

EMBERS

A C A D E M Y



Parent Handbook

Academic Year 2024-2025

This Handbook covers the principles and practices of Embers Academy, as well as expectations of the student body and parent community

Revised January 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

School Contact Information	2
Statement of Educational Philosophy; Mission Statement	2
School Governance	3
Academics; Spiritual Formation	3
School Hours	3
School Calendar and Communication with Parents	4
Attendance; Absence; Arrival and Dismissal	4
Late Morning Arrival; Early Dismissal	4
Late Pick-up; Extended Day Program (EDP)	5
Lunch	5
Illness	5
Emergency School Closing	6
Student Information on Blackbaud Tuition Management (BTM)	6
Tuition Payments on Blackbaud Tuition Management (BTM)	6
Homework	7
Student Assessment	7
Conferences and Classroom Visits	8
Supervision of Students	8
Personal Property	8
Student Uniform and Grooming	8
Outerwear Dress Code	10
Code of Conduct	11
Bullying	12
Parental Code of Conduct	13
School-Sponsored Activities	14
Physical Education	14
Medication; Allergies	14
Birthdays and Parties; Field Trips	15
The Parents Association & Parent Formation	15
Expression and Routing of Parent Concerns	15
Annual Fund and Embers Extravaganza	15
Non-Discrimination Commitment	16

EMBERS ACADEMY SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

Telephone	847.518.1185
Fax	847.518.9625
Email	info@embersacademy.org
Website	www.embersacademy.org

EMBERS' STATEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Embers Academy holds the following educational principles to be true:

- Embers Academy regards parents as the primary educators of the children whom God has entrusted to them. School administration and faculty welcome the privilege of partnering with parents in their noble quest to form their children to become competent, responsible men and women who live by Christian principles.
- Embers nurtures the total formation of each child. Embers intentionally acts holistically to cultivate a focus on academics and character development, the latter achieved through a thoughtful virtues education program that spans all grades. This focus on virtue emboldens students to practice moral behavior.
- Academically, the measure of success for Embers' educational program is clear: helping our students find joy in learning – and using it as a way to glorify God -- is our ultimate goal.
- An integral part of the formation of the child is spiritual in nature. As an academic subject, Religion is taught in faithfulness to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church. At Embers, children grow in the confidence that they are children of God, and come to appreciate themselves and others as gifts from God.
- Inspired by the spirit of Vatican II, Embers emphasizes that lay persons are called to holiness through the fulfillment of their ordinary work while remaining immersed in the world.
- Embers Academy is committed to the truth and merit of this educational philosophy, accepting it as a guide for current efforts and inspiration for future work.

MISSION STATEMENT

- Embers Academy is a private, independent school, rooted in the Catholic faith, serving grades pre-kindergarten through 5th.
- Embers is committed to the pursuit of academic excellence and character formation.
- Embers works in partnership with parents, who are the primary educators of their children.
- Embers sees each student as a child of God and a gift from God and helps them to acquire knowledge, develop skills, and practice moral behavior.

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

The Board of Directors Embers Academy is governed by an independent, self-perpetuating Board of Directors. As the title implies, the Board holds *in trust* the future of the school. The Board determines the school philosophy and mission; sets broad policies; is responsible for the fiduciary well-being of the school and its long-term health; and hires the Headmaster. The Board is not involved in the day-to-day operation of the school. The current Board President is Mr. Samuel Carter.

Headmaster The Headmaster executes and administers Board-approved school policies; solicits funds for the school in conjunction with the Board; oversees the school's finances; directs the school's external operations, such as marketing and admissions; is responsible for all school personnel and all academic and extracurricular programs; is the final authority in all matters of discipline; and assesses the effectiveness of the operations and programs of the school. Mr. Christopher Goffos is the Headmaster.

The Faculty Embers faculty teach, coach, counsel, supervise, and care about the students; work in partnership with parents; advocate and promote the school; work collegially with the Headmaster, Dean of Faculty, and fellow teachers; and grow professionally.

