

2024-2025

Preschool Parent Handbook



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<u>Table of Contents</u>		<u>Page</u>
I.	PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION/MISSION STATEMENT	5-8
	Diocesan Philosophy of Catholic Education	5
	DIOCESAN MISSION STATEMENT	5
	School Mission Statement/Philosophy	5
	Student/Parent Handbook	6
	Parental Role	6
	Non-Discrimination Clause	7
	Non-Catholic Children	8
	Program Information	8
II.	CURRICULUM	9-12
	Supplies and Materials	11
	Assessment	11
	Parent-Teacher Communication	12
	Scheduling and Other Conference Information	12
	Progress Reports	12
	Retention/Promotion/Placement	12
III.	ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	12-16
	Admissions	12
	Diocesan Initial Admission Requirements	12
	Class Placement	14
	Registration	14
	Attendance	14-15
	Absence/Tardiness/Leaving School	14
	Attendance/Reporting Procedures	15
	Transferring to Another School	15
	Lunch Program	15
	Arrival and Dismissal	16
IV	GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES	16-21
	Administrative	16
	Child Custody and Guardianship	16
	Access to Records	17
	School Visitors	17
	School Communications	17
	Telephone Use	18
	Inclement Weather/School Closings	18
	Photos and Other Media	19
	Library	19
	Field Trips	19
	Overnight Trips	20
	Parent Organizations	20
	Fundraising	21
	Transportation/Parking	21

V. FINANCES	21-22
School Tuition Policies	21
Tuition and other Fee Schedules	22
VI. CHILD RESPONSIBILITIES & BEHAVIOR	22-26
Code of Conduct	22
Discipline	23
Use of Disciplinary Action	23
Specific Disciplinary Policies	24
Suspension	24
Dismissal	24
Expulsion	24
Regulations and Procedures	24
Care of School Property	24
Dress Code	25
Dress Code Requirements & Other Pertinent Information	25
Playground Regulations	25
Lunchroom Regulations	25
Show & Tell	26
VII. HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELFARE	26-35
Student Health,Safety, & Welfare	26
Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and/or Child Abuse	26
Wellness Policy	27
Accidents and First Aid	27
Illness	28
Medication Administration Overview	29
Specialized Student Care Needs	29
LIFE THREATENING ALLERGY	30
Infectious/Communicable Diseases	31
Lice	31
Bloodborne Disease	31
Fire/Emergency Drills	32
Sexual Harassment	32
Student Bullying	32
Asbestos Mandatory Yearly Notification	33
Video Surveillance Cameras	34
Children with Special Needs	35
VIII. PROGRAM INFORMATION	36-42
Licensing Information	36
Crisis Management/Emergency Preparedness Plan	40
Over-the-counter Skin Products	40
Insurance	40
Tax Information	40
Parental Involvement	41
Public Disclosure Statement	42

APPENDICES

43

A. Diocesan Forms and School Forms

43

1. Permission for Emergency Care Form (*Appendix F-1*)
2. Confidential Health History Update (*Appendix F-1A*)
3. Confidential Health History Update (*Appendix F-1A- Spanish*)
4. Virginia School Entrance Health Form (*Appendix F-2*)
5. Virginia School Entrance Health Form Instructions (*Appendix F-2A*)
6. Inhaler Authorization Form (*Appendix F-3*)
7. Asthma Action Plan (*Appendix F-3A*)
8. Epipen/Twinject Authorization Form (*Appendix F-4*)
9. Allergy Action Plan (*Appendix F-4A*)
10. Diabetes Reference Emergency Plan: Hyperglycemia & Hypoglycemia (*Appendix F-5*)
11. Diabetes Medical Management Plan (*Appendix F-5A*)
12. Medication Authorization Form (*Appendix F-6*)
13. Certificate of Religious Exemption (*Appendix F-7 Form CRE-1*)
13. Confidential Individual Health Office Visit Record (*Appendix F-11*)
14. Waiver Information/Right to Object Form (*Appendix N*)
15. Parent Permission Form - School Sponsored Trip Participation (*Appendix R*)
16. Academic Intervention Plan (*Appendix AA*)
17. Preschool Handbook Agreement Form (*Appendix AG-3*)

I. PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION/MISSION STATEMENT

DIOCESAN PHILOSOPHY OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

*Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations...
Teaching them to carry out everything I have commanded you.*

Matthew 28:19-20

These words of Christ addressed to the apostles at the Ascension bestowed on the Church the office of teacher. Obedient to this divine challenge, the Church provides education permeated with the spirit of Christ and dedicated to promoting the full development of the human person.¹ The two-fold goal of Catholic schools is to provide an environment which will foster rich religious training as well as solid academic education in a Catholic value-oriented manner.

¹Declaration on Christian Education #3

DIOCESAN MISSION STATEMENT

The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Arlington are an essential component in the educational ministry of the Church. Our schools are committed to providing an education rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ where Catholic doctrine and values and academic excellence prepare each student for a life of faith, service and integrity.

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY

Mission

Epiphany Catholic School, a Christ-centered environment is dedicated to developing the whole child through academic excellence and nourishing servant leaders in the footsteps of Jesus.

Vision

Epiphany Catholic School through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit will achieve excellence through an academic curriculum designed to educate the whole child: spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially. Students will be challenged to expand their abilities through an integrated curriculum in a nurturing, supportive, Christ-centered environment. Recognizing parents as primary educators of their children, our inter-parish school will partner with them to foster the students' individuality and God-given talents as they discover their role in the Church, family, school, community, country, and world.

Preschool Philosophy of Learning

Epiphany Preschool interprets the general goal of early childhood education as being the development of the WHOLE child.

For the intellectual and physical development of each child, the curriculum provides opportunities for each child to develop and perfect a wide range of skills with which to meet future challenges. Using an activity-centered, "hands-on" approach to learning, Epiphany seeks

to provide an environment which recognizes the child as an individual, responds to the child's natural curiosity, and fosters a creative approach to learning.

For the emotional development of each child, Epiphany Preschool provides a classroom experience from which children will associate pleasure with learning and leave each day feeling good about themselves. Epiphany Preschool seeks to develop self-confidence by increasing chances of success while providing the space to fail without fear.

For social development, Epiphany offers a place where each child, under the care of designated teachers, interacts with adults and other children in the process of learning respect and developing the quality of caring for others.

For spiritual development, the program is designed to help each child grow in knowledge and love of God, and respect for His creations. Each child should feel that he or she is a special and unique creation of God.

In a world that is increasingly fast-paced and competitive, Epiphany Preschool provides a place for every child to be a child and explore in the course of a child-oriented day.

STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

Each school shall utilize the OCS template to develop and distribute a handbook for students and parents. All local policies and procedures must be in conformity with Office of Catholic Schools policies, guidelines and regulations.

A committee, representative of the total school community, shall be involved in the development and periodic revision of this handbook.

All parents are required to sign a form stating they have read the rules and regulations outlined in this handbook and they agree to abide by those rules (Appendix AG-33). This signature form will be given to students when they receive a copy of the handbook, and the form must be signed and returned as soon as possible. Failure to have a signed form on file will not prevent the school from enforcing its policies but could result in disciplinary action being taken and/or prevent a student from enrolling (or continued enrollment) in the school.

Faculty and staff members shall be given copies of all school handbooks.

Handbooks and all subsequent changes are subject to prior written approval by the Diocese. to the extent any local handbook or policy statement therein may be inconsistent with the policies, guidelines or regulations of the Office of Catholic Schools, the Office of Catholic Schools policies, guidelines or regulations shall be of controlling force and effect.

PARENTAL ROLE

Since parents have given their children life, the Catholic Church recognizes parents as the primary and principal educators of their children. The Catholic parents' promise at baptism to raise their children as Catholic supports this premise. The Catholic school exists to assist parents

in the Christian formation of their children.

In this Handbook, the term parent refers not only to a child's natural or adopted parent, but to a student's non-parent legal guardian or to any person or agency authorized to act in place of parents.

The Diocese of Arlington Catholic Schools respects the role of parents as the primary educators of their children. Since the school is a continuation of the education children are receiving at home, Diocesan schools should demonstrate respect and support for the parents in their important and challenging task.

Parents are expected to support the school's mission and commitment to Christian principles; support the school policies as outlined in school handbooks (i.e., annually sign the school's Handbook Agreement Form). One of the conditions for initial and continued enrollment at the school is receipt of this signed form indicating the parent's support of the school's philosophy, policies, and regulations. In the event a parent desires to discuss a problem with his/her child's teacher, the parent should make an appointment for a private meeting with the child's teacher. Teachers welcome the opportunity to discuss a matter of concern with parents before it becomes an actual problem. Any parent who wishes to speak with the principal/director may do so, but after an initial meeting with the classroom teacher.

If a parent repeatedly or seriously violates proper school protocol, displays inappropriate or disruptive conduct toward students, or displays disrespectful, disruptive or harassing behavior toward teachers or toward school, parish, or diocesan staff, the school may take corrective action. Such corrective action may include, at the discretion of the principal/director (and, for parish schools, the pastor of the parish), the following: imposition of particular rules or procedures the parent must follow in interacting with the school and its students and staff; restriction or termination of the parent's access to school or parish property; dismissal of the parent's child(ren).

