance at school is required by PA School Code. EFCA accepts only TEN (10) excuses as valid reasons for being absent from school. “Excused absence” shall mean an absence from school which is permitted under this Attendance Policy. Excused absences include:

- a) **Illness:** If a student is dismissed from school during school hours for health-related reasons by a certified school nurse, registered nurse, licensed practical nurse or a school administrator or other school official, the student’s absence from school shall be deemed excused. If a student is unable to attend school due to illness, the student shall submit to the school a written excuse from either his/her parent or licensed practitioner within three (3) school days after the absence. Failure to submit a written excuse within this time frame shall result in the absence being recorded as unexcused. If a student accumulates more than ten (10) absences due to illness during one school year, the school administration shall require the student to provide a medical statement or excuse from a licensed practitioner for every subsequent absence due to illness. Failure to provide the requested

medical excuse shall result in such absence being classified as unexcused. The school will send a notification to the parent/guardian/person in parental relation after a student has accumulated ten (10) absences due to illness during the school year, warning them of the implementation of the ten-day rule.

- b) **Death:** in the family, to allow for students to attend funeral or burial services and grievance days.
- c) **Religious:** holidays.
- d) **Emergency:** school administrators will determine whether a specific circumstance qualifies as an “emergency” on a case-by-case basis.
- e) **Delay or absence of school bus.**
- f) **Educational:** tour/Mission trip/high school shadow.
- g) **Family trips:** Special permission is required for students to take family trips during the school year. At least two (2) weeks prior to the trip, the parent/legal guardian must submit a written request to the school office. Attendance secretary will review the student’s records (attendance, disciplinary and academic). Students who have a history of attendance issues, discipline issues and/or who are in academic jeopardy may not receive approval from the Head of School to take a family trip during the school year. The school administration shall only approve one family trip per student per year and the duration of that trip may not exceed ten (10) school days. Family trips that are not pre approved by the Head of School shall result in the student’s absence being recorded as unexcused.
- h) **Truancy Court appearance.**
- i) **Dental, medical and therapy appointments:** Students who need to leave school for the purpose of obtaining professional health care, dental care or therapy service rendered by licensed practitioners shall submit a note from the parent and/or an appointment card from the doctor/dentist/therapist to the school office prior to the appointment. Students/parents are asked to schedule medical appointments after school as much as possible. The student must obtain written proof from the doctor/dentist that he/she appeared at the appointment, which must be returned to the Attendance secretary upon the student’s return to school, or the absence will be considered UNEXCUSED.
- j) **Weather emergency – If the Head of School orders the schools closed, parents are not required to send a written excuse for their child’s absence on that day.** If the Head of School makes a public announcement that parents may use their discretion whether to send their child to school, parents may make the determination whether to have their child attend school. If the child misses’ school on an official “parent discretion day,” the parent must send a written excuse regarding that weather-related absence with their child upon the child’s return to school.

All other absences are considered unexcused and may result in truant policy action according to student’s home district policy.

The administration of EFCA is required by state law to report to the home district superintendent any child who has been absent three (3) days or greater without lawful excuse.

Disciplinary action will begin within 8 days of absence unexcused and possibly excused if the absences are interrupting students' learning and reflecting in grades. An informational letter will be sent home at this time. This information is designed to remind you of the days missed and the importance of attendance. The

next level of discipline will occur once the student has missed 13 days. A meeting will be scheduled with the administration team and parents. If a student should miss 18 days, excused or unexcused, a final disciplinary action may be implemented. A Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP) will be developed for students who exhibit habitual truant behavior

The administration of EFCA is required by state law to report to the home district superintendent any child who has been absent 3 days or equivalent without lawful excuse. **13 or more days considered Habitually Truant**

A child is "**truant**" if the child is subject to compulsory school laws and has incurred three or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year. A child is "habitually truant" if the child is subject to compulsory school laws and has incurred 13 or more school days of unexcused absences during the current school year.

Every principal or teacher in a public or nonpublic school and every private tutor is required to timely report unexcused absences of three days or their equivalent (i.e., when a student is truant) to the appropriate person(s) (superintendent, attendance officer, home and school visitor, or secretary of the board of school directors of the student's district of residence) in a timely manner.

### **Notification of Absence longer than three days**

If a student has been absent, due to illness, for three or more consecutive days, a written excuse from a doctor must be submitted on the day the student returns to school.

### **Make-up work Guidelines**

When a student is absent, the student must work with the teachers to get the work made up within 2 weeks. We champion student leadership and encourage our students to meet with teachers to gather all work and get it finished and returned. When an absence occurs, the student shall receive full credit for make-up work, unless it is turned in past the deadline.

Work or tests assigned prior to the absence, which fall on the date of the absence, or the following day, should be turned in or taken the day the absent student returns to school. An exception to this would be if the parent wrote a note stating that the student was unable to do any studying at all during his illness; the test could be delayed by one day.

If a student is absent for an extended period of time (three or more days), parents are to receive assignments through their home portal (INOW) when possible. The teacher will provide work for the student if requested by the parent. A twenty-four-hour notice is required to have the assignments prepared by the staff.

### **Non-School Sponsored Education Trips**

Vacations taken during the school year, other than those scheduled by EFCA, must have the Preplanned Trip Form filled out and returned to the office at least one week before making final arrangements for travel. The duration of pre-planned trips should be no longer than 10 school days for the entire school year. EFCA encourages family vacations as positive growth experiences for your children. We have endeavored to allow adequate time in the school calendar for these activities. We strongly urge parents to plan family vacations only during scheduled school breaks.

### **Releasing Students for Medical Appointment**

When taking a child out of school, notify the office by a note as soon as school opens that day. Every effort should be made to schedule appointments at times other than school hours. If it is necessary to schedule an appointment during the school day, a parent/guardian or designated person is to pick up the student in the school office. The person picking up the student must come to the office and sign the child out. If a

child must attend a scheduled doctor's appointment during the school hours, a physician's note is required upon return for an excused absence.

### **Tardiness**

Parents have the responsibility to make sure that their child arrives to school on time. Your child is tardy if he/she is not in the homeroom **by 8:50 a.m.** If your child is tardy, he/she is to go directly to the office for a tardy slip indicating whether the tardiness is excused or unexcused and present the slip to the teacher.

- Elementary – Each quarter the student will begin with a clean record. Parents will receive a letter in the mail or email if tardiness continues.
- Secondary – Each quarter the student will begin with a clean record. The first 3 times a student receives an unexcused tardy will result in a verbal warning. After the 3<sup>rd</sup> tardy, the student will serve after school detention all others.

## **Dress Code Policy –General Rules Applicable to All Students**

The following regulations regarding student dress generally applies to all students, in addition to the more specific requirements of the Dress Code Policy detailed below. Please see UNDER STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT PAGES 27-29.