ACADEMICS

Embers Academy's academic program serves to educate the whole child. Within each classroom, teachers meet the learning needs of their students through the use of diverse approaches built into the existing academic curriculum and class schedule. Embers does not provide academic services outside the scope and sequence of the established curriculum and class schedule.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Embers is an independent school with a Catholic philosophy, imbued with the spirit of Opus Dei, a personal prelature of the Catholic Church. Opus Dei helps lay men and women to sanctify their ordinary lives and grow in virtue. To support the school's emphasis on character formation, Embers integrates virtues into classroom curriculum and all interpersonal interactions. The content of the religious instruction that Embers provides is faithful to the Magisterium of the Church and consonant with the lay spirituality of Opus Dei. Embers prepares Catholic students to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion. Students receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist together as a class.

SCHOOL HOURS

Extended Day Program (morning) (pre-registration required) _____ 7:30 a.m. to 7:55 a.m.

Doors open _____ 7:55 a.m.

Tardy _____ Arrival after 8:10 a.m.

School hours:

- Grades Kindergarten - 5th _____ 8:10 a.m. to 3:05 p.m.
- 3- and 4-year-old Preschool (Half Day) _____ 8:10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
- 3- and 4-year-old Preschool (Full Day) _____ 8:10 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

Extended Day Program (afternoon) (pre-registration required) _____ 3:05 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

For the safety of the school children, faculty and staff, beyond the hours of regularly scheduled arrival and dismissal times, all visitors or deliveries are required to be admitted through the Main Entrance.

SCHOOL CALENDAR AND COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Please consult the online school calendar for student attendance days, parent/teacher conferences, early dismissals, and holidays for the current academic year. The School Office will send an all-school newsletter to all parents each Saturday via email. Calendar updates and information regarding specific classroom activities will be published in the class weekly email. The most up-to-date school calendar can always be found on our website: www.embersacademy.org.

ATTENDANCE

Each student is expected to attend school and to be on time every day, except in case of illness or special circumstances. Absences or tardies can affect grades, credit, and continued enrollment. Students who are absent (without a valid excuse) for more than 10% of the 176 total days of the school year will be considered truant. Further, they may forfeit credit for the particular academic year if the student's classroom teacher and the Headmaster deem such action appropriate.

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

When unforeseen circumstances cause your child to miss school, please call the School Office as early as possible on that morning. You may leave a voicemail message. If you know in advance that your child will be absent on a certain day, please let the Office Secretary (ndonado@embersacademy.org) and your child's teacher know as soon as possible through an email or phone call. If your child is absent, and we have not heard from you, we will make every effort to call you at home or at work before 10:00 a.m. to verify your child's whereabouts and well-being (using the phone numbers you have provided on your child's enrollment records and your *myEmbers!* portal).

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Please refer to our website under the "Current Families" tab for arrival and dismissal procedures.

LATE MORNING ARRIVAL

Students arriving after 8:10 a.m. must be escorted inside and signed in at the School Office by their parents. Parents may park in the Visitor's Parking Lot at the front circle or use their hazard lights to park briefly in the front driveway.

If your student(s) will be arriving late for an excused reason, please call the School Office and/or email teacher(s).

EARLY DISMISSAL

Please notify your child's teacher and the School Office ahead of time if you need to request an early dismissal for your child, either by phone or email. Please park in either the parking lot off the main driveway along Greenwood Ave., or in the north Visitors Lot. Enter using the Main School Entrance doors. Children will be walked down to the School Office and must be signed out by a parent or someone authorized by parents 16 years or older.

LATE PICKUP

As educators entrusted with your child, it is the school's responsibility at the end of the school day to supervise every child until picked up by his or her parent or carpool driver. Policy dictates that we must have two adults on site at all times to provide this supervision, even if just one child is waiting to be picked up. Sometimes traffic and weather can delay travel.

In these instances, parents should call the school office to inform them of their delay. Children not picked up by 3:05 p.m., and without having heard from a parent, will be moved from their dismissal door to the School Office. The office will attempt to contact a parent. If a parent cannot be reached, the student will go to the Extended Day Program and applicable fees will be assessed.