The school may impose other appropriate corrective action, without prior recourse, based upon the nature of the parent's conduct and the surrounding circumstances. As foundation for a faith-community, parents are invited and encouraged to participate in the school's celebration of prayer and Liturgy.

Parents are encouraged to participate in the programs, which are developed for the education of their children. The wide spectrum of this involvement includes volunteer work, participation in parent-teacher conferences, attendance at meetings and seminars designed to help parents assist their children at home and active involvement in the school's Parent-Teacher Organization.

NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE

Catholic Schools, administered under the authority of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington, comply with those constitutional and statutory provisions, as may be specifically applicable to the schools, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, marital status, disability, national origin or citizenship in the administration of their educational, personnel, admissions, financial aid, athletic and other school administered programs.

This policy does not preclude the existence of single sex schools, nor does it conflict with the

priority given to Catholics for admission as students. This policy also does not preclude the ability of the school to undertake and/or enforce appropriate actions with respect to students who advocate on school property or at school functions any practices or doctrines which are inconsistent with the religious tenets of the Catholic faith.

NON-CATHOLIC CHILDREN

The presence of children from other faiths provides a wonderful diversity to the school. However, the presence of non-Catholic children in the school shall not alter the primacy of Catholic religious formation as an integral component of the educational program in the school. As such:

- a. Non-Catholic children are expected to participate in the religious formation and education programs of the school.
- b. Non-Catholic children must participate in liturgies, retreats and other religious functions incorporated within the program.
- c. Non-Catholic children may not be exempted from the catechesis held during the school day.
- d. While Catholic teaching respects the various faith traditions of the children attending the Catholic school, parents must be aware that it is the Catholic position that will be taught.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

The following preschool programs are available:

- 3-year-olds 2 day classes (T-Th)
- 4-year-olds 3 day class (M-W-F)
- 5-day class (M-F)

To enter preschool, children should be 3 by September 30, and should be toilet trained.

Epiphany Preschool is accredited by the Virginia Catholic Education Association. The preschool is operated under a religious exemption from licensure. We are required by the state to meet health and safety regulations set forth by the Code of Virginia, Section 63.1-196.3 for "Exempt" child day centers.

At the present time, our facility consists of two rooms in the Epiphany School complex, which are used for preschool classes. Epiphany provides full use of school facilities including library, gym, stage, playing fields and pavilion for preschool use.

Epiphany Preschool operates under the direction of the principal and preschool director of Epiphany Catholic School, a lead curriculum teacher, teachers and teacher aides. Staff qualifications are listed below. All staff must be certified annually by a licensed physician to be free from any disability which would prevent them from caring for children. Staff are also instructed in the prevention of infectious diseases through proper handwashing procedures and the daily health screening of preschoolers. All staff are required to attain the Red Cross Certification in Infant and Child First Aid and Rescue Breathing.

Staff hired at Epiphany Preschool meet or exceed requirements set forth by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Epiphany Preschool strives to provide an optimal staff-child ratio in each class. We offer a ratio of 1 staff to 6-8 children.

Teachers and aides at Epiphany are required to further their growth and competence by

1. Continuing graduate studies, undergraduate studies, and/or in-service coursework.
2. Maintaining certification/license for teaching
3. Keeping abreast of new developments in Early Childhood Education through membership in the National Association for the Education of Young Children, coursework, conference attendance, workshops and/or in-services.
4. Continually reflecting and improving teaching approach and technique.

Teachers and aides work to provide an optimum learning environment by

1. Communicating an enthusiasm for learning.
2. Possessing a warm and loving approach to young children.
3. Being impartial, fair, and firm in the exercise of authority.
4. Helping preschoolers to develop to their full capacity through stimulating encouragement, and the presence of creative challenges.

Teachers and aides at Epiphany Preschool aid in the formation of a Christian character in young children by:

1. Demonstrating a deep love and respect for God and His creations, and love and respect for the dignity of every child.
2. Directing, modeling, and guiding children to live, work and play peacefully with others.

Considering the unique situations which may arise in the educational process, and because it is impossible to foresee all school issues that arise, the faculty and administration reserve the right to address and to take appropriate action for any such situations not specifically referenced in this manual. In addition, in view of the unique and essential religious mission of the school, it is expressly understood that the school may take actions in cases where moral offenses occur which reflect adversely on the school, the Catholic Diocese of Arlington or the Roman Catholic Church, or which interfere with the ability of the school to perform its religious mission or to effectively maintain the intimate working relationship of the school and the Community of Faith.

This handbook may be modified by the school after reasonable notice to the parents of the effective date of any changes. No section headings are for convenience of use and shall not affect the interpretation of any provisions. If the school should elect not to act in a particular situation, this shall not be construed or interpreted as a waiver or preclude the school from acting in a subsequent situation of the same or similar kind.

II. CURRICULUM

The curriculum is not just the goals of the program and the planned activities but also the daily schedule, the availability and use of materials, transitions between activities and the way in which routine tasks of living are implemented. Young children are expected to learn through active and positive manipulation of the environment and concrete experiences that contribute to concept development.

Without limiting the rights of the school under section VIII of this handbook, modifications may be made in the environment and staffing patterns for children with special needs.

The daily schedule is intended to provide a balance of activities with attention to the following dimension of scheduling:

- a. Daily outdoor play, weather permitting.
- b. Alternating periods of quiet time and active play
- c. A balance of large muscle and small muscle activities is provided.
- d. Various small group or large group activities through most of the day
- e. A balance of child-initiated and staff-initiated activity is provided. The amount of time spent on staff-initiated, large group activity is limited.

Developmentally appropriate materials and equipment that project heterogeneous, racial, gender and age attributes are selected for use.

The school will use media, such as television, films, videotapes, and computers that have been previewed by adults prior to use. Another option for activity is always available. No child is required to view or interact with the program; and the staff discusses what is viewed with children to develop critical viewing skills. Technology is incorporated as an integral part of the day.

The goal of the school is to emphasize concrete experiential learning and to achieve the following goals:

- a. foster positive self-concept;
- b. foster spiritual development;
- c. encourage children to think, reason, question and experiment;
- d. develop social skills;
- e. encourage language development;
- f. enhance physical development and skills;
- g. encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety and nutritional practices; h. encourage creative expression and appreciation for the arts;
- i. respect cultural diversity.

Staff provides materials and time for activities, but children choose from among several activities that the teacher has planned, or the children initiate. Staff respects the child's right to choose not to participate at times.

Children are not always required to move from one activity to another as a group. Unregimented transitions are also used as a vehicle for learning. Planned or routine activities may be changed according to the needs or interests of children,

and/or to cope with changes in weather or other situations that affect routines without unduly alarming children.

Routine tasks such as toileting, eating, dressing and sleeping are incorporated into the program as a means of furthering children's learning, self-help and social skills. Through complimentary actions at home, parents are expected to assist and cooperate with staff to make feeding and the development of other independent skills a positive experience for children. Provision is made for children who are early risers and for children who do not nap.

In addition to the daily learning activities planned by the classroom teachers, preschool children will participate in large group music classes.

Preschoolers will have several opportunities to perform during the school year, including the Hispanic Heritage Day Performance, annual Christmas Pageant, and the Spring Nursery Rhyme Program.

Epiphany teachers plan a theme-based curriculum utilizing the goals and objectives the Arlington Diocese Comprehensive Standards for Four-Year-Olds, Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning, and the guidelines for developmental appropriateness from the NAEYC.

Epiphany Preschool uses the God Made Me and God Made the World religion program published by Loyola Press as a religion resource in classroom planning. Lessons are woven throughout the daily curriculum. The program fosters an understanding that God made each person and He made the world around us. Children learn to know, love, and serve God by learning about Him, by leaning about Jesus, learning to love themselves and others, learning about God's creations, caring for His World, and giving thanks for His wonderful gifts.

SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS

There is no annual supply fee at this time. In accordance with our Diocesan Wellness Policy, students will bring their own snack from home each day. For special occasions, such as birthdays or class parties, children may bring in a prepackaged item to share. All parents will be notified if there is an allergy in the classroom so that they can choose a healthy snack option that works for everyone.

ASSESSMENT

The school's program is intended to assist staff and administrators in a systematic evaluation of the program, to diagnose children's strengths and weaknesses and to aid in revision of the curriculum and planning of instruction.

At Epiphany Preschool, we use the standard diocesan preschool skills assessments for both the Preschool and Pre-K classes. The results of this assessment will be shared with families in the fall and spring.

The Pre-K class participates in the My IGDIs assessments, which are administered in Fall and Spring. Reports will be made available to families.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Teachers are available to parents throughout the school year to keep the lines of communication open in the best interest of the children. Parent-teacher conferences can be scheduled throughout the school year if necessary. Parents should first privately contact a teacher with any concerns about a child or class situation before seeking intervention of the director or school administration.

SCHEDULING AND OTHER CONFERENCE INFORMATION

One formal conference is scheduled in November. This conference addresses the child's transition to school and introduces the Skills Assessment which will be used throughout the year. The second conference in early spring will provide information on the child's intellectual, social, emotional, physical, and spiritual growth as observed within the classroom. Four-year-old My IGBIs assessment results will be shared spring and fall with families.