## Student Code of Conduct

\*Middle to high school students\*

Here at EFCA we believe in disciplining our students to make better decisions and live in the character of Christ. We fully believe in helping our students function in the lifestyle of the fruit of the spirit and walk in accordance with them: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. We understand the word is a light in darkness and we will collectively use the word to correct and exhort simultaneously. We encourage our students to be world changers and conduct themselves in the manner of Godly governance. EFCA's code of conduct is in place to ensure we have a safe and sound environment conducive to learning efficiently and to protect our students and staff at all times.

Here at EFCA we will work off of a merit system that will coincide with the code of conduct violations. Every student will begin the year with 25 merit points. The goal is to keep all 25 of the points. Pending the violations students may lose a point. Every 5 points could possibly result in students facing consequences from detention, suspension to possible expulsion. Any of the violations made that result in a consequence will be documented in INOW for parents' awareness. Notifications for meetings will occur once violations are excessive and concerning for faculty and admin. Guidance Counselor will notify the Dean of Students should students require Student Champion Initiative involvement versus consequences.

The following general rules are applicable to each/every Code of Conduct Violation:

**Level I Violations-** Are those of a less serious nature that do not necessarily pose a threat to the health, safety, welfare or property of any person or the staff. Staff must use appropriate forms of classroom management to correct misbehavior manifested in less serious violations. Students may not always be referred to an administrator for minor violations, although if repeated may be treated as level II violation and be assigned level II consequences.

Level I Violations include (possible 1merit loss):

1. Detention- failure to report
2. Disrespect (defined below)
3. Dress Code violations: (Defined below)
4. Violations of the use of the students electronic Devices, Personal Electronic
5. Devices and Computer/Internet Acceptable Use policies (Warning/confiscation by teacher).
6. Insubordination
7. Derogatory/vulgar language or gestures

**Level II Violations-** Are those of a serious nature that may pose a threat to the health, safety, welfare or property of any person or the staff or self. Consequences from detention to expulsion are considered for level II violations, although the building Head of school and Dean of Students may use discretion as to whether to assign that level of consequence. Staff is expected to work through the incident prior to any loss of points or consequences.

Level II Violations include (Loss of 2-5 merits):

1. Bullying
2. Cheating/plagiarism/forgery
3. Classroom/Laboratory/School Safety
4. Computer Use
5. Disorderly Conduct
6. Disruptive Behavior
7. Endangerment
8. Fighting

9. Harassment
10. Discrimination
11. Inappropriate touching
12. Indecent exposure
13. School Safety
14. Sexual misconduct
15. Electronic Devices- confiscated and parents must pick up.
16. Threats to staff or students
17. Vandalism

**Level III Violations-** Are violations of a very serious nature which pose a threat to the health, safety, welfare and/or property of staff, students or other persons. Building Administrators must assign Level III Violations with consequence of suspension up to expulsion unless otherwise recommended by the Dean of Students and the School Board for extenuating circumstances.

Level III Violations include (Loss of 10 merits):

1. Assault/physical act of violence
2. Terroristic threats/terroristic acts
3. Unauthorized substances/illegal drugs
4. Smoking/vaping
5. Weapons
6. Electronic Devices following 2 disciplinary actions.

1. The consequence given by the Head of School/Dean of Students will be contingent on several factors, including but not limited to: the age and developmental level of the student, whether this was a first, second or subsequent incident, conversation with the student(s) regarding the matter, severity or disruption of the incident, and any other extenuating circumstances.

2. The Code of Conduct is applicable to students while on school property, at any school sponsored activity (including school dances, field trips, mission trips, sporting events, etc.).

3. The Code of Conduct is applicable to students going to and returning from school.

4. Chronic patterns of any Code of Conduct violations, or a combination of violations, will result in the student being referred to the Student Champion Initiative and parent meetings.

## **DESCRIPTION OF CODE OF CONDUCT**

**\*\*"School setting" shall mean in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school. \***

### **Assault/Physical Act of Violence –**

The deliberate or reckless attempt to cause or the actual causing of physical pain or injury to another or the deliberate or reckless attempt by physical means.

### **Bullying –**

Intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, or a series of acts:

1. directed at another student or students
2. occurs in a school setting
3. is severe, persistent or pervasive; and
4. that has the effect of doing any of the following: Interfering with a student's education, creating a threatening environment for any specific student or groups of students; or disrupting the orderly operation of the school. Degrades other pupils, use of harmful/hurtful language and the like.

Bullying may also rise to the level of "Harassment". Students are encouraged to report incidents of bullying to the Head of School/Dean of Students or Student Council representative.

### **Cheating/Plagiarism/Forgery –**

"Cheating" is to violate rules dishonestly, or to deceive, by fraud, pretend, or obtain property/information, answers by distortion of truth, to copy or plagiarize another student's work or aiding and abetting another student in copying or plagiarizing another's work. Cheating includes the use of technologies such as text messaging, cellular devices etc. in a deceptive or dishonest manner in the classroom or educational setting. "Plagiarize" – to steal or pass off as one's own the ideas or words or another; to present as one's own idea or product derived from an existing source.

"Forgery" is the false or fraudulent making or altering of a writing or other document.

### **Classroom/Laboratory Safety –**

Any actions which endanger oneself or others through the use or misuse of classroom and/or laboratory equipment, or any other object found on school property. Examples of this offense include inappropriate and dangerous use of chemicals in a science laboratory, intentional inappropriate use of tools in the gym or chemistry, etc.

### **Computer/Internet Acceptable Use –**

A student's use of the school computers and Internet resources is a privilege, not a right. Students are required to abide by the rules and regulations set forth in the school "Computer/Internet Acceptable Use Policy," as outlined in this Student Handbook.

### **Disorderly Conduct –**

Fighting, threatening, engaging in inappropriate behavior, making unreasonable noise, using obscene language, creating a hazardous or physically offensive condition for no reason, for the purpose of creating or resulting in public inconvenience, annoyance, or alarm.

### **Disrespect –**

A lack of respect or deference shown by a student to the authority or position of an employee or Staff to student. Can be: insults, rudeness, poor treatment, public embarrassment, belittling, private embarrassment etc. student to staff or staff to student.

### **Disruptive Behavior –**

Student behavior, including verbal, physical, written, etc., actions, which are distracting or not conducive to the learning environment of other students while in school. Disruptive behavior may include (but is not limited to), or may be a combination of, behavior defined as physical acts, disorderly conduct, disrespect, profanity, endangerment, and/or insubordination. Disruptive behavior may also occur through a student's use of his/her cellular telephone during class.

### **Dress Code –General Rules Applicable to All Students**

The following regulations regarding student dress generally apply to all students, in addition to the more specific requirements of the Dress Code Policy detailed below. Though an individual's dress and appearance is a matter of personal preference, certain styles of dress/appearance are not permitted in school because of our standard of Godly moral conduct, modesty and good conduct/welfare of students and staff. We encourage students to wear clothing which cannot potentially cause harm to another person, damage to property (i.e spikes), or create an unsafe environment. No explicit language, political jargon, discriminatory statements etc.

These guidelines in school dress code will help students become more:

Accountable to attire that is appropriate

Develop a sense of modest dress

Work at self-discipline in being presentable at all times

Develop a sense of integrity in doing what is required.