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM (EDP)

Embers Extended Day Program includes care before and after school. Morning care is held from 7:30-7:55 a.m. Pre-registration is required.

Afternoon EDP runs from 3:05 to 5:30 p.m. on full days of school. It is the responsibility of the parents to pre-register or inform the School Office when their student will be attending EDP. Parents with students attending on a regular basis should set up the schedule in advance with the program coordinator. If you are interested in pre-registering your child for either program, please contact the School Office.

In order to ensure student safety, the person picking up and signing out a student from EDP must be 16 years or older.

Please consult the school website – www.embersacademy.org -- for the most updated information.

LUNCH

It is Embers' policy that students may not receive lunches through UberEats or any other delivering service outside the school's hot lunch vendor, Marla's Brown Bag Lunch.

ILLNESS

Students who become ill during the school day are sent to the Office by the teacher. The Office will call the parent to determine whether it is necessary for the student to be picked up. Parents (or an emergency contact) coming to pick up students who are ill must sign them out at the School Office before taking them home.

A student who is ill should remain at home until they are fully recovered. A child who is sent back to school too soon can experience a relapse or inadvertently spread illness to others.

When deciding whether to keep a child home from school due to illness, please consider the following criteria:

- The child should be fever free for at least **24 hours** without medicine before returning to school. A fever is a temperature of 100.0 degrees or higher.
- The child should be free of intestinal upsets - vomiting or diarrhea - for at least **24 hours**.
- If prescribed an antibiotic, the child should be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school.

If exposure to a contagious disease, such as strep throat or chicken pox, occurs at school parents will be promptly notified.

LICE

Head lice are easily acquired in the community. This is not cause for panic, but lice are a nuisance. School families will be notified when a case of head lice is reported in their child's grade.

On occasion, the school may conduct individual or all-school lice checks. All-school lice checks may be conducted after holiday breaks or when it is determined that 5% or more of the student body have lice.

If lice or nits are found in your child's hair, you will be notified by the School Office. The school will provide a handout with ideas for potential treatment options for those seeking guidance. Before the child returns to class, he/she should be treated. Upon return, the child will be rechecked to confirm that he/she is "nit-free" before readmission to the classroom.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

Severe weather conditions (heavy snowfall, extreme cold, or hazardous driving conditions) sometimes make it necessary to close school. If Embers determines such a closing is warranted, it will be reported online at www.EmergencyClosings.com and on local radio and T.V. stations via the Emergency Closing Center. A message will be recorded on the school phone voicemail, and a Bright Arrow text message and email will be sent to all Embers families. The decision to close should be made by 6:00 a.m.

Embers rarely closes early for bad weather. However, if the situation arises, parents will be notified by email or parents may pick up their children early at their discretion. When severe and threatening weather is happening at the time of dismissal, students will be held in the building for as long as appropriate, even if parents are waiting in the parking lot to pick them up.

STUDENT INFORMATION ON BLACKBAUD TUITION MANAGEMENT (BTM)

It is vital that parents provide the information requested on the *Blackbaud Tuition Management (BTM)* site and update it, as necessary. Please review your BTM account to verify that all contact information, including emergency contacts, are current and up-to-date.

TUITION PAYMENTS ON BLACKBAUD TUITION MANAGEMENT (BTM)

All tuition payments are handled through *Blackbaud Tuition Management (BTM)*. Each family has a *BTM* account, in which you can choose the frequency of your payments, due dates, and the payment method you wish to use.

Parents whose tuition account is delinquent for 90 days, and who have not made satisfactory arrangements with the Headmaster, will be asked to take their child/children out of school until such arrangements have been made.

Materials Fee: The Materials Fee is to help defray expenses for those consumable items that the school orders for all students. Such items include replacement and additional classroom furnishings; replacement of textbooks and workbooks; technology and its maintenance (computers, Chromebooks; and classroom projectors) and other learning materials, as well as unforeseen expenses.

HOMEWORK

It is Embers' philosophy that the elementary school level is to nurture and foster a life-long love of learning and develop an inquisitive learner in students. Homework is a means to reinforce or extend classroom learning. Through the completion of age-appropriate homework assignments, students are instilled in those virtues, such as responsibility and fortitude, necessary to be a successful student in the years ahead.