Parents may request a conference at any time. Teachers will make every effort to meet with them in a timely fashion.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Evaluation of the child must be based on teacher judgment, observation, daily performance, class participation and effort.

Progress reports will be provided three times a year, in the Fall, Winter and again in the Spring.

RETENTION/PROMOTION/PLACEMENT

A major goal of the school is to assist children to complete each year satisfactorily. Retention is recommended only when it is deemed necessary and advantageous to the particular needs of the child.

- a. The final decision to promote or retain a child is based on the child's developmental performance and best interests, as determined by the principal/director.
- b. Parents will be kept informed about the inability of their child to progress satisfactorily.
- c. Children who would not benefit from being retained may be "placed" in the next level; however, the school may prepare and implement an Intervention Plan for the child as a condition of placement.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

ADMISSIONS

DIOCESAN INITIAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Children who desire an educational experience founded on the Catholic philosophy of education

and who fulfill the age, health and behavioral requirements are eligible for admission to the school.

Eligibility

The school sets registration procedures and admission policies. The availability of space and the order of preference for admission are determined by the school according to the following general criteria:

- a. Children from the parish
- b. Children from parishes without schools
- c. Children from parishes with schools (for sufficient reason)
- d. Children from non-Catholic families

If approved by the pastor, and where practicable, the siblings may receive special consideration.

General Requirements for Preschool Admission

There is no testing for pre-school admission. However, readiness assessment may be utilized to determine the developmentally appropriate placement in the preschool program. The following list of documents/information is required:

- a. Presentation of an original Birth certificate (schools are expected to keep a copy of the certificate on file) .
- b. Baptismal certificate for Catholic students
- c. Proof of custody where applicable
- d. Progress reports (if available)
- e. Completed Diocesan Application Form (Appendix J)
- f. A non-refundable application fee
- g. A fully executed MCH-213 G Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Form or equivalent, which stipulates the following must be submitted prior to the student beginning school:
 - i. Proof of exact dates of immunization as required by the Code of Virginia
 - ii. Current Certification of Immunization
 - iii. Physical examination covering all required aspects as mandated on the MCH-213 G, within 12 months prior to entering school for the first time. Equivalent school entrance physical forms from another state may be acceptable. (Note: A preschool physical does not take the place of the required kindergarten entry physical unless it is completed within 12 months prior to kindergarten entry.)
 - iv. Proof of satisfying tuition requirements at any former Diocesan school previously enrolled in a Diocesan school.

General Conditions of Admission

A child is admitted to the school on the premise the child intends to learn the Catholic religion and be educated in a Catholic environment. In certain cases, a child may be admitted on a probationary basis subject to the child successfully completing one or more subsequent interim evaluations. A

child with academic or other needs (i.e., behavioral), which cannot be reasonably addressed by the school may be denied admission.

School application forms may request disability-related information. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) does not prohibit a school from asking questions about a student's disabilities provided that information does not discriminate (automatically prohibit a student from applying).

CLASS PLACEMENT

The principal/director and faculty reserve the right to place a child in a class to ensure the best interests of the child.

REGISTRATION

Registration begins in January for the upcoming school year. Parishioners of Precious Blood, St. Peter in Washington, VA, St. Isidore the Farmer in Orange, Our Lady of the Blue Ridge in Madison, as well currently enrolled families, are provided with registration materials during an early enrollment period. Classes are filled on a first come-first served basis. Registration packets and school information are available in the vestibules of our supporting parishes, from the school office or by calling (540) 825-9017, or emailing, office@epiphanycatholicsschool.org.

ATTENDANCE

ABSENCE/TARDINESS/LEAVING SCHOOL

Regular attendance in the program is strongly encouraged for setting the groundwork for a successful school experience. Neither the school, the Diocese, the Office of Catholic Schools, nor any of its employees/staff are responsible for ensuring actual attendance; this is the responsibility of the child's parent(s)/guardian(s).

Except in cases of emergency as determined by the principal/director and/or a staff member (as applicable or necessary), a child may only be released from school to another authorized adult with the prior written or verbal authorization of the child's parent. The adult will be required to produce identification before the child is released.

ATTENDANCE/REPORTING PROCEDURES

Absence

Parents are asked to notify the school if their child is ill and unable to attend. Parents are also asked to consult the school calendar before making vacation plans.

Tardiness

A student who is tardy should report to the principal/director's office or attendance office. A student who arrives late for an excused reason (i.e., director's note) is counted tardy.

Frequent cases of tardiness will be brought to the attention of the principal/director so that the parent may be contacted.

Ideally Preschool families drop off in the carpool line starting at 7:50. School begins at 8. Good habits of regular attendance and punctuality should begin early.

Medical excuses

Parents are asked to call the office if their child is sick and will be absent. A note explaining the reason for absence should be sent to school when the child returns.

Anticipated Absence

Please notify the school if your child will be absent. Though there are emergency situations that may require missed school days, we ask families to plan vacation time that coincides with school holidays and minimizes missed school. Teachers plan with each child in mind and deserve to know when a student must miss school for personal reasons.

Release of children

Parents must sign in/out their children when arriving late or being released outside of regular school hours.

No child will be released to an adult other than the designated person unless the school has received written or verbal approval. Children staying for extended days will be signed in and out of their preschool class by the day care person but must be signed in or out of the day care by the parent/guardian.

TRANSFERRING TO ANOTHER SCHOOL

The school must be notified in writing by the parent(s) of a child regarding a decision to transfer a child to another school, including the last day the child will attend classes at school. All school-owned materials must be returned to school and all fees paid before leaving. Scholastic information will be sent to the new school upon a "Release of Student Records Form" from the new school. All fees and tuition MUST BE PAID prior to the release of the child's records.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Lunch is provided by the parents. Hot lunch is catered by local restaurants and is available on certain days, (Days vary). Parents can pre-order hot lunch online.

Rules for acceptance and participation in the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child Nutrition Programs are the same for all children without regard to race, color, sex, age, handicap, or national origin. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any USDA related activity should write to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, DC, 20250.

At the present time, Epiphany Preschool does not participate in the Federal Milk Program.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

7:45-8:00- Arrival time for PreK -4.

8:00 a.m- PreK 4 morning begins.

8:00- Arrival time for preschool-3

12:00 noon- Lunch Time for Preschoolers. Children in the Three-year old program will be dismissed at 11:15.

3:00 p.m.- PreK-4 students are dismissed. Students remaining after 3:15 will remain at the office and will be signed out by the parents.

Teachers should be notified in writing or by phone call to the office if there is a change in the regular pick-up routine.

IV. GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

ADMINISTRATIVE

CHILD CUSTODY AND GUARDIANSHIP

At the time of school entry or at any other time where a change in custody status/arrangements occurs, it is the responsibility of the parent(s) to provide the principal/director with a true and correct copy of the legal document for any child for which there is a legal custody agreement or for any child not residing with his/her parent.

School communication with the appropriate guardian is essential. Accordingly:

- a. Custodial parents should identify in writing other adults who may have access to information regarding their child.
- b. non-custodial parents may receive information (when requested) regarding the child unless specific documentation to the contrary is provided in the legal custody agreement.

ACCESS TO RECORDS

Parents have a right (unless prohibited by the courts in a custody agreement) to the timely inspection of the educational records (cumulative and confidential) of their child during school hours. The school shall respond to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records.

If the educational records of a child contain information on more than one child, the parents are limited to specific information about their child only.

Student records shall be open to authorized school personnel only (principal, director, assistant principal, and those to whom they extend access within a given year.)

The school administration may elect to provide at cost photocopies of a child's educational records to parents, but documentation is to be stamped "unofficial."

Parents are obligated to share educational/psychological testing results and any resulting plan with the school. If a student has a documented disability, a copy of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Individualized Services Plan (ISP), 504 plan, and/or Student Assistance Plan (SAP) should be maintained in the student's confidential file. The refusal to provide such information is a ground for terminating enrollment in the school.

Confidential records for dis-enrolled students are merged with the students' cumulative files.

RETENTION OF RECORDS

The following student records are to be retained indefinitely:

Permanent record card (to include transcripts, attendance record and standardized test results)

The following student records are to be retained for 25 years:

- a. IEP/ISP, or 504 Plan,
- b. Student Assistance Plan,
- c. Eligibility Minutes and/or
- d. Student Assistance Team minutes.

The following student records are to be retained for 7 years or age 25 whichever is greater:

- a. Application
- b. Counselor notes
- c. Discipline notes
- d. Court Documents
- e. Psychological reports

SCHOOL VISITORS

All persons other than school staff and currently registered children must first report to the school office immediately upon entering school grounds, sign in and wear an identification tag when visiting the school.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

Principal/ Director's Communication

Mr. Richard Long, Principal, Ms. Belinda Ferrari, Preschool Director (four year olds teacher) are available to meet with parents for their ideas, questions or concerns. Please call the school office to arrange an appointment. Contact Ms. Ferrari after 3 pm. in the preschool classroom or call the office. Ms.Ferrari may also be reached by email at ferrarib@epiphanycatholicsschool.org

Preschool families receive the school's weekly newsletter and quarterly report which contain information about preschool through grade 8 activities, PTO news, school development, etc.