Students (Secondary School Age Students 6<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> grade) who violate the dress code will lose 2 merit points if they violate the dress code. For this reason, the following guidelines are established:

### **Females:**

**Tops:** Are not to be revealing or suggestive, such as see-through blouses, halter tops, crop tops, tank tops, bare midriffs, cutoff tops. All tops must have sleeves on them.  
**Permitted tops include:** t-shirts (with no profanity, ungodly images, political jargon), polo tops, crew neck sweatshirts, hoodies (hood not permitted to be up during the school day), blouses, school merch.

**Accessories/Jewelry:** Permitted to be worn but does not promote, encourage, or depict any form of ungodly imagery/logos.

**Hair:** Needs to always be neatly kept, not covering the face.

**Pants:** Must be secure around the waist. Pants may be “distressed” (e.g., however rips or holes cannot be in the pants pocket area). Pants may not be excessively tight or inappropriate fitting. Pants may not be low rise or revealing of students’ undergarments. May not be Pajama bottoms.

**Shorts/skirts:** The hem of which must be no shorter than students’ fingertips when hands are placed at their side. Shorts cannot be revealing of glutes or upper thighs. Shorts not excessively short or tight. Shorts cannot be spandex.

**Footwear:** Shoes or footwear must be Hard soled shoes during the school day, including sneakers/boots/Sperry’s/loafers etc. Students may NOT wear slippers to school. Females are permitted to wear thong sandals during summer months.

**Outerwear/Coats:** Must be placed in lockers from “bell to bell” and not permitted to be worn during the school day. Outerwear includes but is not limited to outdoor coats/jackets, windbreakers, gloves, hats, bandanas and scarves.

**Hoodies:** Students may wear hoodies during the school day but only if the hood remains down. If hoodie is not EFCA merch logo cannot be inappropriate in any form. If a student pulls the hood up during the school day, it will be considered “insubordination” as defined in the Student Code of Conduct and loss of 2 merit points. The administration may impose additional limitations on dress and/or appearance if the attire or appearance causes a disruption of the educational process.

### **Males:**

**Tops:** All tops must have sleeves on them and not revealing of skin. No crop, midriff etc shirts.  
**Permitted tops include:** t-shirts (with no profanity, ungodly images, political jargon), polo tops, crew neck sweatshirts, hoodies (hood not permitted to be up during the school day), button up shirts and school merch.

**Accessories/Jewelry:** Permitted to be worn but NOT promote, encourage, or depict any form of ungodly imagery/logos.

**Hair:** Needs to always be neatly kept, not covering the face. Facial hair should be always well groomed.

**Pants:** Must be secure around the waist. Pants may be “distressed” (e.g. however rips or holes cannot be in the pants pocket area). Pants may be: Denim, Khaki, jogger style, sweat pants, docker style etc. Pants may not be excessively tight pants may not be revealing of students’ undergarments. May not be Pajama bottoms.

**Shorts/skirts:** The hem of which must be no shorter than students’ fingertips when hands are placed at their side. Shorts cannot be revealing of glutes or upper thighs. Shorts not excessively short or tight. Shorts cannot be spandex.

**Footwear:** Shoes or footwear must be Hard soled shoes during the school day, including sneakers/boots/sperry’s/loafers etc. Students may NOT wear slippers to/in school.

**Outerwear/Coats:** Must be placed in lockers from “bell to bell” and not permitted to be worn during the school day. Outerwear includes but is not limited to outdoor coats/jackets, windbreakers, gloves, hats, bandanas and scarves.

**Hoodies:** Students may wear hoodies during the school day but only if the hood remains down. If a student pulls the hood up during the school day, it will be considered “insubordination” as defined in the Student Code of Conduct and loss of 2 merit points. The administration may impose additional limitations on dress and/or appearance if the attire or appearance causes a disruption of the educational process or constitutes a health or safety hazard.

2. Overall:

- *Bottoms:* shorts, skirts, skorts, in any solid color (e.g. No words or pictures, etc.), including denim or “jeans,” which must be worn to fit or belted at the waist. The hem of the shorts, skirts or skorts must meet requirements mentioned above.
- *Hoodies:* Students may wear hoodies during the school day but only if the hood remains down and is an official EFCA Merch.
- *Shirts:* must be in good taste, Shirts must fit to size at all times, provided, however, students may wear shirts or jerseys with the official or approved name or logo of the EFCA, including athletic jerseys and club gear. All tops must have sleeves.
- Exceptions to the High School mandatory dress code will be made on a case-by-case basis in order to accommodate special health conditions.
- Specific dress requirements may be assigned to students participating in technical labs or other classes or activities that necessitate the wearing of specific clothing in order to maintain the health and safety of that student and others. These class or activity-specific rules will be approved by the building admin and established by classroom teachers and will be delineated in the class, lab or activity syllabus. Failure of a student to abide by these health and safety dress requirements may result in the student’s removal from that lab or activity.

**Electronic Communication Devices –**

are communication devices with voice, data, text, and/or navigation capabilities that are able to access the Internet, transmit telephone calls, text messages, email messages, instant messages, video communications (such as any chat groups etc), perform word processing and other computer and online applications (apps), and provide location information. The devices are capable of electronically communicating, sending, receiving, storing, recording, reproducing, and/or displaying information and data. Examples of Electronic Communication Devices include smartphones (iPhone, Android etc), cellular phones, mobile phones (with recording and/or camera/video and other capabilities and configurations); traditional telephones; pagers; global positional system (GPS) instruments; computers; portable game units; graphic calculators; MP3, music, and media players or recorders; personal digital assistants (“PDAs”); traditional cameras, video cameras, and digital still cameras; tablet and laptop computers; and other similar devices.

**“Personal Electronic Communication Devices”-**

Are Electronic Communication Devices that are owned by the **student** or **employee**. Any use of electronic communication devices, Not EFCA-owned or personal, is prohibited.

**Fighting –**

Any physical conflict between two or more persons. Interference – Any student who interferes with a staff member trying to stop a fight will be treated as fighting.

**Agitate, Instigate, Intimidate, Rumors-**

Any student provoking a fight - that is, agitating, instigating, intimidating, or spreading rumors so as to cause a disruption, will be treated with in a similar manner.

## **Definitions**

### **Discrimination-**

Shall mean to treat individuals differently, or to harass or victimize based on classification including race, color, age, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, and/or disability.

### **Harassment-**

Is a form of discrimination based on the protected classifications listed above consisting of unwelcome conduct such as graphics, written, electronic, verbal or nonverbal acts including offensive jokes, inappropriate touching, inappropriate gestures, slurs, and name-calling, ridicule or mockery, insults or put-downs, offensive objects or pictures, physical assaults or threats, intimidation or other conduct that may be harmful or humiliating or interfere with a person's school or school-related performance. It shall be a violation of this policy to harass a student or school employee. Bullying can be a form of harassment.

### **Stalking-**

Stalking means to engage in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to either:

- Fear for their safety or the safety of others.
- Suffer substantial emotional distress.