On the day of an absence, parents may email the School Office before 10:00 a.m. for the child's assignments. The teacher should be cc'd on the email. The teacher will have the assignments ready after dismissal for the parent to pick up at the School Office or will send them home with a sibling or fellow car-pooler, per parental request. Please follow the teacher's guidelines outlining make-up work.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Please see the school calendar for parent/teacher conferences, report card dates, and standardized testing (grades 3-5).

General Policy: Embers assumes there is a correlation between a student's *ability* (as measured by standardized tests) and *achievement* (as measured by both standardized tests and report card grades). If there is not, the school will take the lead in trying to determine why and, with the parents, take appropriate action. Embers further assumes that a child should leave Embers scoring at least the 70th percentile on standardized achievement testing, which equates to national norms.

Preschool thru 2nd grade Grading: Daily work is corrected, but not assigned letter or number grades. As appropriate, students are required to correct mistakes.

K – 2nd parents receive three end-of-trimester report cards per year. Additionally, parents attend two parent/teacher conferences. In the report cards, the rubrics used on the *skills inventories* are not grades, but indicate the level to which the skill has become habitual (e.g., Mastery; Satisfactory; Developing; Beginning; and Not Evident).

3rd - 5th grade Grading: Parents receive three end-of-trimester report cards per year and attend two parent/teacher conferences.

Major subjects receive letter grades and minor subjects receive "Mastery", "Satisfactory", "Developing", "Beginning", and "Not Evident" ratings. Major subjects are Religion, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, History, and Geography. Enrichment subjects are Art, Music, Spanish, and Physical Education. The explanation of letter grade ranges are as follows:

- A: 93-100
- B: 85-92
- C: 77-84
- D: 70-76
- U: Unsatisfactory
- NA: Not Applicable

Standardized testing: Once a year, the 3rd - 5th grade students take a standardized test. These results are used as one measure of achievement. The test results are sent home and the student's teacher can be contacted with any questions.

CONFERENCES AND CLASSROOM VISITS

Besides regularly scheduled parent/teacher conferences, other conferences may take place at any time during the school year. Parents are asked to call or email to make an appointment with a teacher if they have an issue or concern they would like to discuss.

Scheduled classroom visits can easily be arranged. Unannounced parental visitations can disrupt important school routines, therefore, parents are asked to schedule visits in advance.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

Students cannot be on campus without supervision. Aside from officially scheduled and supervised on-campus activities, the school cannot assume any responsibility for the supervision of students before and after school hours or on weekends. Unless involved in a supervised school activity or in the Extended Day Program, students must be picked up immediately after school.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Please mark your child's name on all personal property. Each child is assigned a space for hanging a coat and storing a lunch. Books are kept inside the classroom. Valuables or large sums of money should not be brought to school. The school cannot be responsible for lost or stolen articles. The "Lost and Found" is located in the School Office.

Cell phones or other electronic devices, games or toys, including electronic games, smartwatches, iPods, and music players, may not be brought to or used at school.

STUDENT UNIFORM AND GROOMING

How students dress affects the total learning environment. Therefore, student dress and grooming must be clean, neat, modest, and appropriate at all times.

Beginning with the first day of school, and except on days specially designated by the Headmaster, students must wear the required uniform.

Except for items which carry the Embers Academy logo or the uniform jumper or skirt, uniform components may be purchased at any store as long as the items are comparable.

Parents of Preschool, Kindergarten and 1st grade students, please note: At the beginning of the school year, please send in a change of clothes with your child. These clothes should be in a bag labeled with the child's name.

Hair may not be colored or dyed a color that is unnatural and considered inappropriate. Boys' hair should be above the eyes and should not touch the top of the shirt collar in the back.

