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**BUS TRANSPORTATION  
PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

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Epiphany Cathedral Catholic School

# **Bus Transportation Program**

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## **Registration for the Bus Transportation Program**

### **Annual Participation**

All students participating in Epiphany Cathedral Catholic School's bus program must be registered in advance with a signed contract and release of liability form. Students who have not registered with the program will not be allowed to ride the bus. Registered riders will receive transportation to and from the school for arrival and dismissal for each day that the school is in session for the duration of the school year. Bus transportation is not provided for students who participate in after school activities, including, but not limited to sports practices, games, or clubs.

### **One-Time Participation**

On the rare occasion a student who does not ride the bus will be going home with another student who is riding the bus, a one-time transportation contract is available. Students who participate for a one-time use, must complete the transportation contract and return to the school office no later than one day prior to the student's need to use the bus.

### **Fee Schedule**

Epiphany Cathedral Catholic School offers Bus Transportation, for a fee.

### **Annual Participation**

The fee for full time participation in the bus program is \$700 per year. The fee is non-refundable and non-negotiable.

### **One-Time Participation**

The fee for one-time participation in the bus program is \$30 per use. The fee is non-refundable and non-negotiable.

## **General Route Information**

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### **Route Scheduling**

Due to the inconsistency of traffic, all route times are approximate. Please be patient, especially during the first few weeks of school, as route schedules are established.

No additional stops are permitted once the bus leaves the specified location. The bus will not stop along the route to accept tardy students or to make any other stops.

## **Morning Procedures**

### **Morning Arrival/Departure**

Students should be ready to board at the specified "arrival" time. Arriving 5 minutes prior to the specified time guarantees your child will not miss the bus. Once those students have boarded and are safely seated, the bus will depart.

### **Arrival at School**

Scheduled arrival at Epiphany Cathedral Catholic School is between 7:30 and 7:45 AM. Students will arrive at the main gate of the school building near Pre-K. If for some reason the bus is running late, the driver will notify the main office and students will not be considered tardy.

## **Afternoon Procedures**

### **Departure from School**

Students should report to the bus by 2:55 PM (11:25 AM on Early Dismissal days). Please note that the bus departs no later than five (5) minutes after the reporting time.

### **Afternoon Pick-up**

Specific Information about each location is contained in the next section. Parents and guardians should be prepared to claim students at the appropriate time and location. Please understand that the driver cannot wait after the specified time. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that they are on time to pick up their child(ren) when the bus arrives.

For safety reasons, any parent who plans to have another adult pick-up his/her student must submit a note including the person's full name, phone number, and relation to the student to the School Office. The driver will only drop-off students at the specified location. No additional stops are permitted.

### **Special Afternoon Arrangements**

If your student plans to routinely walk home or ride home with another parent, please indicate this on the Bus Transportation Contract.

## **Pick-up/Drop-off Locations and Route Information**

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- On Early Dismissal Days, the reporting time is 11:25 AM with departure at 11:30 AM.

## **General Policies and Procedures**

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### **Absences**

Please remember to contact the school office if the student will be absent from or tardy to school. The school will contact the bus driver to advise them of an expected absence.

### **Tardiness**

The bus must depart all locations on schedule and cannot wait for tardy students longer than the scheduled time. At no point will the driver turn around for students who are late. Furthermore, after departure from the scheduled location, the bus cannot stop along the route or the roadway to accept tardy students. As such, please ensure that your child is at their designated bus stop PRIOR TO the bus arrival time.

### **Participation in After School Activities**

For those students participating in school activities or athletics, parents should notify the school well in advance with the normal dates of absence. Students participating in after school activities will not be able to have bus transportation home. Parents will be responsible for picking up their child from any after school, event, activity, or sports program that is held after school.

### **Personal Belongings**

Students are responsible for their personal belongings on the bus. No personal items are to be left or stored on the bus. All personal belongings must remain clear of the aisle and stored under the seat. Drivers and school personnel will not open buses during the school day to retrieve items left behind.

## **Emergency or Unexpected Changes**

If for some reason an unexpected change in schedule occurs, please contact the school office.

## **One-time Riders**

Only contracted students may ride the bus. However, if bus transportation is needed for a student not enrolled in the program (i.e. friend riding home, sleepover, etc.), there is an option for "one-time riders." The procedure is as follows:

1. Contact the School Office at least 24 hours in advance of the requested date.
2. A Transportation Contract must be signed with the release of liability. The contract must be received at least 24 hours In advance of transportation:
3. See rates above for fee information.

There is no guarantee that a seat will be available for "one-time" riders.

## **Parent Communication**

The school will contact the parents via email, text, and or phone in the event of an emergency, bus delay, or cancellations. Parents must ensure that the most current contact information is on file with the school office at all times.

With this program, email and text messages will only be sent for important, urgent or emergency information. Examples include:

- Reminder of early bus departure (early dismissal days)
- Announcement of early bus departure due to inclement weather, expected traffic delays (these announcements will continue to be announced on the school's PA system)
- Emergency information or significant delays in schedule

## **Safety Procedures**

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### **Inclement Weather/ Emergency Procedures**

If the bus schedule is modified due to a local weather condition, hurricane evacuation, or for some other emergency, parents will be notified.

