



**EPIC Homeschool Academy**

# EPIC Family Handbook

## 2022-2023

The EPIC Family Handbook outlines all of the important information regarding participation in EPIC Homeschool Academy. Class expectations, costs, rules, and more are described. We have provided a “Top 10” overview in the first section of this document, but it is expected that the handbook is read in full before enrollment to EPIC classes.

### **Handbook Changes for 2022-2023:**

- Adjusted tuition payment schedule (see page 5)
  - Adjusted refund structure (see page 6)
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## Overview

These are the Top 10 questions asked of EPIC. You are still required to sign off in agreement with all components of this handbook, but having this FAQ list may be useful for future reference.

1. **How much do classes cost? Do I have to pay it all at once?** *Classes range from \$225-375 for the year depending on grade level. The K/1 block is \$950. This fee is split into two equal payments and some classes may have additional supply fees.*
2. **Does my student have to do homework and projects?** *Yes. Without prior arrangements, all coursework is required to meet our academic excellence core value.*
3. **What if a class is not a good fit for my student?** *We encourage parents to reach out to instructors to help put adaptations in place if the fit is related to any personal, emotional, or educational issue. We offer the ability to transfer tuition payments to other available classes. Tuition refunds of 50% before the 2nd week of the semester.*
4. **Do you require parent involvement?** *Each EPIC family must volunteer for at least one service area or select the buy-out option. Parents are also expected to partner with teachers and hold their children accountable. Some parental involvement with homework in elementary classes should be expected.*
5. **How will EPIC maintain a safe environment?** *Every class and study hall takes attendance. The only unlocked entrance is monitored at all times. We have procedures in place for all manner of inclement weather and threats. All of our instructors undergo a background check and have been vetted by the EPIC Board. Please note our Freedom to Learn Plan with regards to mitigations for illness and other events.*
6. **Do I have to be a Christian to attend EPIC?** *Each family must sign an agreement to our handbook and statement of faith. EPIC teaches, disciples, and encourages a Christian worldview in all classes and extracurricular events. While it is not required to have a personal relationship with Christ, we ask for respect and adherence to our model.*
7. **Is there a dress code?** *We ask parents to encourage student dress to reflect modesty and appropriate coverage.*
8. **Are personal technology devices allowed?** *Students are allowed to have cell phones with them, but they are not to be taken out in class unless instructed to by the teacher. To build community, we ask technology only be used for academic purposes during breaks, lunch, and study hall periods.*
9. **What technology is required for participation in EPIC Classes?** *All parents and older students will need a Praxi School Portal account to see homework, grades, and more. An active email account must be on file to receive weekly EPIC announcements. Students will need access to the internet and printer regularly. Some classes may require the use of google drive products, flip grid, and more to continue the learning throughout the week.*
10. **Are you a ministry of Peace Church?** *Peace Church offers use of their facilities and resources to EPIC as a community partner, not as a direct ministry of their church.*

## What is EPIC Academy?

Since its founding in 2015, EPIC Homeschool Academy has driven to **E**mpower **P**arents and **I**nspire **C**hildren in their homeschooling journeys. By offering one-day-a-week classes and a community of like-minded families, students are inspired by experts in content area fields and parents are equipped to help their children to achieve excellence in academics, faith, and service.

EPIC Academy has five core values:

1. **Academic excellence:** EPIC strives to build curiosity and wonder while preparing minds for whatever future lies ahead. This is not an ancillary program, and with most classes, an investment of time and effort throughout the week is required.
2. **Authentic, project-based learning:** Students will participate in many hands-on experiments and projects in each of their classes. We believe that the very best learning happens when students are engaged in their learning for real, authentic purposes.
3. **Community:** Interactive classes, engaged teachers who love the Lord, and EPIC family events and service projects give EPIC students and parents a sense of belonging.
4. **Discipleship:** EPIC desires to be a place where children are encouraged to deepen their spiritual walk with Christ. Weekly chapel services and teachers who focus on teaching their content through a Biblical worldview are ways we encourage this growth at all levels.
5. **Service:** Quarterly service projects help refocus attention beyond the bubble sphere of our community. World and local organizations are served in intentional and hands-on ways. Students are also encouraged to serve their EPIC community by helping with the “behind the scenes” needs to keep Monday classes running.