Uniform Requirements for Boys (K-5th grade)

- Pants: Navy Dennis uniform pants with navy or black belt
- Belt: a navy or black belt must be worn with school pants. Standard belts as well as magnetic and adjustable belts are acceptable in both canvas and leather materials.
- Shirts: White Dennis uniform polo with Embers logo, short or long sleeve
- Shorts (*until Oct 15 and beginning again Apr 15*): Navy Dennis uniform short
- Socks: Solid Navy or Black socks, at least 2" above ankle; no decorations or brand logos

- Shoes: Black dress shoe, no deck or boat shoes
- Gym shoes: one pair of gym shoes will be left at school for gym days and recess

Winter Uniform (worn Oct 15 – Apr 15)

- Sweater or Vest: Red Dennis V-Neck Pullover, Cardigan Sweater, or Vest with Embers logo. Sweater/vest is required to be worn on Mass days.

Uniform Requirements for Girls (K-3rd grade)

- Jumper: Dennis Belair Plaid Jumper with Embers logo, knee-length, must be worn with navy blue shorts underneath
- Blouse: White Dennis Peter Pan Collared Blouse, short or long sleeve
- Socks/Tights: White bobby-sock, at least 2” above ankle; Navy or White Knee High socks; *or* Navy or White tights
- Shoes: Black or Navy Mary Jane shoes with straps
- Gym shoes: one pair of gym shoes will be left at school for gym days and recess

Winter Uniform (worn Oct 15 – Apr 15)

- Sweater (*optional*): Red Dennis Crew Neck Cardigan with Embers logo
- Leggings (*optional*): Fitted, navy, ankle-length leggings may be worn under the jumper throughout the day.

Uniform Requirements for Girls (4th-5th grade)

- Skirt: Dennis Belair Plaid Skirt, knee-length, must be worn with navy shorts underneath
- Shirt: White Dennis uniform polo with Embers logo, short or long sleeve
- Socks/Tights: Navy or White Knee High socks; *or* Navy or White tights
- Shoes: Black or Navy Mary Jane shoes with straps
- Gym shoes: one pair of gym shoes will be left at school for gym days and recess

Winter Uniform (worn Oct 15 – Apr 15)

- Sweater or Vest: Red Dennis V-Neck Pullover or Cardigan Sweater *or* Vest with Embers logo. Sweater is required to be worn on Mass days.
- Sweatpants (*optional*): Neutral color sweatpants (navy, black, grey) may be brought to school and worn during outdoor recess & gym classes.
- *Note*: Sweatpants must be removed prior to entering the classroom. Leggings are not permitted in the classroom.

Preschool Uniform Requirements

Boys

- Navy Pull-on Pants
- Red Dennis Short or Long Sleeve Jersey Polo with Embers logo
- Navy Pull-on Shorts (*worn Oct 15 - Apr 15*)

Girls

- Navy Dennis Jersey Polo Dress with Embers logo
- Navy blue shorts
- Navy blue leggings (*optional; Oct 15-Apr 15*)
- Red cardigan with Embers logo, optional

Preschoolers may wear comfortable shoes or socks (including gym shoes) with the school uniform. **We strongly encourage Preschool children to wear shoes that have velcro closures if still learning the skill of tying shoes.**

Uniforms may be obtained from:

Dennis Uniform Company, 7055 W Higgins Ave, Chicago, IL 60656; (708) 669-7944
www.dennisuniform.com

Out-of-Uniform Days

On out-of-uniform days, the following attire is appropriate:

Boys

- Pants or shorts of walking length (slacks, chinos, athletic pants or jeans are acceptable).
- Polo shirt or t-shirt without inappropriate writing or graphics.
- Socks and shoes, gym shoes are acceptable.

Girls

- A dress, skirt (both must be worn with blue shorts underneath), slacks or walking shorts (chinos or jeans);
- Blouse, polo shirt, or t-shirt without inappropriate writing or graphics;
- Socks and shoes, casual shoes with a backing and sandals are acceptable.

The following items are **not** permissible for any Embers student:

- dirty, torn, patched, faded or cut-off clothing;
- clothing with offensive messages;
- gym clothing (except during PE);
- halters;
- bare midriffs or shoulders, including shoulder cut-outs in garment;
- tank top garments;
- hats, caps, or sunglasses indoors;
- backless shoes;
- flip-flops;
- bare feet;
- leggings without a skirt or top with the length that provides proper coverage;
- shorts with inseams less than 5", regardless if worn with leggings or tights;
- earrings on boys;
- or any items that are construed to be strange or inappropriate.