Students will be notified of any bus schedule changes via PA announcement and by a school-wide notification.

If for some reason an emergency change in schedule occurs (i.e. bus mechanical problems), the school will contact parents as quickly as possible. In the event of a mechanical problem, every effort will be made to provide alternate transportation. Given the nature of such situations, an alternate mode of transportation may not be available. In that event, parents will be notified as quickly as possible in order to arrange pick up of students.

### **Safety and Emergency Procedures**

Each student will be instructed on bus safety and emergency procedures. Fire exits are clearly marked and their operation will be demonstrated to all students. Furthermore, an emergency evacuation drill and overview of emergency procedures will be conducted at least twice during the school year, once per semester.

It is the responsibility of each student riding the bus to ensure personal safety, as well as the safety of others. This is accomplished by adhering to all rules and regulations as well as abiding by

the bus safety procedures. Consequences will be implemented for violations of specific safety procedures as described in this handbook.

Should there be any emergency, the school has specific procedures in place to ensure the safety and security of each student.

## **Contact and Emergency Information for Students**

Parents are responsible for supplying Epiphany Cathedral Catholic School with any changes to the following information that is kept on file and information that is necessary for emergency and safety purposes:

- Contact Information, including telephone number changes (please provide as many contact numbers as possible, i.e. home, work, cellular);
- Medical or Health changes;
- Authorized adults designated to claim a student;
- Student cell phone numbers\*

\*student and parent cell phone numbers are requested so that they may be kept on file in case of an emergency change of schedule (i.e. bus mechanical problems).

## **Student Bus Rules**

Students must adhere to all Epiphany Cathedral Catholic School policies and the student code of conduct while riding the bus and at the pick-up/drop-off locations. The following specific guidelines must be followed by all bus passengers to ensure the safety of the bus and its riders:

- ✓ Students must show respect to the driver at all times and should show respect for fellow students while riding the bus;
- ✓ Students must remain seated at all times in his/her assigned seat.
- ✓ Students are allowed to talk, however, they must keep their voices low so as not to distract the driver;
- ✓ Horseplay or other inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated on the bus;
- ✓ Keep all parts of the body inside the windows at all times.
- ✓ Small snack items (i.e. breakfast bars, etc.) and bottled water are not allowed to be consumed on the bus.
- ✓ Students are responsible for the cleanliness of their seat areas and must dispose of trash upon each departure from the bus;
- ✓ Students may not throw or toss items to one another and must keep all personal items with them at all times.
- ✓ Students will be instructed on how to secure their personal belongings safely to prevent any mishaps should the bus have to make a sudden stop;
- ✓ Book bags and personal belongings must be stored under the seat, keeping the aisle clear at all times.
- ✓ Students may not communicate with any person or vehicle outside of the bus;
- ✓ Wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before moving, exiting or entering the bus. When the bus approaches its stop, students ready to board must remain five feet away from the bus as it approaches; and
- ✓ Enter or leave the bus only at the front door after the bus has come to a complete stop, except in the case of an emergency or instruction from the driver.

**Note:** The Epiphany Cathedral Catholic School dress code applies on the bus and at the pick-up/drop-off locations.

## **Disciplinary Action**

Any student who violates the Epiphany Cathedral Catholic School rules or policies, including that of the Bus Transportation Program will receive disciplinary consequences. Any Infraction will result in a referral to the Principal.

Continued conduct violations, especially those that endanger the safety of the bus and its occupants, will result in either a suspension from the bus and/or expulsion from the program and termination of the transportation contract. The Administration reserves the right to invoke this policy as necessary. If transportation is terminated, no refunds will be issued.

## **Policy and Procedural Changes**

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The Administration of Epiphany Cathedral Catholic School reserves the right to modify, replace, add, or subtract from the policies and procedures documented herein. Furthermore, any such changes may be made at any time during the school year and when deemed necessary and appropriate by the Administration.

**ECCS Bus Transportation Parent-Student Handbook**  
**Rules and Regulations**  
**Parent Agreement**

As directed by the Office of Schools of the Diocese of Venice, each parent must sign a form indicating that he/she has read, understands, and accepts the directive, rules and regulations, as outlined in the school Bus Transportation Parent-Student Handbook. In this regard, you are asked to sign on the line below to indicate your agreement with this directive. This is a requirement for your child to ride our school bus and must be completed within the first week of school.

The Bus Transportation Parent-Student Handbook is part of the contractual agreement between the school and the parent and is essential to the smooth and informed day to day running of the school bus program. Parents having any concerns or questions about the contents of this handbook may call the school, and the Principal will gladly discuss and help clarify any such issues.

Student Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand and accept the policies and procedures and directive contained in the Epiphany Cathedral School Bus Transportation Parent-Student Handbook. I have read the book and agree to follow the policies and procedures of the handbook. I also understand that the Principal has the right to amend this handbook at any time.

Parent's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**This form must be signed and returned within one week of the beginning of school.**