### **Inappropriate Touching –**

The intentional physical contact with another person without his/her consent. Inappropriate touching may rise to the level of harassment.

### **Insubordination –**

The outright refusal to obey a directive from any staff member after more than one attempt has been made to encourage students to comply. Failure to turn over a cellular telephone (restricted electronic device) when requested by staff is insubordinate behavior and shall be treated as a second offense along with a warning and phone given to admin after the 2nd incident.

### **School Safety –**

In order to keep the schools in a safe and orderly condition during the school day and during school-sponsored events, students must comply with the code of conduct.

### **Smoking –**

Students are prohibited from using or possessing tobacco in school building, on buses, vans or other vehicles owned by, leased by or under the control of EFCA, and on property owned by, leased by or under the control of EFCA anywhere a school sponsored activity takes place. Tobacco is defined as "a lighted or unlighted smoking product and smokeless tobacco in any form.

EFCA also prohibits students from using or possessing electronic cigarettes, vapes, Gutka, hukkah pipes and/or drug paraphernalia, etc. "Electronic cigarettes" or vaping devices mean any oral device that provides a vapor of liquid nicotine, lobelia, and/or other substance, and the use or inhalation of which simulates smoking. Any student who serves as a "look out" will be treated as if smoking.

**Unauthorized Substances (Illegal Drug Policy)** - The possession and/or use of an unauthorized substance, the possession of an unauthorized substance with the intent to deliver, the misrepresentation of an unauthorized substance and the possession of paraphernalia by students on school property, at school sponsored events and on school transportation is prohibited and will be treated as a violation of code of conduct and Level III consequences.

**Definitions:**

Illegal Alcohol - any malt, brewed, or distilled beverage, the purchase or possession of which by a person under twenty-one years of age is prohibited by Pennsylvania State Law.

Illegal Drug – (a) Any substance (other than food) which affects the structure or function of the human body when introduced into the body by ingestion, injection, inhalation, or any other means; the possession, delivery, or use of which is prohibited by Pennsylvania and/or Federal Law, unless prescribed by a physician.

b) Any legal substance not intended for introduction into the human body, but which when introduced into the body affects the structure or function of the human body; which is possessed for the purpose of introduction into the body; and the introduction into the body of such substance is prohibited by Pennsylvania or Federal Law (such as solvents).

**“Look-alike” drugs/substances –**

Any substance that substantially resembles or is meant to represent any illegal drug or unauthorized substance.

**Paraphernalia –**

Tools or equipment whose function is to aid a user in consuming or selling any type of drug, controlled substance, or alcohol or any other unauthorized substance. Paraphernalia shall also include hukkah pipes or any other similar device, and all oral devices that provide a vapor of liquid nicotine, lobelia or any other substances, the use or inhalation of which simulates smoking, including any such devices whether they are manufactured, distributed, marketed or sold as e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes, vapes, vaping devices, vape pens, advanced personal vaporizers (aka MODS), wave cartridges, vape pods and/or any other similar device or under any other product name or descriptor.

**Possession –**

Student in possession of unauthorized substances or paraphernalia found on the person of the student; in the student’s locker; under the student’s control while he/she is on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school; or while the student is on his/her way to or from school.

**Unauthorized substances –**

Shall include but are not limited to alcohol, illegal drugs, controlled substances, prescription drugs, non-prescription drugs which are being used in an abusive or unlawful manner or in a manner for which they were not intended or prescribed, non-prescription drugs which are possessed by the student without compliance with the schools’ procedures regarding student use of medication.

**Vandalism –**

Is the deliberate or reckless destruction, damage or defacement of school property or property controlled by the school.

## CONSEQUENCES FOR CODE OF CONDUCT VIOLATIONS-

### LEVEL I Violations Consequences: Warning, Discipling and Discipline

1. Verbal warning from teacher or building administrator (write up in Inow)
2. Parent Notification (If repeated)
3. Parent Conversation
4. Teacher Detention

### LEVEL II Violations Consequences, Loss of 2 or more Merit points\*

1. Verbal conversation with student/warning
2. Parent Notification
3. Parent Conversation
4. Teacher Detention Administrative Detention

\*Suspension 1 – 10 days out of school suspension no credit/"0" for assignment/test

### LEVEL III Violations Consequences \*

1. Parent notification + Parent Conference
2. Up to 10 days out of school suspension (gr. 9 -12)
- 3.

### Detention:

1. Arrive at the assigned time.
2. Prepared to stay for full detention time.
3. If permitted, work the full time quietly and independently.

### Probation Policy

Probation may occur if a currently enrolled student consistently shows a lack of effort and responsibility in academic and/or behavioral areas. Any student who does not maintain a grade of "C" GPA may be subject to probation or expulsion if accommodations do not aide students in satisfactorily completing work. Any student who repeatedly violates school rules and/or classroom rules can be placed on probation or suspension according to the code of conduct. A student on probation will be subject to an academic/behavioral contract in which the school may place requirements upon the student which are not placed upon the student body at large. A student failing to comply with the requirements of the contract may face expulsion.

### Account Usage

- Account holders should use only their own personal accounts unless given permission by an authorized member of the faculty, administration, or professional staff to use one that is designated for a specific purpose or job. Account holders may not allow others to use their personal accounts. The person holding an account is responsible for its use, and all activity originating from that account, at all times.
- Account holders should protect their passwords and keep them confidential. Passwords will be changed frequently. Any problem resulting from irresponsible use of a password (e.g., a password that can be easily guessed or oral or written dissemination of a password) may be treated as grounds for action against the account holder. Any attempt to determine the passwords of other users is strictly prohibited.
- Account holders should not abuse any electronic mail, social media, or communications system, either local or remote, by sending rude, obscene, or harassing messages.

## Athletic Policy

### Athletic Department Philosophy and Objectives

The goal of the Athletic Department at EFCA is to provide an excellent means to teach Christian living and build Christian characteristics in the personalities of the students. Through these activities, athletic talents and abilities can be developed and recognized publicly. Sports teams can also be an effective way to build a sense of community by enhancing relationships between students, students and teachers, and the school and supporting families. The larger community can also be enhanced through school sports teams as athletics can serve as a method of witnessing. "Run in such a way as to get the prize" (1 Corinthians 10:5b).

As an athlete, the purpose of competing in athletics is to win; therefore, as an Athletic Department we want to build teams that are victorious.

As a result, the goal of athletics at EFCA is to help each participant:

- Develop character traits including respect for others, integrity, and humility.
- Use critical thinking and good judgment in decision making.
- Form disciplined work habits and pride in careful workmanship that carries over into academics and other areas of life.

### Overall Athletic Department Participant Rules

- Rules, strategies, and game plans shall be communicated to athletes as an aid in maximizing their potential success, knowledge, and enjoyment of their athletic event.
- Appropriate advanced techniques, skills and playing opportunities shall be provided to all athletes whose skill level enables them to go beyond the more introductory or participatory level of play.
- Sport practices will be organized so that each squad member is an active participant during practices and develops in skill and understanding of team strategies and physical conditioning.
- All squad members will experience learning opportunities in self-discipline, emotional control, and sportsmanship.
- Sportsmanship will be taught and emphasized in the school's athletic program. Participants are expected to be courteous to coaches, officials, and opponents as well as work with teammates in harmonious ways.