Take-Home Communication

All materials prepared by parents for release to the parish or school community must be approved by the principal/director or his/her designee.

*All Epiphany teachers, the principal and office have email addresses that provide an additional means of communication between home and school. Addresses will be provided at the beginning of each school year and posted in the school directory. **Please note that it is inappropriate to contact staff members on social media about school related issues. If you need to get in contact with a teacher please call the school or email the teacher directly.***

TELEPHONE USE

The telephone in the main school office is available for parent use.

INCLEMENT WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Epiphany will follow the decision of Culpeper County Schools to close for the first three (3) calendar days of an inclement weather event. The principal will make the decision, if necessary, on the fourth (4th) calendar day. Faculty, staff, and families will be notified by phone, email, and text (if requested) through SchoolMessenger®.

Opening Delay

Epiphany will follow the decision of Culpeper County Schools to delay the opening of school for the first three (3) calendar days of an inclement weather event. The principal will make the decision, if necessary, on the fourth (4th) calendar day. Faculty, staff, and families will be notified by phone, email, and text (if requested) through SchoolMessenger®.

-One Hour Delay:

- Arrival will begin at 8:55am
- School Day will begin at 9:10am

-Two Hour Delay:

- Arrival will begin at 9:55am
- School Day will begin at 10:10am

Three-year-old Preschool will be canceled in the event of a two hour delay.

Early Closing while at School

Epiphany will follow the decision of Culpeper County Schools for an early closing of the school day. Families will be notified by phone, email, and text through SchoolMessenger®. Parents are encouraged to pick up their children as soon as possible if they are concerned about driving conditions. Parents will need to respond immediately or have alternative plans in place in case they are not able to arrive at the time school is closed.

If school is closed for inclement weather, or has closed during the school day, all afternoon and evening activities are canceled.

PHOTOS AND OTHER MEDIA

Parents may opt out their children from participating in videotaping, audio recording, school pictures, other photography or participation involving the Internet. When a parent decides to exercise this right, the school is required to use the *Waiver/Right to Object* form (Appendix N). All student or parental publications are subject to review and approval by the school administration prior to publication.

LIBRARY

All books chosen for classroom reading in Diocesan schools must be appropriate for students not only in age level and reading ability but also for the moral development which we are working to foster. All books shall conform to Diocesan policies and guidelines regarding Catholic education.

Parents or teachers who object to reading or audio-visual/computer materials must complete an Objection to Content Form (Appendix K) and submit it to the school principal/director. A review committee (to include an Office of Catholic Schools member) will subsequently discuss the objection and decide the disposition of the challenged material. The parent or teacher initiating the review should be personally notified of the results of the review.

FIELD TRIPS

- Field trips are privileges planned by teachers and approved by the school administration with educational purposes as the primary objective and in light of financial considerations.
- Field trips are considered an extension of the school day and the code of conduct will apply.
- A child must give to the sponsoring teacher a permission form signed by a child's parent(s) prior to a child participating in each activity (Appendix R).
- In the event private automobiles/vehicles of children, parents or other authorized adults of at least 21 years of age are to be utilized to transport children on field trips, the drivers and/or the vehicle owners must have a valid driver's license and sufficient liability, medical and uninsured motorist insurance coverage as defined by the Diocesan Risk Manager. Evidence to this effect must be presented to the principal/ director for review and approval prior to the use of such vehicles. The principal/ director shall have the right to prohibit for any reason a proposed driver from transporting children on a field trip.
- Youth weighing less than 100 pounds may not be seated near the front seat airbag. Cell calls and texting are not permitted while driving. Teachers and other school employees should not drive students in their personal vehicles.
- Parents/guardians are to be furnished with detailed written information about the field trip and must be given the opportunity to "opt out" their children from the field trip. It should also be understood, in light of world conditions and specifically threats of terrorism against Americans, it may be necessary to cancel school-sponsored trips due to world and national developments at any time.

All medications given on field trips must comply with medication administration policies. For a student with prescription medication and/or medically necessary health related procedures or treatments, a trained individual needs to be present on the field trip such as; a school nurse, parent/guardian or designated family member to ensure care in the case of an emergency. If a trained individual of the school is unable to chaperone the student on a field trip, it is the responsibility of the parent to provide a trained individual to accompany the student.

Parents who volunteer to drive a group of children for preschool field trips must be accompanied by a schoolteacher or aide and have completed the insurance and Diocesan Child Protection and Safety paperwork.

Participation in field trips is intended for enrolled students, their teachers and approved parent drivers/helpers.

OVERNIGHT TRIPS

Overnight trips are not permitted for preschool children.

PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

Parent-teacher (and/or home-school) organizations are sponsored by the school to promote a cooperative effort at meeting certain needs of the child. The parent organization is subject in all respects to the control of the school. All parent organization activities and all materials prepared by parents must be submitted to the principal/director for approval prior to implementation and/or distribution.

All PTO monies must be deposited in the parish or school account as designated by the pastor. In consultation with the principal, the PTO officers should prepare a budget and submit it to the pastor and principal for approval.

A PTO board member must receive the approval of the pastor and principal.

Every school should have an effective Parent-Teacher Organization. An effective Parent-Teacher Organization should strive to provide support and assistance to the head of school/principal regarding advancement of the school's mission and legislative issues concerning the school as directed by leadership.

Every school should have a representative on the Diocesan Council of PTOs.

Epiphany School has a dynamic PTO. Their goal is to have 100% participation of school families. There are many committees, activities, and school operations that depend on parent help. Volunteers are asked to sign up for volunteer activities, and track their volunteer hours in the binder in the school office. The PTO and the school will recognize outstanding volunteers. Each family is asked to give a minimum of 20 hours per year in volunteering (10 hrs. per adult).

Parents are welcome at Epiphany Preschool. We welcome any parents who would like to share special hobbies, interests or careers with the children. We need volunteers to help on our class trips and other special activities which will come up during the year. Your help and support, as well as your good ideas, are always welcome.

Parent volunteers who will have substantial contact with children are required to file child protection paperwork and attend a VIRTUS training session. Please note: to attend any field trips with your child you will need to complete the VIRTUS workshop and child protection paperwork. This is standard procedure at all diocesan schools. Volunteers needing this paperwork will be notified and provided with a Diocesan packet.

V. FINANCES

FUNDRAISING

Any program of generating additional revenue should have the approval of school leadership (pastor, principal, director). These activities should be organized and executed so that the school program is not interrupted.

Students may participate in and cooperate with worthy collections and fundraising projects conducted by a school or parish, provided such activities have been approved by the school leadership (pastor, principal, director).

The PTO fundraisers include a Race for Education, pansy sale, shopping through Amazon Smile, box tops for education, and annual Dinner Dance/Auction. Family participation is crucial to the success of these events.

TRANSPORTATION/PARKING

Transportation is provided at an additional cost.

Preschool Parking for Arrival and Dismissal

Arrival and dismissal for PreK-4 & 3 will be through the carpool line. Late arrivals must check-in at the office. Enter and exit through the main doors. PreK 3 will drop off later for the first month of school at 8:10 a.m.

Office staff will bring the children to the classroom. Early dismissals can pick up their children from the office. Parents picking up from extended day will pull around to the Pavilion behind the school.

Children's safety is of greatest importance. Parents must keep their children and siblings with them and not allow them to run ahead to the classroom or to the car.

SCHOOL TUITION POLICIES

Tuition may be paid in full or in installments. Epiphany utilizes the services of FACTS Tuition Management for those who choose to make payments. FACTS provides a direct debit plan. There is a one-time fee for using the payment plan. Families choose their method of payment at registration and complete FACTS paperwork if necessary. The first tuition draw is made in July, and a payment schedule for 2 to 11 payments can be arranged. Final tuition payments are due in May. If for some reason there is a difficulty in making payment on time, please notify the school as soon as possible so that we may adjust the time of your payment to meet your needs.

TUITION AND OTHER FEE SCHEDULES

3-Year-Old – 2 Day/Week: \$2,300

4-Year-Old – 3 Day/Week: \$4,320
4-Year Old – 5 Day/Week: \$6,500

Tuition payments may be made in full by June 1, or families may register to pay by installments through FACTS Tuition Management Co. There is a 40.00 Annual Fee to use FACTS tuition payment program. Late fees of \$10.00 per child will be added beginning June 11 to outstanding supply fees and tuition.

Late Pickup Fees: The fee is \$15/hour. Bills are sent out biweekly.

CODE OF CONDUCT

VI. CHILD RESPONSIBILITIES & BEHAVIOR

In all areas of learning, discipline must be considered in the development of children. The Code of Conduct is based on the Gospel message of Jesus. Growth in self-discipline, a responsibility for Catholic moral values and a loving respect for the rights of all persons is encouraged and nourished by the Code of Conduct. To achieve these ends, parents, staff and children work together to create a Catholic school environment. Based upon the Catholic moral values and loving respect for others taught by Jesus, children:

- a. will be truthful.
- b. will be respectful and courteous toward all teachers and adults.
- c. will refrain from harassment of any kind.
- d. will use appropriate language.
- e. will speak respectfully to and about others.
- f. will respect all school and personal property.
- g. will play only in assigned playground areas with good sportsmanship and cooperation.
- h. will bring to school only appropriate show & tell items from home.