EPIC will serve as a launchpad for subjects that are more challenging to do in a homeschool setting, or that are best taught in a setting of community classes such as science, art, foreign language, physical education, writing, and worship.

EPIC 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 in our programming. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship, or other EPIC-administered programs.

Students or families who choose not to maintain the standards set forth in this handbook or statement of faith or have a significant impact on the safety of fellow EPIC students and staff may be asked to leave. The EPIC Board reserves the right to revoke enrollment of students who become a disruption to the vision and purpose of EPIC or safety concern to the EPIC family.

## Statement of Faith

All of our classes will be taught through the lens of the EPIC Statement of Faith. We believe:

- The Bible is the inspired, infallible Word of God and the ultimate authority in faith and life.
- There is one God, who is eternally existent in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
- Man, though created in God's image, has been separated from God by sin through birth and by choice. As a result, man is totally unable to justify himself before God.
- We believe God created man in His image, uniquely separated from the rest of creation. We were created male and female with distinct roles to play in His kingdom.
- Jesus Christ came to earth – as a man without sin – conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary. Jesus died on the cross as our substitute sufferer; the sacrifice that paid the penalty for our sins. Three days later, he rose again and is seated with God in heaven. He will return again to make all things new.
- God sent the Holy Spirit who testifies of Jesus, convicts us of sin, and guides and empowers us to live a life that glorifies Him.
- God's love for mankind was the motivation for Christ to come and die for us.
- Salvation and eternal life are offered – grace through faith – as a free gift to each person.
- Genuine trust in Christ will result in a commitment to Him, love for Him, and a desire to please God.

All EPIC families must sign an acknowledgment and understanding of this statement of faith, how it impacts the culture and classrooms of EPIC, and agree to respect these beliefs. It is not required for students to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, but it is expected the faith-based worldview in which EPIC began and continues to operate will be regarded.

## Class Information

### Tuition and Fees

While enrollment is for a full year, we have split tuition into two payments for your convenience. **Half is due on August 15, 2022, and half is due on January 9th, 2023.** One exception is Odyssey of the Mind which has the full amount due at the start of the year. **Class supply and curriculum fees are costs beyond tuition and are non-refundable.** Yearly tuition rates for 2022-2023 are as follows:

- The **Kindergarten-1<sup>st</sup> Grade** class will be \$950 per child for the entire year. P.E. is included with the enrichment class.
- **Elementary** Classes will be \$225 per child per class.
- **Middle School and High School** classes will be \$350 per child per class, except Chemistry, which is \$375 because it is a two-hour class.
- **Study Hall** is \$50 per class period. Students who are not in class and not picked up from EPIC or with a parent must be enrolled in study hall. K/1 students may not be in study hall without a parent.

## Other Costs and Refunds

- A \$50 per child non-refundable registration fee is due at the time of registration.
- Books and school supplies are NOT included in tuition costs. Some may be purchased through EPIC and charged to the parent account. Curriculum fees will be published later in the summer and due with the 1st Semester's tuition.
- Enrollment is for an entire year of classes, with payment split into two halves. If a class or classes need to be dropped during a semester, **requests for refunds will follow this schedule:**
  - Tuition can be transferred to a replacement class (not for a sibling or future invoice)
  - Class supply fees are non-refundable
  - 50% tuition cost refunded after Week 1 of the semester (Withdraw by September 11, January 15)
  - No refund after Week 2 of the semester
  - Supply or curriculum fees are non-refundable
- Refunds are not given for missed classes due to absence, snow day, declared emergency, or act of God. Class activities and homework will be provided in a virtual format to continue learning and meeting course objectives.

## Paying Tuition Balance

There are three primary ways you can pay your tuition balance. Late fees may apply and are outlined below.