The school reserves the right to determine if a student's appearance or grooming is not appropriate. Students missing uniform items will bring home a reminder slip to notify parents to help ensure those uniform pieces can be found if lost, or replaced and worn the next school day. We encourage parents to send an email or note back to your child's teacher to let them know if there is a delay in obtaining a uniform item.

OUTERWEAR DRESS CODE

Children will go outside for recess when temperatures are above 20 degrees. They should come to school with at least a coat, hat, and mittens/gloves when temperatures indicate such outerwear is needed. When it has snowed, we require snow pants and boots in order to be allowed to play in the snow. If a student is without snow pants and boots, they will play on the blacktop. Similarly, after heavy rain, students must bring rain boots to wear in order to play in wet areas.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Philosophy of Discipline

It is the philosophy of Embers that discipline should be a formative process and is an important tool in furthering the education of each child. In this light, discipline should always be formative rather than punitive. The school strives to help its students understand why certain actions are allowed or not allowed so that they enter the world with a greater understanding and broader perspective of human interaction.

Behavioral expectations at Embers flow directly from the Embers Spark Pledge, which all students recite each morning with their class. This practice sets a strong foundation for our school's core values and gives teachers a foundation from which to teach behavior expectations.

Embers Spark Pledge

*As an Embers Spark, I promise to
shine light on the world by trying my best to:*

Be Respectful

Take Responsibility

Show Kindness

Embrace Truth

Students receive instruction, guidance, modeling, and support from all teachers and staff on behavior expectations throughout the school, and all expectations relate back to the values contained in the Embers Pledge. When a student struggles with behavior choices, the goal is to always foster student learning and guide students to move on from mistakes and bad choices in a positive, constructive way.

If a student does not respond to constructive corrections and positive reinforcement and continues to struggle with behavior choices, natural consequences and other outcomes can occur.

Behavior Contract

If a student continues to struggle with a specific behavior, an individualized behavior contract will be presented to parents. This contract will list expected behaviors the student is working on and a timeline for the tracking of student behavior. Parents, teachers, and administration will sign the contract (older students will be expected to sign the contract as well). An extra copy will be given to the Dean of Faculty. During the contractual time, student behaviors will be closely monitored throughout the entire school day by all teachers and staff. Notifications will be given to Specials teachers, recess monitors, front office staff and any after-school club sponsors so that the behavior standards are supported throughout the entire day during all school areas.

Actions and Consequences

All Embers staff members have the right and responsibility to ensure the smooth functioning of the school and the safety and well-being of all students. If a student's behavior in some way does not meet the expectations of the school and so harms the school community or harms the student himself, then the Embers faculty and staff have the obligation to provide the student with formative discipline. The actual consequences follow directly from the seriousness of the student's actions. Specific consequences for behavioral issues can include one or more of four responses:

In-School Suspension

During an in-school suspension, students must attend school but will not be allowed to participate in any school-related activities – including classes and all extracurricular activities (as a participant or a spectator). All missed work during this time must be made up promptly. It is the student’s responsibility to make the necessary arrangements with his/her teacher(s).

Out-of-School Suspension

Students given an out-of-school suspension will be required to stay off school grounds for the duration of their suspension. In addition, they will not receive credit for any daily work (as opposed to major tests or projects) assigned or due during the period of their suspension. Apart from this, the same in-school suspension consequences apply.

Expulsion

In exceptionally severe cases, students may be permanently dismissed from Embers. Parents will have direct dialogue with the Disciplinary Committee prior to a final decision being made. Students that are dismissed from Embers are also prohibited from attending any Embers extracurricular activities and events.

Disciplinary Committee

The Disciplinary Committee consists of the Headmaster, Dean of Faculty, and relevant classroom teacher(s). The purpose of this Committee is to meet and hear discipline cases beyond the ones considered ordinary. It is convened or called by the Headmaster, who will be the primary point of contact for the parents during a disciplinary-decision process.