The school observes this Code of Conduct because it is built on fundamental Catholic social teachings. The role of the principal/director and staff is to work with the children and parents to assist the children in developing a strong Christian attitude toward life.

DISCIPLINE

Classroom rules are designed to protect persons and property and to promote prosocial behaviors, such as sharing and taking turns. If problems arise, the children in question will be reminded of acceptable behaviors and redirected to more positive activities.

USE OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

In cases where a child is continually disruptive of others or in the case of a single serious disciplinary infraction, the teacher will apprise the principal and director of the situation. They will assist in the development of a course of action to be taken to correct the situation.

Children who lack self-discipline or who violate the rights of others can expect disciplinary action. Each offense will be dealt with on an individual basis according to the age of the child, the nature of the infraction and the severity of the case. Repeated infractions can result in more serious consequences, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion, but there is no requirement for progressive discipline.

SPECIFIC DISCIPLINARY POLICIES

Preschool teachers to formulate rules for their class at the beginning of each school year. The Teachers will help the children understand what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate behavior, and why is an important learning process that leads children towards the goal...self-discipline. Children in this learning process receive positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior, and redirection, understanding, counseling and if needed, a time out consequence for inappropriate behavior. Children with behavior difficulties will be asked to sit and verbalize their problems with a staff member, come to a good solution, and rejoin activities as soon as they are ready.

Repeated behavior problems will be brought to the attention of the parents, so that parents and teachers together can better understand any underlying problems and work towards a solution. IN THIS REGARD, WE ASK ALL PARENTS TO COMMUNICATE WITH US CONCERNING ANY PROBLEMS THEIR CHILDREN MAY BE FACING OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL...FAMILY PROBLEMS, ILLNESSES, ETC., AS THEY WILL AFFECT A CHILD'S ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR. Good communication between home and school is essential. If the preschool staff feels that the child has behavior problems which may require special guidance, parents will be referred to local agencies which can provide help.

SUSPENSION

Suspension may be imposed as determined by the principal/director. Once the principal/director suspends a child, parents may be required to sign a behavioral contract in which they signify their understanding of the problem and agree to work with the school in correcting the situation.

The failure of the parents to follow the above referenced agreement shall preclude the child from returning to the regular program.

DISMISSAL

Conduct which is disruptive to the learning atmosphere and/or contrary to the school's Code of Conduct is justification for a principal/director to dismiss a child at the close of the school year. Children who are dismissed may apply for readmission to any Diocesan school after one full year.

EXPULSION

Expulsion may be resorted to when one or all the following are present:

- a. a serious infraction of school rules occurs;

- b. the child has demonstrated continuing disregard of school rules for which other means of discipline have proven ineffectual;
- c. the child's continued presence in the school is considered by school officials to be a serious hindrance to the safety or welfare of the school community;
- d. a parent repeatedly or seriously violates proper school protocol, displays inappropriate or disruptive conduct toward students or displays disrespectful, disruptive or harassing behavior toward teachers or toward school, parish or diocesan staff.

If the principal/director believes it necessary to expel a child, the principal/director will notify the child and the child's parents about the child's action and provide them with an opportunity to respond in accordance with the school's disciplinary hearing process before making any final decision on the matter.

A parent whose child is expelled may appeal this decision in writing to the Superintendent of Schools within 5 working days from the time of written notification.

During the pendency of any appeal, the expelled child shall be removed from the school community in compliance with the expulsion notice unless otherwise directed in the discretion of the principal/ director.

Children who have been expelled from any Diocesan school may not apply for admission to that school or another Diocesan school for a minimum of one (1) year from the date of expulsion.

REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

The privacy of individual children must be balanced against the need to protect the health, welfare, and safety of other members of the school community. The principal/director or his/her designee has the right to protect the health, welfare, and safety of school patrons by searching a child's person and/or personal property on school grounds or at school activities. Lockers and desks are school property and are subject to searches by school personnel.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Children are to care for school property in a respectful manner. Children who deface or damage school property or the property of others will make financial restitution.

DRESS CODE

The dress code provides a standard for our children that fosters an environment conducive to learning and respectful behavior.

Final decisions regarding the school uniform rest with the principal/director.

DRESS CODE REQUIREMENTS & OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION

The preschool-3, and PreK-4 class will wear the school gym uniform on non-mass days. The summer uniform is the epiphany school T-shirt and shorts, the winter uniform is the school sweatshirt and sweatpants. Children should wear tennis shoes and plain white crew socks.

PreK-4 is required to wear the full school uniform on mass days. Gym uniforms are **not** permitted on mass days.

Preschoolers in our three-year-old program are not required to wear the school uniform. if a mass is scheduled during their class time. Nice dress clothes are required if a mass is scheduled during their class time. No tennis shoes during mass, but please provide a change of shoes for playground time. All jackets, sweaters, hats, and gloves with your child's name. The school can not be responsible for missing clothing, if it is not labeled clearly.

****Children should have with them on the first day of school a change of clothing (underwear, socks, long pants, and shirt) to leave at school in case of emergency. Please mark items and put them in a bag, with your child's name.**

PLAYGROUND REGULATIONS

Preschoolers will use the playground daily when the weather permits. Children will be taught safe and courteous procedures for using the equipment. Preschoolers are required to always have adult supervision on the playground.

Playground safety rules include:

- Play only on equipment approved for preschool use.
- Do not throw gravel or mulch.
- Go one at a time down the slides.
- Go down the slide...do not walk up the slide.
- Keep a safe distance from the swings while in use.
- Take turns and share riding toys and playground equipment.

LUNCHROOM REGULATIONS

Preschool children in the four-year-old classroom and preschoolers will eat lunch in the respective preschool classroom. Children should bring a bag lunch. Families will also be given the option of purchasing catered lunches that the PTO orders on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Parents can order online.

If a food allergy is present in the classroom. The parents will be notified of the snack and lunch items that will be considered off limits in the classroom. Do not send in those items, as those items will not be allowed to enter the classroom, throughout the year, as it may cause health issues or a medical situation.

Given the risk of potential harm, students' access and use of microwave ovens are prohibited. Student meals provided by parents must not be heated in microwave ovens by school personnel

and/or school volunteers.

SHOW & TELL

Children are allowed to bring toys from home for the purpose of Show and Tell only. Weapons (whether real or toy) of any kind are not appropriate Show and Tell items and shall not be brought to school for any reason. If weapons of any kind are brought to school, the child shall be subject to immediate disciplinary action which may include but not be limited to expulsion.

Show and tell days will be announced by teachers in advance. This activity fosters children's expressive and receptive language abilities and self-esteem, while making personal learning connections with the topics or units being presented. Parents can help their children make interesting and relevant choices for show and tell. Again, toy weapons or aggressive play figures are not allowed.

VII. HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELFARE

STUDENT HEALTH, SAFETY, & WELFARE

Parents and guardians have the primary responsibility for the health and well-being of their children. School health services supplement, rather than substitute, for parental care and concern for the health of the students.

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND/OR CHILD ABUSE

The Catholic Diocese of Arlington Policy on the Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and/or Child Abuse generally applies to all clergy, all employees and all volunteers.

It is the policy of the Diocese that sexual misconduct and/or child abuse while performing any work or activities under the auspices of the Diocese is contrary to Christian principles and outside the scope of any authority, duties and/or employment of any clergy, employee or volunteer.

Any clergy, employee or volunteer with the Diocese who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that an incident of child abuse or illegal sexual misconduct has been perpetrated by any individual, including clergy, employee, or volunteer with the Diocese,

- must comply with applicable reporting and other requirements of state and local law;
- must report the incident to the Moderator of the Curia of the Diocese of Arlington.

Virginia law imposes upon school personnel the legal responsibility of reporting to the local child protective services agency any incident of suspected child abuse or neglect.

School personnel who suspect the abuse or neglect of a student must report the matter directly to Child Protective Services and to the school principal/director who in turn will call the Moderator of the Curia. At that point, confidentiality must be respected.

According to the *Code of Virginia*, (Section 63.2 – 1518) *Authority to Talk to a Child or Sibling*, “Any person required to make a report or conduct an investigation or family assessment, pursuant to this chapter may talk to any child suspected of being abused or neglected or to any of his siblings without consent of and outside the presence of his parent, guardian, legal custodian or other person standing in loco parentis or school personnel.”

WELLNESS POLICY

The Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools Wellness Policy (2006) meets minimum federal standards and establishes goals for physical education, nutrition and healthy environments in schools. All schools must develop, and continue to evaluate, local school wellness policies. The local policies create a framework for increased student activity, staff wellness, safe and healthy environments, and the elimination of foods of minimal nutritional value, during the school day. All schools have wellness committees to implement, sustain and evaluate the local wellness program.