- **Pay on the Praxi Portal**
  - **You can pay your balance for free using the ACH/Electronic Check processing** on the PraxiParent portal. This is the most efficient way to pay! **You can also have your information saved for easy future payments!**
  - If you select to pay by credit card you will incur a 3% fee.
- **Pay with check or cash**
  - Checks can be made out to EPIC Academy and mailed to Jen Spica at 2599 Ridge Top Dr. Byron Center, MI 49315.
  - Checks and cash can also be dropped off in person (please set a time to meet) to one of the executive board members (Karen Miedema, Sonny Huisman, or Jen Spica).
  - If mid-year, these can be handed in at the study hall desk at EPIC.
- **Late Fees**
  - Late fees may apply.
  - Fees are charged at 5% per week late.
- **Reimbursement**
  - For any tuition reimbursement (100% before August 15th, 50% before September 15), the reimbursement will be posted to the student's account.
  - It can be applied to a new class or to the next semester's bill.
  - A check will be written upon request. Please give 2 weeks for delivery.

## Discounts and Scholarships

One of the frequently asked questions concerns discounts or scholarships. The EPIC Board is happy to announce the following programs available beginning the 2022-2023 academic year. More information will be provided in late spring/early summer as well as the instructional steps for applying for aid.

- **Registration Fee Credit**
  - Registration fee is \$50 per student.
  - For families with 4 or more enrolled students, the registration fee beyond \$150 cumulative will be credited back towards first-semester tuition.
  - Credit is not redeemable for cash in the case of withdrawal.
- **Scholarships**
  - Using Board directed funds from the scholarship donation account, families can be awarded scholarships to help offset costs of tuition and class fees.
  - Applications based on financial need and family size will be accepted throughout the year as funds allow. The EPIC Board will disperse funds at its discretion.
  - Scholarships will vary in amount but will be given only as a credit on the family account. Any unused credit will be placed back in the EPIC scholarship fund. Credits cannot be rolled over to future EPIC years or registration fees.
  - Application for scholarships must be renewed each EPIC year.

## Class Expectations

1. **EPIC Academy is not an ancillary program. If you join our EPIC family, you will have the opportunity to:**
  - a. Choose the classes that best fit the needs of your homeschool. Classes are selected a-la-carte for customization of workload and desired content areas to fit with what is done at home. Use the Course Catalog to ensure you understand what is intended for the class. Please consider the workload when making class decisions to maximize success in the classroom.
  - b. Commit to be all in for the classes you choose. Parents should help hold all of their children accountable for homework and projects. Classwork is not optional, but accommodations can be made with conversations with staff and administration.
  - c. Take all-inclusive classes. Courses provide a full load in the content area. Teachers will launch lessons on Monday with follow-up to be done throughout the week.
2. **Make Class Attendance a Priority:** Quarterly breaks are scheduled throughout the year. Avoiding unnecessary or extended absences will help ensure students are reaping the most from their classwork, especially at the Middle and High school levels.
3. **Teachers act like mentor coaches or tutors.** In order to comply with the Michigan Homeschool Law, parents are the primary educators in all subject areas for their children. EPIC Teachers provide course lessons and work felt necessary to fully complete a credit-based class. Grades are also issued as a suggestion based on work completed. In the end, it is the responsibility of the parent to teach and assess their child's work.
4. **All EPIC families must have an active PraxiSchool Parent Account and active email regularly checked.**
  - a. Praxi is where balances can be paid, homework is posted, shout-outs and discipline notifications are published, and announcements are given.
  - b. Middle and High School students are also required to activate their student portal praxi accounts. It is optional for elementary students.
  - c. All EPIC Families must have an email on file that is regularly checked for important weekly email communication.
  - d. Technology is important to maintaining excellence in academics throughout the week outside of Monday classes. Teachers may require the use of access to things like

google drive products, flip grid, google classroom, internet searches, youtube, and more.

#### **5. Accountability and Expectations**

- a. At the elementary level, parents are expected to work as partners in learning. Dictation, hands-on project help, technology assistance, and guidance through content are expected of parents throughout the week.
- b. At the middle school level, parents are expected to begin the transition to giving their students autonomy for completion of work and taking on some of the responsibility of assignments, final projects/editing, and time management.
- c. At the high school level, it is imperative that students begin to take ownership and hold themselves accountable for their work. However, parents need to be prepared for weekly check-ins with their students and to step in when needed.
- d. Teachers welcome your homework questions and are open to conversations about adaptations to fit your child's unique needs. Please contact them directly using the Staff Directory on the Parent or Student Portal.

#### **6. Preparedness**

- a. A complete book and school supply list will be available around the first week of August.
- b. Students are expected to come to class prepared with required text, supplies, and completed projects and homework.