BULLYING

Embers strives to promote and maintain a healthy, safe, and orderly learning environment for all students. Embers fosters a Golden Rule environment: “Do unto others as you would have them do to you.” Bullying or harassment of another student substantially interferes with a positive educational experience. Any such behaviors should be reported immediately to the Headmaster. Any bullying or harassment is a serious matter and will be dealt with promptly and appropriately.

“Bullying” is either repeated incidents or a severe isolated incident of deliberate, hurtful behavior by which one student intimidates or harasses another student. Specific and unprovoked acts of bullying may include but are not limited to: physical confrontations, verbal taunts, threats, intimidation, extortion, and hazing.

“Cyber-bullying” is any bullying which is accomplished by the means of the internet, e-mail messages, text messages, instant messages, social networking sites, video sites, and/or blogs. While it is beyond the school’s jurisdiction to regulate off-campus bullying, Embers reserves the right to investigate these incidents and take appropriate action when such activities threaten violence against another Embers student or otherwise disrupt the learning environment or orderly conduct of the school. Any off-campus incidents of this nature that come to the attention of Embers will be reported to the parents of the involved student(s) by the Headmaster.

Application of the Policy

This policy is in force:

- While on the school property before, during, or after school hours;
- While on any bus or other vehicle as part of a school activity;
- During any school function, extracurricular activity, or other school activity; and

- Outside the school property when the incident involves a threat of violence, disrupts the learning environment or orderly conduct of the school.

Procedures for Reporting an Act of Bullying

All members of the school community, including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors, are strongly encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy. Any student who believes he has been the target of bullying or witnessing any acts of bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to an Embers teacher or staff member. Teachers or staff members who witness or receive individual reports of bullying are required to promptly report these to the Headmaster. Any individual who reports an act of bullying should do so without fear of reprisal or retaliation.

School Response to a Report of Bullying

Each reported incident of bullying is taken seriously and will be investigated by the Headmaster. When the alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy, the Headmaster will determine the consequence. In addition, the parents of the aggressor and the victim will be contacted by the Headmaster.

Although the school will try to maintain anonymity, parents should understand that when they bring an incident to the attention of the school, in many cases, the anonymity of their child cannot be guaranteed. Also, once an issue is brought to the attention of the Headmaster, it is at his discretion, as to the manner in which the incident is investigated and handled.

Consequences

Subject to the discretion of the Headmaster, any student who violates this policy will be subject to suspension or expulsion. The length of the suspension will depend on the frequency and severity of the conduct. The student's cumulative discipline record will be a factor in determining the length of the suspension, or if expulsion is warranted.

Students making false claims of bullying will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Retaliation or reprisal against any person who reports a bullying incident(s) will not be tolerated. Such actions will result in severe disciplinary procedures.

Follow-Up Procedures

Any student who is suspended for a violation of this policy will be allowed to return to Embers after serving the suspension and having a meeting with the Headmaster. The meeting will also include the parents of the suspended student and serve to inform all parties of the severe disciplinary consequences should such behavior be repeated.

The Headmaster will continue to monitor the situation.

PARENTAL CODE OF CONDUCT

Both the student and the student's family agree to comply with and be subject to the regulations, rules, and standards of academic and social behavior established by the school. A positive and constructive relationship between Embers and its parents is essential to the fulfillment of the school's mission. Therefore, Embers reserves the right to suspend, dismiss, or not re-enroll a student if the administration concludes that the actions of a parent or guardian make such a relationship difficult or impossible. The decision of the administration in this regard shall be final.

SCHOOL-SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

Students attending school-sponsored events that are held off-campus are expected to adhere to the same standards of behavior as they would while on school grounds. Any behavior infraction at these activities (e.g. athletic competition, field trip etc.) will be treated according to the Embers discipline philosophy outlined above.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All Embers students have Physical Education (PE) once per week. Students will change into a pair of gym shoes to wear for gym class.

If your child is not able to participate in physical education class due to illness or injury, please send a note the day of PE class. Your child will attend class, but will not participate for the period of time as indicated in the note. If non-participation is for a duration longer than a week, we require a note from the child's physician.