## Athletic Standards

### Academic Standards:

**In accordance with the Athletic Department's Philosophy, academic excellence is paramount for the student-athlete—each athlete must maintain an average of 75% or above in each subject.** The first eligibility report of grades will be made after the first two weeks. Thereafter, every Friday eligibility will be reported by the Athletic Director to the Administration for that week's grading period. Any student-athlete who is found deficient in any subject area will be placed on a one-week probation from any sports-related activity. While on probation the student-athlete may participate in practice and play in games. If after the one-week probation the student remains deficient, he/she will be removed from the team and not be permitted to participate at all for a period of two weeks. If the student is still deficient (or deficient in another class), he/she will be removed from the team for the remainder of the season.

A student is only allowed one probation period per season. Thus, if they regain eligibility after their initial probation period, but become ineligible later in the season, they are immediately removed from the team, sans probation. Once a student has been removed from a team, they will be ineligible for the remainder of that sport's season, regardless of whether they improve their grades (subject to Administrator override).

### **Student-Athlete Classroom Attendance**

A student must be in attendance at least two periods the day of a contest. Failure to attend at least two periods will result in the student becoming ineligible to play in that day's scheduled contest. Any student-athlete who fails to attend all classes the next school day after a scheduled contest may be placed on attendance probation. A second occurrence may result in the athlete becoming ineligible to compete in the next regularly scheduled contest. *[Exception: documented injury during the scheduled contest by the student to the A.D.]*

### **Student-Athlete Commitment and Conduct**

Being a student-athlete at Erie First Christian Academy requires effort and dedication. Our student-athletes must not merely focus purely on athletic ability but must also strive to achieve academic and classroom excellence that is reflective of a disciplined life. As a result, a standard of conduct has been implemented while following the rules, policies and procedures as set forth by the Parent/Student Handbook. All conduct before, during, after, on the way to and from any sporting event is subject to the disciplinary guidelines outlined in the Parent/Student Handbook.

Athletes must show the respect for authority. A strong, capable opponent will bring out the best in us and show us our areas of weakness. Officials and opponents must be treated with the same respect and dignity that we would want to receive. Humility is the mark of self-control. We must build self-control and focus on the bigger picture, not letting circumstances distract us from our ultimate goal. Participants in the athletic program must die to self, giving up individual rights to gain team victories (Philippians 2:5-8). If any player is removed from a game for unsportsmanlike behavior, he/she will not be allowed to play in the next game but is allowed to practice, suit up, and sit with the team during the game. A second occurrence may result in removal from the team, pending a hearing with the Administration.

### **Practices**

All athletes must faithfully attend practices and abide by team rules as set forth by the coach. Each athlete – whether starter or backup – must respond with maximum effort on practice days so the team may achieve maximum results on game days (Colossians 3:23-24).

### **Sports Events**

Students and parents are encouraged to attend sports events in support of EFCA. There are gate fees for Volleyball and Basketball, however those fees can be waived on the day a parent volunteers to help with Admissions or Concessions.

## STUDENT PARKING

Any student with a valid Driver's License may drive on school property with parental permission and school authorization.

### Parking Information and Rules

Students will lose parking privileges if found leaving school without authorization. Students will also lose their parking privileges if they transport other students off of school property during the school day and be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and the following without proper permission:

- 1st Offense – 1 week loss of parking privileges
- 2nd Offense – 1 month loss of parking privileges
- 3rd Offense – Loss of parking privileges for the year.

- Student drivers will abide by all school regulations and policies, including a **10 mile per hour speed limit** in the school zone. Student drivers will follow faculty directions when entering or exiting the parking lots.
- Student drivers will maintain academic eligibility. If a student becomes academically ineligible their permit may be revoked until eligibility is restored.
- Punctuality and good attendance are necessary to maintain parking privileges. Habitual lateness and/or absences may be grounds to terminate parking permission. Tardiness will be monitored by administrator and a scheduled meeting with Administration and students' parent or guardian may result.
- Students will vacate their vehicles immediately upon parking. Loitering in vehicles is grounds for revocation of the students parking.
- Student drivers will not interrupt the flow of bus traffic. At afternoon dismissal, students will wait until "ALL CAR DRIVERS" are dismissed.
- The school assumes no responsibility for vehicles on School/Church property since each student is provided with the opportunity to ride a school bus.
- **Please note that all vehicles are subject to be searched while on school property.** Students are responsible for ensuring all contents in their vehicle adhere to EFCA school policies. EFCA retains authority to conduct routine checks of the student parking lot and to inspect the exteriors of student automobiles on school property.
  - The interiors of student vehicles may be inspected whenever a school authority has "*reasonable awareness*" that illegal or unauthorized items are inside.
  - Such inspections may be conducted without notice, without a student's consent, and without a search warrant.
- The student driver will immediately notify the school of any change in vehicles. The permit must match the car for which it was issued and cannot be used on any other vehicle or by any other driver.

## **Fines**

Reckless Driving / Speeding \$10.00  
Parking Outside of Student Area \$10.00

## **Carpool**

Parents are responsible to form car pools to transport children to and from school. The school cannot be responsible for the safety of the child in any car pool. Please be sure that the driver is adequately covered with insurance.

In order to assure the maximum safety for the children who attend EFCA, we are asking you to observe the following drop-off and pick-up traffic procedures and rules. Students **SHOULD NOT ARRIVE** prior to 8:15 a.m. unless they have made arrangements with the school office or set up for school event.

## **Traffic Pattern for early dismissal**

Traffic Pattern for early dismissal A-L (Morning Drop Off/ Door #16) Traffic Patterns Last names beginning with A-L enter the church parking lot through the main entrance veer right towards, Door #16, and form a carline to pick up under the door canopy. Last names beginning M-Z enter through the main entrance and veer left towards the playground. Proceed under the main building canopy, driving through to the end of the sidewalk, stopping past, Door #17.

## **Transportation**

Students are eligible to receive BUSING through their home school district, if the district's border is located within a 10-mile radius of Erie First Christian Academy.

At the beginning of each school year, you will receive notification of busing schedules from your school district. The following districts provide transportation: Erie, Fairview, Ft. LeBoeuf, General McLane, Harborcreek, Millcreek, Iroquois, and Wattsburg.

## **Policies for Conduct on the Bus**

- No loud music to and from an off-site school function will be allowed. (Headphones are acceptable). Keep content clean.
- Students separated by sex.
- Students must respect the authority on the bus.

- **Consequences of Violating Policies on the Bus: Students are to follow home districts policy for transportation behavior.**
- **EFCA:**
  - 1st Violation — Verbal warning
  - 2nd Violation — Detention

## HEALTH POLICIES

We recognize that God has ordained the home as primarily responsible for the caring and upbringing of their children, and the purpose of Erie First Christian Academy shall be to complement the home by partnering with and not taking the place of parents in this caretaking. Staff will work together with families in the oversight of the student's health.