## **Course Catalog**

You can find our Course Catalogs for [Elementary](#) and [Middle/High School](#). The Course Catalogs contain class descriptions, prerequisites, a list of needed books and supplies, and information on our EPIC teachers based on information currently available (subject to change). Updated lists of books, supplies, and instructors will be available around mid-July.

## **Freedom to Learn**

### **Overview**

The EPIC Board is committed to ensuring the freedom of families to experience education and learning to suit their needs. With the experience of a global pandemic and the various mitigations at government and societal levels, this commitment was tested and a more formal statement regarding EPIC's stance was created. The "Freedom to Learn Plan" was formed in the summer of 2020 and continues to this day, no matter what situation may arise. The EPIC Board hopes to continue to extend this freedom with the EPIC families and staff, but understand adjustments may need to be made along the way. This educational plan is broad to suit foreseeable future events or outbreaks.

### **Goals of Freedom to Learn**

1. Respect the wishes and protocols of Peace Church

2. Honor the desire of EPIC families who have come seeking an excellent program assisting them in their homeschool journey
3. Seek to find balance in obeying our Earthly leaders while maintaining the freedom promised to citizens in the Constitution as we seek to represent Christ in all we do
4. Provide a quality experience, even if it is not 100% meeting EPIC's desired outcomes
5. Provide flexibility and nimbleness to move from one level to another without adhering to specific directives from political officers

## Freedom to Learn Levels

1. **Level 1:** In this level, EPIC moves forward with in-person experiences as normal. While the world outside may not be functioning at the same "level", the leadership of Peace Church and the EPIC Board feel confident in continuing forward as a ministry program.
2. **Level 2:** EPIC may be forced to move to level 2 in the event Peace Church no longer feels comfortable with hosting our group in person. In this instance, the Board will encourage teachers to host virtual learning opportunities as well as occasional small group in-person activities. Families or teachers can host classes or small groups in their homes for learning best done in a group. These in-person activities are optional, but students in a credit-based class should find alternatives if the one offered is not used.
3. **Level 3:** In this level, there appears to be imminent danger or threat and the leadership of EPIC in partnership with its teachers feel it is best to not endorse any in-person gatherings. Teachers will still provide virtual learning opportunities to move forward in the content area to the best of their ability.

\*If Level 2 or Level 3 learning occurs for more than 3 consecutive weeks, all elementary classes will be canceled for the remainder of the quarter/semester. Middle and High School classes, except for PE, Art, and possibly others, will continue in the course of learning.

## Freedom to Learn Precautions

There are many viruses and bacteria (not to mention things like lice) that can impact the health of people when gathered together. As a reminder, here are good practices to keep in mind out of respect for others.

- If a student is running a fever of over 100°F, please keep them home from EPIC. Please allow for 24 hours without signs of fever before returning.
- If a child is violently coughing, vomiting, or quite unwell it is asked they stay home from EPIC. Not only does it help protect others, but most likely your student will not have an effective day of learning.
- Students who become ill at EPIC will be required to go home. Please make sure an emergency contact is on file to pick up in the event a parent cannot come.
- Remind your child to avoid sharing things like hats, hairbrushes, and drinks.

## Other Mitigations

In line with sharing the freedom shared with us by Peace Church, EPIC extends this freedom of choice to our EPIC staff and families. At no point will EPIC require the use of face masks. Students and staff are welcome to wear them, but they will never be required. Social distancing is not something we will

encourage or enforce at EPIC. We believe in the God-ordained design of His people living in community and fellowship with one another, not enmity which is what social distancing can breed. If older students feel the need to distance, we will accommodate to the best of our abilities.

## Protecting EPIC Academy and EPIC Families

All EPIC Families are required to sign an assumption of risk and liability waiver form upon registration. If you have questions or concerns regarding this waiver, please contact the office.

## Policies and Procedures

### Attendance

Attendance is taken at the start of each class with unexcused or excused tardies and absences. This is imperative to maintaining the safety of our entire EPIC student and staff body.