Epiphany Catholic School participates in the Wellness Program recommendations of the Federal Government and the Diocese of Arlington, to promote healthy living practices including healthy eating, physical activity, and health education. Healthy choices should be supported in the early childhood years to prevent childhood obesity and foster lifelong wellness. Our goals at preschools include:

- Healthy snack choices (we will provide families with recommended snacks but welcome your resourcefulness and creativity!)
- Daily physical activities
- Healthy food choices for celebrations (birthdays, holidays)
- Connecting with the natural world to encourage outdoor activities and appreciation for God’s creation
- Health education for preschoolers on the importance of rest, active play, healthy eating, cleanliness and illness prevention
- Parent education on child nutrition and wellness

Any preschool parents who would like to be part of the Epiphany Wellness committee are encouraged to notify the principal. Your participation is welcome and appreciated.

ACCIDENTS AND FIRST AID

The parents of an injured student will be notified of the accident/injury by the principal/administration or the principal/administration's designee as soon as reasonably possible, taking into consideration such factors as the apparent severity of the accident/injury and the priority of aiding the student.

If an incident results in a medical condition or injury which can be reasonably known to the appropriate supervisory faculty/staff member and/or the principal, the school and/or its staff are authorized to render reasonable basic first aid if such direct medical assistance would, in the opinion of the school, serve to minimize the severity of the injured person's condition. In addition, staff may secure professional diagnosis and/or treatment if such an action, in the opinion of the school, appears to be reasonably warranted. The school and school officials shall be expressly held harmless from any liability costs or expenses associated with the professional diagnosis and/or any treatment or first aid provided (including but not limited to the cost of transportation),

such costs or expenses being the responsibility of the injured party or, if a student, the student's parents.

ILLNESS

Each school will provide a health office or comfortable space, apart from the student population, where children who become ill or injured can be cared for according to the *Virginia School Health Guidelines, 2nd edition*.

Children with fevers, contagious, or infectious diseases will be sent home promptly and excluded from school while in that condition, per Virginia Department of Health regulations. Once the student is confirmed to be free of communicable illness by a healthcare provider or is **fever free/symptom free for 24 hours without taking anti-fever medications**, the student may return to school, after-school, and extracurricular activities...

When a student is requesting a waiver from participating in Physical Education classes and/or recess, parents are required to submit a written statement from their child's physician which states any activity restrictions regarding participation in Physical Education classes and/or recess. The statement is expected to include a specific time frame for the activity restrictions.

Children who become ill while at school will be sent to the school office. Office staff or teachers will contact the parent concerning the illness and arrange for child's pick-up. Children will remain in the office while waiting to be picked up. Parents need to sign them out from the office.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION OVERVIEW

Detailed Diocesan medication policies and procedures can be accessed on the Office of Catholic Schools website, in the school clinic and in the appendix of this document.

All school clinics, administrators and staff are required to administer medication within the framework of the procedures outlined in Diocesan policy and summarized here...

All prescription and over the counter (OTC) medications may be administered during the school day under the following conditions:

- a. When the need for administration of medicines during school hours has been confirmed by the school nurse/health assistant (or the school administration)
- b. After the first dose of any medication has been given at home;
- c. When the parent/guardian provides and transports the medication to and from school and the medication is given directly to the school nurse/health assistant, or a senior member of the school administration;
- d. When there is a health care provider's written order signed by the parent/guardian requesting the school to administer medication or to permit the student to self-administer the medication. ;
- e. When the medication is brought to the school in its original container stating the name of the student, the dosage and method of administration prescribed by a physician. It is the parent's or guardian's responsibility to notify the school of any changes to the original prescription. The new prescription must also be brought to the school in the original container as stated above;

- f. When the appropriate medication authorization form (see Appendix F-6) has been completed, signed and accompanies the medication;
- g. For any medication, parents must document the number of tablets or dosages to be secured for administration by authorized school personnel. If tablets are to be divided, the parent or guardian is responsible for dividing the tablets that are to be divided in order to achieve their child's proper dosage.

All OTC and prescription medications are to be kept locked in the clinic/school office and be administered by the school nurse, clinic aide, principal/director, or trained designee. No student is to carry/possess medications, without appropriate medical authorization. No medication will be administered unless the school has received a signed copy of the Medication Authorization Form (see Appendix F-6). OTC medications do not require a health care provider's signature unless the medication is required for four (4) or more consecutive days.

It shall be the student's responsibility to come to the clinic/school office at the appropriate time for medication unless a health care provider or parent indicates in writing that the student cannot do this.

Students are NOT permitted to self-medicate. The school does not assume responsibility for medications taken independently by the student. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis for students who demonstrate the capability to carry and self-administer emergency life-saving medications (e.g., inhaler, EpiPen).

Within one week after expiration of the effective date on the order, or on the last day of school, the parent /guardian must personally collect any unused portion of the medication. Medications not claimed within that period will be destroyed.

SPECIALIZED STUDENT CARE NEEDS

The parent of any student on a continuing regimen for a non-episodic condition shall inform the school principal/director/administration and identify in writing the student's supervising health care provider. If necessary, and with parental written consent, there may be occasions when the school needs to communicate with the health care provider regarding possible effects on the pupil's healthcare management, special emergency procedures or behavior at school.

LIFE THREATENING ALLERGY

All schools will provide an annual in-service for school faculty and staff to educate on the policy. Training will include minimizing the risk of exposure to life threatening allergens in the school setting as well as anaphylaxis recognition, medical management, and incident reporting.

Schools will utilize the policy to develop allergen management communications for student handbooks, classrooms, and parental publications. Schools will recruit and train teams responsible for managing an allergic crisis.

Parents and guardians of students with a life-threatening allergy must inform principal/director and school health personnel of any allergies and provide schools with fully executed Diocesan documents. Parents/ guardians are expected to supply schools with any emergency medications as prescribed and may additionally provide the student with "safe" foods for classroom celebrations

involving food. Schools will utilize Diocesan documents to formulate an emergency care plan for the student and will share this care plan with those involved with the student including, but not limited to teacher(s), food service, bus driver, and janitorial staff.

INFECTIOUS/COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

DISEASE

Parents must notify the school within 24 hours if their child or any member of the immediate household has developed a communicable disease. Parents must notify the school immediately if the disease is life threatening. Parents must pick up their sick or injured child in a timely manner when contacted. If the parent cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be called to pick up the child.

The protection and welfare of each individual student is of importance in the schools of the Diocese of Arlington. To enhance protection of students:

- a. No preschool student may attend class without documentary proof of adequate immunization in accordance with Virginia Department of Health's school entry requirements (or modified schedule as approved by licensed health care provider) on the Virginia School Entrance Health Form (MCH-213 G).
 - i. Parents or guardians who object to the administration of immunizing agents for their child on the grounds that this conflicts with their religious tenets or practices must produce a notarized Certificate of Religious Exemption CRE-1 form, which will be retained in the student health record.
 - ii. Students who have traveled or resided in a foreign country for five months or more during the last three years are required to provide documentation of a recent tuberculosis skin test result prior to school entry.
- b. Children with fevers and/or contagious or infectious diseases will be sent home promptly and will be excluded from school while in that condition, according to Virginia Department of Health regulations. Once the student is confirmed to be free of communicable illness by a health care provider or is fever free/symptom free for 24 hours without taking anti-fever medications, the student may return to school.
- c. School health personnel will follow the Virginia Department of Health Communicable Disease Chart, found in the Virginia School Health Guidelines, 2nd edition, when referring suspected cases of communicable disease to the local health department for excluding or readmitting a student.
- d. The Diocese of Arlington has comprehensive guidelines for school/parish-based influenza vaccination clinics. The liability associated with the vaccination of children is great. The Diocese of Arlington does not promote school-based vaccination clinics, for children during school hours and in the absence of the parent, except for a state or federal emergency. Any school wishing to offer an onsite school influenza vaccination program must comply with all aspects of the Memorandum of Agreement (Appendix F-18). Vendors wishing to serve as vaccinators must be fully vetted by the Office of Risk Management prior to the consummation of any contract for services.

LICE

All students determined to have an active case of lice will be excluded from school until they receive treatment. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide appropriate and adequate treatment for the student and home environment as recommended by their health care professional. Readmission to school is determined by the school nurse/administration based upon re-inspection and the effectiveness of treatment. Follow up treatment is expected and verified by the school nurse/administration. Classroom contacts may be inspected.

Children infected with head lice will be sent home for treatment. Parents are asked to provide proof of treatment and that the child remains free from nits/lice before returning to school. Families will be notified if an outbreak of lice should occur.

If a child has head lice, parents should do the following:

1. Notify the child's teacher or school office.
2. Treat the child with appropriate shampoo (Rid, etc.) and comb through hair thoroughly to remove nits.
3. Wash all bedding (sheets, pillowcases, etc.) in hot water, and then dry in the dryer. 4. Bag up all stuffed animals or other possibly contaminated items for 2 weeks in a plastic bag.
5. Vacuum thoroughly and dispose of vacuum bags right away.
6. Recheck child frequently for nits or lice.

Head lice are not selective! Any child/adult may become infected if exposed to lice. To eliminate or reduce outbreaks, we do not allow children to share hats, combs, hair accessories or bedding.