### Dental Examinations

Pennsylvania State Law requires that children attending school receive a dental examination in grades K, or 1, 3, and 7. It is recommended that these examinations be done by your family dentist since he can best evaluate your child's health and assist you in obtaining necessary treatments and corrections. Children not examined by a private dentist will be examined by the school dentist.

### First Aid

The school is equipped with first-aid supplies for use in case of accidents or illness. When students are ill, parents will be contacted to come and pick them up. In the first aid area the following medications, treatments and solutions may be used per first aid situation: baking soda, Calamine or Caladryl lotion, hydrogen peroxide, alcohol, peppermints, Vaseline, warm salt water, hand sanitizer, soapy water, also a heating pad may be used for menstrual cramps only. Please contact your school if you do not want any of the above items used for your student or if any allergies are known to the above items. If a heating pad is needed for injuries or pain, a note from a parent will be needed.

### Health Screenings

Certain health procedures are mandated and done on a yearly basis by the school nurse. These tests are not diagnostic. When results are not within normal limits, students will be referred to their private physicians. Parents NOT wishing their children to participate in these programs should advise the school office in writing early in the school year so your child can be excused while screenings take place.

These include:

- Height and Weight Screening
- Hearing Screening
- Vision Screening
- Body Mass Index Screening

### Illness

Control of communicable illnesses is an important part of maintaining the health of school children. Students who have been diagnosed by a physician or are suspected by the school Nurses who have certain communicable diseases will be asked to remain home until diagnosis is no longer contractible.

A student who has been excluded from school due to symptoms of the following illnesses may return to school with physician's excuse if they meet these conditions:

- Chicken Pox-Blisters must be dried; no drainage.
- Respiratory streptococcal (strep) infections-(including scarlet fever) 24 hours **after** starting antibiotics.
- Head Lice-until judged non-infective by school nurse. *Must be nit free.*
- Infectious Conjunctivitis (pink eye) and/or Impetigo Contagiosa- 24 hours **after** starting antibiotics.
- Flu (fever of 100 or more, &/or throwing up) - 24 hours after symptoms have gone away.

For COVID guidelines and isolation times, please contact school administration for the most up-to-date information.

### **Immunizations**

Pennsylvania State Law requires the following immunizations be completed and on file before a child may enter school K-12):

- 4 doses of tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis\* (1 dose on or after 4<sup>th</sup> birthday)
- 4 doses of polio (4<sup>th</sup> dose on or after 4<sup>th</sup> birthday and at least 6 months after previous dose given)
- 2 doses of measles, mumps, and rubella\*\*
- 3 doses of hepatitis B
- 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) or evidence of immunity

Students in 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade additional immunizations are required for attendance:

- 2 doses meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV)
  - First dose is given 11-15 years of age; a second dose is required at age 16 or entry into 12<sup>th</sup> grade.
  - If the dose was given at 16 years of age or older, only one dose is required.
- 1 dose of tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap)

*\*Usually given as DTaP or DTP or DT or Td*

*\*\*Usually given as MMR*

Because these immunizations are not a series, there is no provisional enrollment period. If students do not have the required Tdap or MCV on the first day attending school, they will be excluded from school. (According to PA Dept. of Health).

Any time your child receives any immunization, please record what was given and the date. Send these to the school nurse so that they may be recorded on the health record.

Any families that choose to be exempt from immunizations must supply a written response to the school office to be filed in the health file in the office.

### **Medication Policy**

Erie First Christian Academy permits only the school office personnel to administer prescribed medication provided that these procedures are followed:

#### **General Information**

- A permission form for the dispensing of medication to students has been completed by the parents and physician.
- A note describing the medication and specifying the times it is to be administered.
- Medication containers must be properly labeled with child's name, medication name, dose, and time to be given. No medicine will be given which is not properly identified.
- The administration will not dispense any medication to any student unless the appropriate form is on file.
- **Tylenol, aspirin, and similar "over the counter" medications will not be dispensed from the office unless a medication form is signed and the medication is sent in a container properly labeled for the student (as per medication policy).**

Increasing numbers of students are requesting treatment for home-related illness/injury. It is encouraged that parents seek medical attention with a family physician for illness/injury occurring away from school. The school in such cases shall make referrals to the family and their physician.

It is our desire to continue to provide the very best care for our students. Every effort will be made to communicate with parents, faculty, staff, and students to promote wellness.

### **Important Notice about Medications for Field Trips**

If your student is going on a field trip, please make arrangements for him/her not to take medication. If it is necessary for him/her to take a daily medication, put the dose clearly marked in an envelope with the student's name, name of medication, and the time to be given. Seal the envelope and make sure the teacher receives it. Also, notify the school office so we know **NOT** to administer the usual dose that day. Do not ask the office staff to take a dose from your child's supply at school to send on the trip. This constitutes "relabeling medication" and is actually against nursing practice regulations. Of course, you may come in and request a return of medication from the school supply at any time.

### **Physical Examinations**

Pennsylvania State Law requires children attending school to receive a physical examination at the following stated intervals: the original entry (Kindergarten or first grade), sixth grade, and eleventh grade. When your child is due for a physical, you will receive notification along with a form for your physician to fill out. Children not examined by a family physician will be examined by the Ft. LeBoeuf School District physician.

### **School Health Services**

The health status of a child directly affects the child's educational performance. Therefore, when a child is registered for kindergarten, the school nurse begins compiling a confidential health history. This record is maintained throughout the child's school career.

Parents are urged to share with the school nurse any additions or changes to the health history. Emergency cards are sent home at the beginning of each school year. It is very important that these be completed in full and returned to school as soon as possible. There is space on the emergency card to indicate any health problems that school should be aware of as well as numbers to be called if your child should become ill or injured at school. An emergency contact person other than the parent must be listed.

### **School Nurse**

The school nurse is responsible for protecting and promoting the health of all students. She works closely with teachers, administrators and parents to maximize each child's potential to learn and grow. Parents should share information and concerns regarding the student's health to assist the nurse in providing quality care. In addition to health screenings, the nurse provides health education and counseling, manages communicable diseases, and promotes a helping relationship between the school and community.

## **SAFETY INFORMATION**

### **Fire Drills**

Fire drills will be held at various times during the school year. Directions are posted in each classroom. When the alarm sounds, students are to exit according to the designated route. This is to be done quickly and orderly. Talking is prohibited.

### **Safety Drills – Stay Put / Shelter-in-Place / Lockdown / Evacuation**

In an effort to maintain a safe environment, we will conduct unannounced, quarterly lock-down drills to familiarize students with proper procedure during any emergency.