**Tardy-** 10 minutes late arrival to class

**Unexcused-** No communication about absence ahead of time or the morning of in the case of illness or weather.

**Excused-** Permission from another teacher (hall pass) or notification via the absence reporting on the parent portal.

#### Reporting an Absence:

- Online Portal Reporting
  - Login to your parent portal then Click on “Online Forms”
  - Select the child to report the absence for and select “report absence” from the drop-down menu. Click “start new form”
  - Fill out the information and submit
  - Connecting with teachers regarding lessons or work missed or delayed due to absence is the responsibility of the parent and student.
- Phone Call (last-minute only)
  - For last-minute absences due to illness or weather, you may report your student to the EPIC phone line to be published later in August.

### Connection with the Community

- A Staff Directory is available on the parent and student portals
  - Students have access ONLY to their personal teachers
  - Parents have information on all EPIC staff
  - Email is often the most efficient way to communicate questions or receive clarification from teachers
  - Please notice communication preferences of teachers noted on their syllabus
- An EPIC Family Directory is also on the portal
  - Information is only published with permission

- This information is available only to current EPIC families with an active Praxi School login. Please treat this information with the same safety and regard for privacy as we do.

## Turning in Homework

Homework and projects are not optional since EPIC is not an ancillary program and strives for academic excellence. Arrangements can be made in circumstances of schedule, abilities, learning challenges, and life circumstances ahead of time with a teacher. Homework turn-in policies will be teacher-directed, ranging from physical turn-in on EPIC Mondays, email, or Google platforms such as docs, slides, or sheets. Homework not turned in is marked excused or unexcused.

Excused	Unexcused
<p><u>Completed</u> homework failed to turn in will have no penalty if:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Parent sends a picture or emails a scanned copy of it.</li> <li>2. Homework is turned in via email on the same day.</li> <li>3. Homework arranged for a later due date PRIOR to vacation or absence.</li> </ol>	<p>Homework is unexcused if a student shows up to class with unfinished work.</p> <p>All unexcused late homework will be docked 5% for each day it is missing. This will be marked as an I/C (incomplete on the grades page on the portal).</p> <p>All homework late due to vacation or absence that is not arranged prior is unexcused.</p>
<p>If excused homework isn't turned in by an agreed-upon adjusted due date, the 5% per day rule will go into effect.</p>	

## Grades

Grades can be viewed on the parent and student praxi portals at any time. As soon as a teacher inputs a grade, it goes live on the portal. It is the most up-to-date information available.

### 1. Grading Scales

- Most Elementary Classes will use the ESN grading scale.
  - E- Excellent, above and beyond what was expected or required
  - S- Satisfactory, meeting expectations
  - N- Needs Improvement, incomplete work or projects
- Most Middle and High School Classes use a 10+/- Scale
 

100-94 A	84-80 B-	69-60 D
93-90 A-	79-75 C	<60 F
89-85 B	74-70 C-	
- Other enrichment style classes such as art, elementary gym, music, etc. may choose to only do quarterly comments which will be seen on the printed progress reports at the end of each quarter.

- Incompletes-** Incomplete grades are shown as an I/C and are in red font on the portal. They average into the grade as a zero at the Middle and High School levels.

3. **Quarterly Progress Reports will be printed** with additional comments and available at Conference & Coffee Events. Reports can also be requested at any time: [epichomeschoolacademy@gmail.com](mailto:epichomeschoolacademy@gmail.com).
4. **Grades and Transcripts**- It is the ultimate authority of parents to issue a final grade on a transcript per Michigan Homeschool Law. **These reports are to be used as guidance only.**

## Dress Code

Parents should encourage students to come to EPIC dressed with the mindset of modesty. Respect for others in how students present themselves is key. We want our students to dress for success!

- Clothing should be neat and clean and provide appropriate coverage.
- Please be sure shirts are long enough to cover the midriff, and skirts and shorts are a modest length.
- Please be sure leggings are paired with a shirt or skirt that covers the bottom.
- If there is any question regarding the dress code or any concerns regarding your child's interpretation of the dress code email Sonny at [shuisman.epicacademy@gmail.com](mailto:shuisman.epicacademy@gmail.com).

## Cell Phone and Tablet Use

Cell phones, iPads, and tablets will not be permitted during class time **unless requested specifically by the classroom teacher or if needed for related course work.** Teachers maintain the right to ask that phones or devices be put in a classroom basket for the duration of class.