BLOODBORNE DISEASE

The Christian community is called to respond to the sick in our midst with compassion and justice. The diocese recognizes its obligation to protect the rights of individual students infected with Hepatitis and HIV to provide a safe environment for students, staff members, and the public. Students who are infected with blood-borne Hepatitis, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) or HIV-related conditions must be provided the opportunity to receive a Catholic school education in a regular classroom unless the student's health interferes significantly with school performance.

Since it is known that blood borne Hepatitis and HIV are not transmitted through casual contact, any student who is infected will continue education in a regular classroom assignment unless his or her health status requires otherwise. It is the intent of the Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools to follow the recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Virginia Department of Health which state that, most blood borne Hepatitis and HIV-infected children be allowed to attend school in an unrestricted setting, and that decisions regarding school attendance be based on the medical condition of each child and the expected type of interaction with others in that setting.

Persons involved in the implementation and monitoring of this policy shall maintain confidentiality of records in compliance with federal and state law, and diocesan policy. All diocesan schools shall also maintain a program of information and training for school staff members to ensure a consistent and accurate understanding regarding prevention of exposure to bloodborne pathogens. This includes training related to the proper application of

universal/standard precautions.

FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS

Epiphany School is required to conduct a fire drill each week for the first two weeks of school, and once a month thereafter. Preschool children will participate in these “fire safety practices”. They will learn to respond to the fire alarm, to leave quickly and quietly with the teacher, and to find their outdoor safety place.

The children will also participate two times per year in an “indoor safety practice” or severe weather drill. Preschool classes will learn their “safe place” in the building and learn to respond to the air horn alert.

We are very sensitive to the way preschoolers are introduced to these safety measures. Preschool teachers incorporate initial practices into an age-appropriate curriculum that will help children understand what they are doing and why it is important. Congratulate your child on his/her ability to participate in safety procedures.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT--STUDENTS

Sexuality affects all aspects of the person, including in a general way the aptitude for forming bonds of communion with others. The Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Arlington endeavor to provide for their students an atmosphere free from sexual harassment.

No student is to sexually harass another member of the school community. Any student who engages in sexual harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature or unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. "Unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature" includes, but is not limited to, “the deliberate, repeated making of unsolicited gestures or comments, or the deliberate, repeated display of offensive, sexually graphic materials which is not necessary for school purposes.”

BULLYING

Bullying is defined as any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between aggressor or aggressors and victim; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. “Bullying” includes cyber bullying. “Bullying” does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, argument, or peer conflict.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- a. Physical intimidation or assault
- b. Extortion
- c. Oral or written threats, including text messaging
- d. Malicious teasing

- e. Putdowns
- f. Name calling
- g. Threatening looks
- h. Gestures or acts of aggression (Overt and Covert)
- i. Cruel rumors & false accusations
- j. Social Isolation
- k. Cyber-bullying

School personnel will not tolerate any bullying on Diocesan school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity (on or off school grounds). In addition, the Office of Catholic Schools expects students and parents who become aware of an act of bullying to report it to appropriate school personnel (e.g. principal/director, teacher, school counselor). The Office of Catholic Schools expects staff members who become aware of an incident of bullying to take appropriate steps to intervene unless intervention would be a threat to staff members' safety. If a staff member believes that his/her intervention has not resolved the matter, or if the bullying persists, he/she shall report the bullying to the school principal/director for further investigation.

In cases of reported bullying, the principal/director or designee shall interview all students involved (i.e. the aggressor(s) and the victim(s)) and investigate, as appropriate. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents and school staff; review of school records; and identification of parent and family issues. Any student who retaliates against another for reporting bullying may be subject to appropriate consequences.

Consequences for students who bully others shall depend on the results of the investigation and may include:

- a. Counseling
- b. Parent conference
- c. Detention
- d. Suspension and/or Expulsion

Depending on the severity of the incident(s), the principal/director may also report incidents of bullying to law enforcement if appropriate.

ASBESTOS MANDATORY YEARLY NOTIFICATION

Asbestos Notification

In the past, asbestos was used extensively in building materials because of its insulating, sound absorbing, and fire-retardant capabilities. Virtually any building constructed before the late 1970s contained some asbestos. Intact and undisturbed asbestos materials generally do not pose a health risk. Asbestos materials, however, can become hazardous when, due to damage or deterioration over time, they release fibers.

In 1986, Congress passed the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Act (AHERA) which requires schools to be inspected to identify any asbestos containing building materials. Every _____ years, _____ School has conducted an inspection to determine whether the condition of the known or assumed asbestos containing building materials (ACBM) has changed and to make recommendations on managing or removing the ACBM. At the last inspection, all

materials listed in the Management Plan as asbestos containing (or assumed to be asbestos containing) were inspected and found to be in good condition.

The law further requires an asbestos management plan to be in place. The School Asbestos Management Plan has several ongoing requirements.

It is the intention of Epiphany school to comply with all federal and state regulations controlling asbestos and to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure students and employees a healthy and safe environment in which to learn and work. You are welcome to review a copy of the asbestos management plan at the school during regular business hours.

The building belonging to Epiphany Catholic School has been tested of all building materials and is asbestos free.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS

School leadership at each individual school may elect to install video surveillance cameras in order to maintain a safe and secure environment.

- a. In the discretion of the principal/director or his or her designees, video surveillance cameras may be placed in public locations deemed appropriate. Such locations may include, without limitation, school entrances/exits, lobby areas, hallways, classrooms, cafeterias, athletic areas, gathering spaces, and outdoor grounds, as well as school buses.
- b. Restrooms, changing rooms, private offices, nurse's offices, and locker rooms are excluded from security camera use.
- c. It is recognized that it will not be possible to monitor all building areas, rooms and grounds, or to monitor any location at all times.

Schools making use of video surveillance cameras will provide notice to staff, students, and parents/guardians, by means of inclusion of this policy in their respective handbooks that video surveillance may occur on school property. In addition, school leadership may elect to install signs at building entrances or other locations deemed appropriate to inform visitors and invitees that video surveillance may occur.

To the extent video images may be deemed to create student records or personnel records, the school shall comply with any applicable state and federal laws related to record maintenance, retention and disclosure.

Video images obtained by the school shall be viewed by authorized school and diocesan personnel as necessary. The school and the diocese may rely on the images obtained by the video surveillance cameras in connection with the enforcement of diocesan or school policies, regulations, codes of conduct, building rules and other applicable laws or rules, including but not limited to use of such images in student and staff disciplinary proceedings and matters referred to local law enforcement agencies in accordance with applicable law. Video images may become part of a student's educational record or a staff member's personnel record in accordance with applicable law.

All video recordings shall be stored in a secure place. Recordings will be saved for no less than 30 days and may be retained longer if deemed appropriate. All video recordings are the sole property of the Catholic Diocese of Arlington. Release of such videos will be made only with the permission of the diocesan Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Catholic school recognizes the beauty and potential inherent within each child. To foster continued growth, the school embraces the challenge to provide assistance and programs to serve children with special needs according to the resources available within/to the school. Parents are considered an integral part of the process.

To accommodate a child who has been evaluated for special learning needs, parents are obligated to share educational/psychological testing results and any resulting plan with the

school. The refusal to provide such information is a condition for negating enrollment in the school. A child may be admitted on a probationary basis with dates and criteria of evaluation clearly established in writing.

If a child has a documented disability, a copy of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), Individualized Services Plan (ISP), 504 plan and/or Student Assistance Plan (SAP) should be maintained in the child's confidential file. Children who have a documented disability but do not qualify for services through the local public school may be eligible for accommodations through a Student Assistance Plan written at the Catholic school.

When a student qualifies for special education services through the public school and will not receive services, an Individualized Catholic Education Plan can be written following the information in the Guidelines for Serving Students with Special Needs.

Failure of the parent to sign the Student Assistance Plan or Individualized Catholic Education Plan does not prevent the implementation of the plan.

Children with disabilities are expected to follow the school's policies and honor code.

VIII. PROGRAM INFORMATION

LICENSING INFORMATION

Epiphany Catholic School is accredited by the Virginia Catholic Education Association. The Preschool is operated under a religious exemption from licensure. We are required by the state to meet health and safety regulations set forth by the Code of Virginia, Section 63.1-196.3 for "Exempt" child day centers.

The Commonwealth of Virginia helps assure parents that child day programs that assume responsibility for the supervision, protection, and well-being of a child for any part of a 24-hour day are safe. Title 63.1, Chapter 10 of the Code of Virginia gives the Department of Social

Services authority to license these programs. While there are some legislative exemptions to licensure, licensed programs include child day centers, family day homes, child day center systems and family day systems. The state may also voluntarily register family day homes which are not required to be licensed.

Standards for licensed child day centers address certain health precautions, adequate play space, a ratio of children per staff member, equipment, program and record keeping. Criminal record checks and specific qualifications for staff and most volunteers working directly with children are also required. Standards require the facility to meet applicable fire, health and building codes.

Compliance with standards is determined by announced and unannounced visits to the program by licensing staff within the Department of Social Services. In addition, parents or other individuals may register a complaint about a program which will be investigated if it violates a standard.