### **Release / Dismissal of Children**

Parents must provide the Academy with the names of persons authorized to bring/pick up the child. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to notify the Academy office of any changes in this authorization. Changes in dismissal pickup schedules must be submitted to the child's teacher **IN WRITING**. **Verbal arrangements will be accepted ONLY in emergencies such as illness, accidents, or death in the family.** This policy will ensure the safety of your child as well as alleviate confusion at an already busy time of the day. Children will be released only to those authorized on the emergency card. If necessary, photo identification may be required before the child is released. **Copies of legal documents must be provided to administration before any staff person can actively prevent a non-custodial parent from picking up his/her child.**

### **Security System**

The entire school facility is locked during the normal school day (Monday - Friday 7:30 am - 6:00 pm). All visitors must enter through main school office door, labeled school entrance Door #17, which is controlled by the school receptionist with a buzzer and speaker to let guests enter.

The staff/faculty and parents of daycare and before care are allowed to enter thru Door #16, under the carport by the school office. This requires a code that only works until 8:45 a.m. and after 3:15 p.m. In order to gain entrance to the building through this door during hours that the main entrance door is locked, a code must be entered into the keypad located to the right of the entrance door. *Numbers will be given only to parents whose children are enrolled in the before or after school program.* The code only works Monday through Friday between 7:30 am and 6:00 pm.

Please remember the following if you are issued a code:

- This system will not be in operation after 6:00 p.m. or on weekends.
- For security purposes, these codes are for ADULT USE ONLY! Please do not give your child/ren access to the code or allow them to play with the keypad.
- DO NOT ALLOW OTHER PEOPLE TO ENTER ON YOUR CODE by holding the door open for them, etc... They must enter on their own code, be buzzed in the EFCA receptionist door, or call 866-6979 to be led in by Erie First staff.
- Please keep your code in a safe place.
- You may ONLY share your code with those listed on your child's emergency contact form as an authorized pick-up.
- Failure to comply with these policies may result in the deletion of your code.
- Please remember, these policies are in place for the safety and security of YOUR child!

### **Parents and Visitors**

Parents and visitors are always welcome; however, all parents and visitors to the school building shall be required to register with the office upon arrival and prior to leaving. Please do not proceed to any classroom before signing in at the office. Come to the school office, whether to bring a lunch, a forgotten book or to pick up your child. For your child's safety, it is important that we know who is in the building at all times. A visitor badge must be worn by all visitors in the building. Volunteers assisting with a class must submit required PA clearances to the EFCA Office. (PA Criminal Record Check; FBI fingerprinting; Child Abuse Clearance).

### **Student Personal Belongings**

Each student's name should be marked on all of their belongings. (Example: coats, gloves, tablets, etc.) This will assist in returning lost items. Items found in school are also kept in our lost and found box in the office for one week. If you are missing clothing items at home, it's a good idea to have your child check at school immediately.

### **Teacher Aides, Parent Volunteers and Student Helpers**

Aides, volunteers, and helpers can make an important contribution to our Christian school program at EFCA. In order that we may make good use of this type of contribution it will be important to follow certain guidelines.

Volunteers will be Christians who are caring, dependable and effective with children. They should be willing to work cooperatively with a teacher and under a specific teacher's supervision.

Clearances are required before the volunteers are allowed to work. Information regarding requirements can be obtained from the school office.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Student Personal Belongings**

Each student's name should be marked on all of their belongings. (Example: coats, gloves, tablets, etc.) This will assist in returning lost items. Items found in school are also kept in our lost and found box in the office for one week. If you are missing clothing items at home, it's a good idea to have your child check at school immediately.

### **Teacher Aides, Parent Volunteers and Student Helpers**

Aides, volunteers, and helpers can make an important contribution to our Christian school program at EFCA. In order that we may make good use of this type of contribution it will be important to follow certain guidelines.

Volunteers will be Christians who are caring, dependable and effective with children. They should be willing to work cooperatively with a teacher and under a specific teacher's supervision.

Clearances are required before the volunteers are allowed to work. Information regarding requirements can be obtained from the school office.

### **P.T.F.:**

Parents interested in becoming involved please contact school office.

### **Student Resources:**

Suicide & Crisis Lifeline-988

Achievement Center of Erie- 814.459.2755

Sarah Reed Children's Center: 814.838.1954

Children's Behavioral Health: 814.833.0355

### **Assemblies and Programs**

Special assemblies and programs will be conducted from time to time during the school year. Each student will be required to attend and conduct themselves in the proper manner at these functions.

### **Cafeteria**

The cafeteria period will be 30 minutes to 60 minutes in length. This will allow time for your children to be taken to and from the cafeteria. Rules of the cafeteria are as follows:

- Each student is responsible for the cleanliness of the area in which he/she is seated.
- **All** paper, food, milk cartons, and straws are to be disposed of in the proper containers.
- Students may talk in an orderly manner. Yelling and screaming is not permitted.
- Students must remain seated unless carrying out specific duties or requests from the teacher on duty.
- Students are not to share their lunches.

### **Chapel**

Chapel services on the students' level of understanding are presented on a regular basis. The primary purpose of the chapel service is to draw the student into a more meaningful relationship with Christ. Chapel will present more opportunities for students to unpack and have dialog on the message that was delivered.

## **Communication**

It is the desire of Erie First Christian Academy to maintain constant and open communication with our "school family." miscommunication can create a quarrelsome environment. It is our desire to clear up misunderstandings as quickly and as efficiently as possible.

We believe that the Bible commands us to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian community in conformity with the Biblical injunctions of 1 Corinthians 6:18, Matthew 5:23-24 and Matthew 18:15-20. For example, if the situation involves your classroom teacher, you need to make an appointment convenient to both you and the teacher to discuss the issue with him or her. If after visiting with the classroom teacher, you still do not believe the matter is completely resolved, you may then schedule an appointment with the principal. If resolution of the dispute and reconciliation do not result from such efforts, the matter shall then be submitted to a panel of school administration arbitrators.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are away-from-school experiences related to classroom study and activities. A permission slip for each trip will be sent home to be signed by parents/guardians and returned. No child will accompany any excursion without a permission slip on file. A letter explaining the objectives of each trip will be sent home by the teacher and will include specific dates, times, places, and costs. Appropriate dress and costs will be announced at that time as well.

Field trips are an important part of the learning experience; therefore, we encourage every student to attend. If a student cannot participate in a field trip, parents must submit a "permission for exclusion" request in writing one week prior to the trip date. The administration will consider this request and contact parents. **Credits/reimbursements will not be issued after the school has paid for reservations/tickets for the event.**

## **Lockers**

Student lockers and locks are the property of the school, and are loaned to the student temporarily for the student's convenience. At the end of the year, there will be a fee assessed if the locker is NOT in clean and good working order and / or the lock is missing or not working. ***All student lockers are subject to search at the discretion of the administration in the interest of safety and the enforcement of the school's rules.***

## **Locker Assignment**

Each student in grades 5-12 is assigned a locker in which to keep his/her books and possessions throughout the school year. One combination lock will also be issued for each locker to the student. The school recommends that student utilize the school lock on their locker. It is the student's responsibility to memorize the combination for the lock and to use the lock. Lockers must be locked at the end of each school day.