**Devices can be used during study hall for educational purposes only.** No social media, YouTube, Netflix, video games, or other unnecessary streaming will be tolerated. Listening to music with personal listening devices (earbuds/headphones) is allowed. Music should not be shared with others. After one warning, devices will be taken and given directly to the child's parents. We would like to promote community, conversation, and relationships amongst our students, and devices such as these are not conducive to that environment. We do not have the capacity to monitor what is happening on each student's private device and desire to maintain safety and accountability for all of our students. Access to all emergency contacts is available to our staff. Your child will have access to an EPIC staff phone if they need to contact you.

## Conduct and Behavior

### "Be" Attitudes

These are the main behavioral guidelines for EPIC.

1. Be Respectful
2. Be a Builder
3. Be Prepared
4. Be Where You Belong
5. Be on the Lookout

We encourage our students to be respectful of both the people at EPIC and the space/supplies we use, to use their words to build others up, to be prepared for each class by coming with the appropriate supplies and completed homework, to be in their scheduled classroom or study hall rooms and NOT wandering the halls, and to be on the lookout for ways to help or encourage others at EPIC.

## Behavior Management

Each teacher will implement their own “whole class” management incentives as they see fit. Individual behavior issues will be tracked by the classroom teacher in their PraxiSchool classrooms. When you visit your child’s PraxiSchool page, you will be able to see all behavior-related notations, both good and bad under the “Behavior” tab.

We’ll work on a “three strikes” system. Each classroom teacher will monitor their students’ behavior, and if needed will issue a verbal warning about inappropriate behavior (strike 1). If a teacher needs to continuously talk to the same student about the same issues, s/he will contact Sonny, who will then talk to the student directly (strike 2). If issues continue, Sonny will contact the parents directly (strike 3) and put a plan together to avoid further issues. If issues continue after the third confrontation, the student will be asked to take a break from EPIC for a time. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis. There are specific protocols in place for any violence, threat of violence, or encounters of a sexual nature. If you would like details about these protocols, please contact administration.

## Shout Outs

We love to foster an environment where doing the right thing and going above and beyond is celebrated and acknowledged! Shout Outs will be issued to students when they are “caught” being extra helpful or exhibiting one of the Fruits of the Spirit in an “above and beyond” manner. Shout Outs will be issued and tracked using our PraxiSchool system. A record of student shout outs can be found under the “Behavior” tab on the Portal. Students who are issued Shout Outs will be entered into drawings a few times a year to win fabulous prizes! Students will be entered the same number of times as the number of Shout Outs they earned.

## Incident Reports/Special Circumstance Issues

There may be times that extenuating circumstances warrant additional attention, such as an injury, an urgent behavior issue (violence, or something sexual in nature), an observation of concern (self-harm, depression, anxiety), or specific conversations with students that may need to be documented. In this case, an “Incident Report” will be filled out by the concerned party/witness and followed up on by Sonny Huisman, our program director.

## **EPIC Monday Details**

### Breaks and Lunch

1. Students who attend classes over the lunch hour will be given a common area to eat. Snack and bathroom breaks are also held throughout the day between classes.
2. There is NO MICROWAVE available and NO COLD STORAGE. All food should be kept cold or hot on its own. Lunch boxes should be labeled with the student’s name.
3. It is recommended that students bring a labeled water bottle to use throughout the day to be filled at drinking fountains.
4. Lunch and recess are supervised by volunteers.

## Recess

1. Students will be allowed free playtime after they have eaten their lunches.
2. Students are allowed to play outside during this time, but must stay either in the entry area, the sidewalks, the area near the handicap parking, or the side yard on the north side of Peace Church (only with recess duty volunteer monitoring).
3. Students are NOT permitted in the landscape areas on either side of the entryway OR in the grass between the handicap parking area and Cherry Valley Road.
4. Days with inclement weather will have recess time hosted inside in available areas.

## Lost and Found

Items collected throughout the EPIC day are collected and on display in the main atrium near the front desk. Items will be kept for 2 weeks then donated. Please label all of your student's belongings, especially lunch bags, coats, backpacks, folders, water bottles, and textbooks.

## Study Hall

The Peace Church Lobby will be available all day as a Study/Social Hall for families waiting on students participating in classes. If a quiet atmosphere is desired, a separate room will be offered as a quiet study hall. Individual rooms are available for parents who want to work with some of their children during class hours.