Three types of licensing may be issued to programs. Conditional licenses may be issued to a new program to allow up to six months for the program to demonstrate compliance with the standards. A regular license is issued when the program substantially meets the standards for licensure. A provisional license, which cannot exceed six months, is issued when the program is temporarily unable to comply with the standards. Operating without a license when required constitutes a misdemeanor which, upon conviction, can be punishable by a fine of up to \$100 or imprisonment of up to 12 months or both for each day's violation.

If you would like additional information about the licensing of child day programs or would like to register a complaint, please contact the Regional Office of Social Services closest to you.

Fairfax Licensing Office 3701 Pender Drive,
Suite 125 Fairfax, VA 22030
703) 934-1505

Northern Virginia Regional Office 320
Hospital Drive, Suite #23
Warrenton, VA 22186
(540) 347-6345

Central Regional Offices
1604 Santa Rosa Road, Suite 130
Richmond, VA 23229-5008
(804) 662-9743

Eastern Regional Office
Pembroke Office Park
Pembroke Four Office Building, Suite 300
Virginia Beach, VA 23452-5496
(757) 491-3990

Verona Licensing Office Post Office Box 350
Verona, Virginia 24482-0350
(540) 248-9345

Piedmont Regional Office
Commonwealth of Virginia Building 210
Church Street, S.W., Ste. 100 Roanoke, VA
24011-1779
(540) 857-7920

Abingdon Licensing Office
190 Patton Street
Abingdon, VA 24210
(540) 676-5490

EARLY CHILDHOOD

PERSONNEL

Given the principal/administrator is knowledgeable about quality childhood programs and is effective in explaining, organizing, and implementing such, quality programs are staffed at all levels by persons who have specific training and experience in working with children beginning with age three (3). To this end, the administrator collaborates with other groups, programs, and agencies in the community to provide all needed services for children and their families.

STAFF POLICIES

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

The **Administrator** oversees the total operation of the program, ensures that policies are adhered to, directly supervises the director, and coordinates the school p and the early childhood program. The Administrator of the early childhood program can be the school principal or a designated person. The Administrator is responsible for adherence to VCEA Early Childhood Guidelines and the Minimum Standards for Licensed Childcare Centers Serving Children.

The **Director** of the program oversees the day-to-day operation of the program in close communication with the administrator. The Director hires staff according to Diocesan policy with the approval of the principal/administrator. The director maintains a personnel record on all staff members, develops staff and parent handbooks in consultation with the administrator, supervises the staff, plans the activities, is responsible for overseeing and communicating with the bookkeeper concerning the collection of fees, and is responsible for communicating with the parents whose children are enrolled in the program. The Director is responsible for adherence to VCEA Accreditation process and the Minimum Standards for Licensed Childcare Centers Serving Children.

The **teaching staff** of the program is responsible for complying with the Director and operates under his/her guidance. The staff directly supervises the children enrolled in the program, provides instruction, and performs other duties as assigned by the Director. A complete job description is provided by the director and is in the Staff Handbook.

Teaching assistants assist staff in the supervision of children but are not independently responsible for the supervision. A complete job description is provided by the director and is in the Staff Handbook.

Substitute staff must comply with regulations in the EARLY CHILDHOOD and EXTENDED DAY GUIDELINES.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

The qualifications of an administrator could be:

School Principal Director Qualified Special Exemption of the Office of Catholic Schools The **Director** of an early childhood program must have a B.A. or B.S. degree or adequate coursework or appropriate experience in early childhood education as required by the Virginia Standards for Licensed Child Day Centers. This determination is made by the Administrator. The director must work toward acquiring Religion certification.

The **teaching staff** of the early childhood program must hold a B.A. or B.S. degree and/or C.D.A. Certificate as defined by the local county/city requirements and adequate experience in early childhood education. This determination is made by the Director. Teachers must work toward acquiring Religion certification.

The **teaching assistants** in the early childhood program must be at least 18 years of age, holding a high school diploma or equivalent.

STAFF-STUDENT RATIO

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

The minimum staff-student ratio is one staff member for every eight children aged two. One staff member is required for every ten children ages three to the age of eligibility to attend public school, five years by September 30th. Each school should be responsible for compliance with Department of Social Services staff-student ratios. At least one staff member must always be present with children. Two staff members must be always on the premises when the program is in operation.

STAFF TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

All teaching staff must receive twenty hours of staff development each school year, appropriate to the duties assigned and the program. Teaching assistants (Aides) must receive sixteen hours of staff development. Staff development activities must:

- Be related to children and the function of the center
- Consist of some sources outside the center which may include but not be limited to audio and visual tapes, conferences, and workshops
- Be from someone with verifiable expertise or experience when conducted as in-service training
- Include annually the topics of safety for children, child development and discipline, and playground and outdoor supervision for staff
- Include first aid and CPR training.
- Stress the spiritual development of the young child
- Working toward acquiring Religion certification.
- Following Go Therefore and Make Disciples of All Nations: Catechist Certification Guidelines (Diocese of Arlington) Handing on the Faith (Richmond)

PUBLIC DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The Code of Virginia, Section 63.2-1716, allows child day centers operated by religious institutions the opportunity to file for an exemption from licensure by meeting documentation and other requirements specified within the religious exemption law. The statements below have been prepared and distributed to meet the requirements of the religious exemption law.

RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION

In compliance with the Code of Virginia, Section 63.2-1716, this Center is religiously exempt from licensure and is classified as a "religiously exempt child day center."

QUALIFICATIONS OF PERSONNEL

Attached above are position descriptions of staff presently employed with the center.

DESCRIPTION OF FACILITIES

The Center is located at: 1211 Grandview Ave. Culpeper, VA 22701.

The size of the building is: 26,382 sq. ft.

The number of rooms used for the Center is: 2

The kitchen facilities are available for use by the Center.

Play equipment consist(s) of: swings, slides, large playground equipment, balls.

ENROLLMENT/CAPACITY

The maximum number of children that the Center will enroll is 275. The maximum number of children to be in care at any one time (as dictated by the local building inspector) is 275. Our entire occupancy for the building and gymnasium is 885.

FOOD SERVICE (Check appropriate response)

The Center intends/does not intend to provide food service. The description of the service consist(s) of the following:

- hot breakfast
- cold breakfast
- combination (hot/cold) breakfast (parent provided)
- mid-morning snack (parent provided)
- hot lunch (Catered by local restaurants)
- cold lunch (parent provided)
- afternoon snack

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS FOR STAFF

Staff employed at the Center MUST be certified by a practicing physician to be free from any disability which would prevent them from caring for children. Documentation is on file at the Center.

PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE

The Center is covered by public liability insurance which provides coverage in the event that someone brings suit for personal or bodily harm suffered during the operation of the Center as a result of negligence.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT/EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

A Crisis Management/Emergency Preparedness Plan has been developed and approved. All employees have been trained accordingly.

OVER-THE-COUNTER SKIN PRODUCTS

All non-prescription drugs and over-the-counter skin products shall be used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Non-prescription drugs and over-the-counter skin products shall not be kept or used beyond the expiration date of the product.

For all over-the-counter skin products,

- a. written parent authorization noting any known adverse reactions shall be obtained;
- b. shall be in the original container labeled with the child's name;
- c. does not need to be kept locked but shall be inaccessible to children under five years of age;
- d. any sunscreen must be provided by the parents, along with a medical authorization form, in order to administer..

When insect repellent is used, a record shall be kept that includes the child's name, date of use, frequency of application and any adverse reaction. Manufacturer's instructions for age, duration and dosage shall be followed.

INSURANCE

The program is covered by public liability insurance through the Diocese of Arlington and the Catholic Mutual Relief Society of America. Student insurance must be provided by the family through their own policy or purchased through an independent school insurance provider.

TAX INFORMATION

Because the Internal Revenue Service requires identification of caregivers in order to claim a credit for child and dependent care expenses, the school will complete and return to the parent any W-10 that is sent in, provided Part II is already completed by the parent.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

In compliance with state regulations for state licensed programs, a custodial parent shall be admitted to any child day program. Such right of admission shall apply only while the child is in the child day program (63.2-1813 of Code of Virginia).

School Forms

Diocesan Forms

Permission for Emergency Care Form (*Appendix F-1*)

Confidential Health History Update (*Appendix F-1A*)

Virginia School Entrance Health Form (*Appendix F-2*)

Virginia School Entrance Health Form Instructions (*Appendix F-2A*)

Inhaler Authorization Form (*Appendix F-3*)

Asthma Action Plan (*Appendix F-3A*)

Epipen/Twinject Authorization Form (*Appendix F-4*)

Allergy Action Plan (*Appendix F-4A*)

Diabetes Reference Emergency Plan: Hyperglycemia & Hypoglycemia (*Appendix F-5*)

Diabetes Medical Management Plan (*Appendix F-5A*)

Medication Authorization Form (*Appendix F-6*)

Confidential Individual Health Office Visit Record (*Appendix F-11*)

Waiver Information/Right to Object Form (*Appendix N*)

Parent Permission Form for School Sponsored Trip Participation (*Appendix R*)

Academic Intervention Plan (*Appendix AA*)

Preschool Handbook Agreement Form (*Appendix AG-3*)