## **Locker Guidelines**

Students may personalize their locker by using the following guidelines:

- **Materials:**
  - No stickers or other adhesive methods are to be used outside the lockers without prior Administration approval.
  - Mirrors, shelves, and fixtures must be easy to remove without any damage to the locker.
  - Do not paint or mark up any part of the locker.
  - Students should not leave leftover food, open drinks, or dirty clothing in their lockers overnight.

- **Pictures:**
  - When displaying pictures, students should use discretion and adhere to the mission, philosophy and beliefs of EFCA and limited to the interior of the locker.
  - The Administration has the final say in determining the appropriateness of locker content and reserves the rights to have the student remove any item deemed inappropriate.
- **Advertisements and Words:**
  - Appropriate material should be chosen.
  - Double meanings and suggestive materials must be avoided.

### **Parties**

Each class will hold scheduled parties during the year for special celebrations or holiday times. EFCA classes will celebrate the following at the teacher's discretion:

- **Thankful Day** - a celebration of God's blessings on the day before Thanksgiving.
- **Jesus' Birthday** - Each class will celebrate Jesus' birthday on the day before Christmas break.
- **Valentine's Day** - Each elementary class will exchange Valentine cards. The room parents may coordinate parties as requested by the teacher.
- **Resurrection Celebration** – a celebration of the Resurrection of our Savior. This will be held the day before Easter vacation.
- **Birthday Treats** – Teachers should always be contacted before treats are sent to school. If teachers know in advance, they can plan for a SMALL TREAT to be distributed sometime during the day. Teachers will not give out phone numbers and addresses to parents or students. Teachers will not pass out party invitations. Students may bring invitations to school ONLY when the entire classroom or every student of a specific gender is invited.

### **Patriotism**

The school plays an important role in the development of patriotism. We expect each student to respect the US government and to feel proud to be an American. Therefore, at the beginning of each school day, our students recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag, Christian flag, pledge to the Bible, and participate in prayer.

### **Loyalty**

We hereby declare our uncompromising allegiance to the government of the United States of America and declare our intent to assist it in every way morally consistent with our Faith. The Scriptures indicate that believers need to have and show a strong loyalty to the Body of Believers, which is the Church. The school, as one arm of the Church, has that same loyalty.

### **Pledges**

As noted above, here are the three pledges that students are to be familiar with:

- **American Flag:** *I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic, for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with Liberty, and Justice for all.*
- **Christian Flag:** *I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag, and to the Savior for whose kingdom it stands, one brotherhood, uniting all mankind, in service and in love.*
- **Bible Pledge:** *I pledge allegiance to the Bible, God's Holy Word. I will make it a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. I will hide God's Word in my heart that I might not sin against God.*

## **Recess**

Students at EFCA have outdoor recess as weather permits. Children will be kept inside during recess time only if the teacher receives a note from a parent explaining the reason. Please do not ask to excuse your child from outdoor recess unless there is a medical reason for doing so.

Erie First is committed to integrating Biblical principles in all areas of our program. Therefore, the guidelines for toys and play are as follows:

- **Toys:** Children may only bring in personal toys on *prearranged Show-and-Tell days*. All other toys from home will be put away until the end of the day when they will be returned to the child to take home. Parents should help select Show-and-Tell items. Please choose items or toys of educational value. Toys that promote aggressive play are not permitted (i.e., Power Rangers, weapons, monsters, Gargoyles, etc.)
- **Play:** During recess, free play or gym time, activities contrary to our Christian philosophy will not be permitted. This includes martial arts, guns or warlike actions, Power Rangers, Batman, etc.

## **School Photographers**

Color pictures will be taken each fall by a professional photographer and will be available for parents to purchase. You will be notified of the dates.

## **Spiritual Training**

It is the requirement of EFCA to develop an attitude of service in the heart of every believer. Therefore, we foster the development of that attitude through a variety of ways; missions, service learning, and involvement in a local church.

### **Missions**

The development of a mission mindset and involvement in mission's are an important part of our academic program. We have on occasion been a part of short-term mission/ outreach trips. We also hope to inspire students to want to be apart of God's Missio Dei.

## Service Learning (Grades 9-12)

# 7 Mountains of Influence

Genesis 1:26-28

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals,<sup>[a]</sup> and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

<sup>27</sup> So God created mankind in his own image,  
in the image of God he created them;  
male and female he created them.

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

The world as we know it functions by various spheres of influences. Of those influences it is believed that they occupy 7 high places in our culture and as believers of the gospel we are called to occupy them and make those influences for the kingdom of our God. They are actually referred to as 7 mountains of influences: Family, Government, Economy, Arts and Entertainment, Media, Education, Religion. The Gospel must infiltrate the Church and the Church must infiltrate the Culture for us to have impact and influence in the earth. These mountains shape the culture and the way we function, think and move in it. Consider how much social media has reshaped how we communicate and interact etc. If we don't occupy seats in these mountains or raise up generations to take seats at tables in these mountains, the world system will insufficiently lead. They are world kingdoms so long as the ungodly rule them and have more influence than the Kingdom of our God in those spaces. How will you influence the marketplaces while a student to change the world?

Service Learning will be built around these 7 mountains. Students will be required to complete 5 hours a year of service learning in one of the following areas of influence:

This will give students an opportunity to identify areas they are passionate about and how they can become involved and impact those spaces.

- **Family:** Serve Erie, City Mission, Erie City Moms, Work sporting events, Assist at Youth groups, youth community programs, Community Agencies, local food banks, Crisis pregnancy center, second harvest food bank, Women's care center etc.
- **Government-** Attend local school Board Meetings (notes must be submitted to Dean of students and a signed document from a school board director), Attend City or County Council meetings (notes must be submitted to dean of students and a signed document from a Council member), Identify something you see lacking that government oversees. Write a letter to voice your thoughts and opinions, find government webinars that address topics you are passionate about, Local or national government.

- **Economy/Business:** Find a business you can serve at. (Thriftier Heaven). Think of a business you'd like to begin and how will it impact individuals' lives.
- **Arts and Entertainment:** What can you create to influence this culture for the kingdom by way of arts and entertainment? Art show with story lines? Participate in dinner and theater, Submit a piece of artwork to a local museum with a biblical storyline. Participate in a talent show.
- **Media:** How can you influence social media, assist school with their social media, Videos for student/youth events, Kingdom youthful messages, creating a blog with Kingdom Content, creating a Podcast with Kingdom content, writing a newsletter (digital), Assist with Media at church.
- **Education:** Literacy Programs, After School tutor ideas, how can you assist an educator?
- **Religion:** Lead a Sunday Schools (present material to Dean of Students), Lead Chapel present material to Dean of Students) Lead an innovative church project, develop ways to reach the lost souls, Mission Trips with a chapel presentation, Youth For Christ volunteer.

All Service-Learning projects must be approved by the Dean of Students and Signed off by the director or leaders of the entity the student is participating with.

### **Church Attendance**

Believing that our role at EFCA is to assist the home and church in the task of training young people, we feel that it is of utmost importance for all of our students to be in regular attendance at their church. We do not feel that we are working in harmony with the home if the family is not active in regular church attendance. Church attendance is a requirement as part of the bible class.

-

\*\*revision 2022