MEDICATION

Parental permission must be obtained if a student needs to take prescription or non-prescription medication during the day. Students are not allowed to take any medicine without first checking with the School Office.

A student taking prescription or non-prescription medicine on a regular basis must bring a note from the parent along with the medicine in its original container, labeled with the student's name to the School Office. Exceptions to this rule may be granted for students who have severe allergies or other serious medical conditions. For students who have asthma, parents must submit an [Asthma Action Plan](#) form, available on our school website. Students are never permitted to give medicine of any type to other students.

ALLERGIES

The Embers educational environment is not equipped to service students with allergies that can result in severe bodily harm. Parents of children with mild allergies are responsible for notifying the classroom teacher and the administration about any known food or other types of mild allergies their child may have.

Parents are also responsible for ensuring that school personnel are trained in how to appropriately respond to their child's allergic reaction. Embers faculty and staff will take reasonable precautions to prevent a student with mild allergies from coming into contact with the substance(s) communicated by the parents to trigger an allergic reaction.

In classes including a student who has a peanut or tree nut allergy, students who bring food items to school containing peanuts and tree nuts may eat them at a designated table. The classroom teacher will restrict students with peanut and tree nut allergies from the designated table.

Treats brought to school to be shared in the Preschool and Kindergarten **must be prepackaged** and have an allergen notice. The classroom teacher will not distribute treats that the allergen notice indicates are not suited for all students in the class. The classroom teacher will also not distribute treats marked with an allergen notice of peanuts and tree nuts in the Preschool and Kindergarten.

If your child has an allergy and needs to keep medication at school, you must submit an [IL Food Allergy Emergency Action Plan and Treatment Authorization](#), available on our school website. Any medications must be submitted with this form.

BIRTHDAYS AND PARTIES

Please refer to Embers Allergy policy regarding distribution of treats in the Preschool program and Kindergarten. Students may distribute invitations to private parties at school *only if they are inviting everyone in their grade*.

Parent Ambassadors will be organized by the Embers Parents Association. Parent Ambassadors will work with the classroom teachers to provide simple parties to celebrate select holidays and assist with some class projects.

FIELD TRIPS

Embers Academy encourages field trips with an educational purpose that extends the classroom curriculum. In order for your child to attend a field trip, he or she must have a signed *Field Trip Request* form on file with accompanying payment.

In some cases, the school relies on parent volunteer drivers. Parents who drive must have a valid driver's license and proof of automobile insurance, and are to leave a copy of each with the School Office before transporting any student who is not their own child. Each student must be secured according to current safety guidelines, and Embers students may not ride in the front seat of any vehicle.

THE PARENTS ASSOCIATION AND PARENT FORMATION

By virtue of being a parent or guardian of an Embers student, you are a member of the Embers Parent Association. The mission of the Embers Parents Association (EPA) is to foster a sense of community within the school, facilitate an environment where friendships can be formed among parents, help make the Embers experience personal and positive, and sponsor faculty and teacher appreciation events.

The Embers Parents Association relies on the generosity of time and talent from the parents of our school community. The EPA and its Ambassadors and Coordinators are supported by the Parents Association Director.

EXPRESSION AND ROUTING OF PARENT CONCERNS

If you have a question or concern about any classroom matter, please first contact your child's teacher. If the matter is not settled at that level to your satisfaction, you are invited to bring it to the attention of the Headmaster. If you have a question or concern on a school-wide issue, please bring that to the attention of the Headmaster, as well.

ANNUAL FUND AND EMBERS EXTRAVAGANZA

Tuition alone does not cover the full cost of educating each Embers student. Therefore, the school relies on two fundraising events – the Annual Fund (Fall), and the Embers Extravaganza (Spring). Each family

is asked to participate in these events to the greatest extent possible given their individual financial situations. Whether it is \$5 or \$5,000, each donation is important.

NON-DISCRIMINATION COMMITMENT

Embers Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Embers Academy reserves the right to make changes to policies stated in this handbook when it is determined by the Board of Directors and the administration to be in the best interest of the school.