**Students who are not in a class must check in with the Study Hall Monitor and either be in a private room with a parent or be in a designated Study/Social Hall room. Students who will be taking a study hall *without the monitoring of a parent* will be responsible to bring their own work or quiet activity to do during that time and will be expected to work quietly without disturbing those around them.** Please see the sections above on cell phone and device use AND on expected conduct. Study hall for all students who are not with a parent is now \$50 per class period, per year.

## Parking

Please enter Peace Church at the main entrance on the Cherry Valley Avenue side (west side of the church). Please park on the south side of the church and enter the main doors nearest the Worship Center. The handicap parking can be used on request. Cones are set up to block off the drive entrance for the safety of students playing outside.

## Drop-off and Pick-up

Please come into the building through the main entrance to Peace Church (to the west). **Elementary students K-5th must be picked up directly from their last classroom at the end of the day.** Middle School and High School students should proceed to the Lobby or parking area after their final class for pick up.

## Campus Safety

### Secure Facility

There are several things we do to ensure that the Peace Church Facility is safe and secure for your children:

- All doors to Peace Church are locked \*except\* for the front entry doors off of Cherry Valley Avenue.
- A monitor is stationed at all times at a table at these front entry doors to keep an eye on coming and going traffic as well as study hall areas.
- Lunch and Recess monitors are assigned to monitor students during lunch and recess time.
- Attendance is taken during each class and study hall, ensuring any students in the Peace Church building are monitored and accounted for.
- Our campus is a closed campus for all students. This means they will not be permitted to leave the building without a parent, another trusted adult, or sibling without parental permission.
- Students who are independent drivers can have a permission form submitted by a parent to be able to leave campus during lunch or study hall hours. This form can be found on the parent portal.
- Any student **MUST** be signed out with the study hall monitor if arriving or leaving EPIC early. Elementary students must be signed out by an approved guardian or contact on file. Emergency contacts can be added on the parent portal.
- All visitors should check in with the study hall monitor. Visitors who are not parents, guardians, or there for a specific class presentation or purpose, must have prior approval. It is expected for all visitors to help maintain a safe and healthy environment at EPIC by complying with the handbook guidelines. Those who choose not to respect these desires may be asked to leave.

### Emergency Protocols and Drills

Please know that we have specific protocols in place in the unlikely event of a:

- **Fire** - evacuating the building
- **Tornado Warning** - escorting students to safe places within Peace Church
- **Lockdown** - protecting students if a known threat is in the area surrounding the church
- **Inclement Weather** - contacting parents regarding early pick-up during unexpected afternoon snowstorms

Our EPIC teachers are trained for how to handle each of these situations should the need arise. If you are interested in the specific step-by-step protocols for these emergencies, we can make them available to you upon request. In the case of any of the above emergencies, parents and/or emergency contacts will be made aware through our blast text and email system.

### Inclement Weather/Cancelation Policy

With families coming from all over West Michigan, the EPIC board makes independent decisions on class cancelation. Families are always encouraged to make safety decisions for themselves and accommodations will be provided. Classes will be canceled if:

- A tornado watch or warning is broadcast for our area within one hour of class.
- Snow or ice create dangerous road conditions in our area.

The EPIC Board uses wisdom and local closings and delays to help formulate a decision. You will receive a text blast (if cell carrier is provided on your parent portal) and an email by 7:00a to confirm that EPIC is closed. We will also post that information on our EPIC Facebook site. If the weather is questionable in the morning, please be sure to check your phone/email BEFORE you leave for EPIC.

If the weather becomes unexpectedly inclement, an early closing notice will go out via text and email to all parents.

Since we only meet for 28 weeks, our meeting days are precious. If we have to cancel due to inclement weather, we \*may\* end up tagging on an additional meeting date during one of our “rest” weeks. Acts of God or catastrophic events may inhibit EPIC from meeting in person. Adaptable coursework and assignments will be provided in a virtual format to allow learning to continue moving forward.

## **Volunteer Requirements**

Service is one of the core values of EPIC Academy. In an effort to foster this attitude and help spread the responsibilities of what it takes to run EPIC, we ask that **each family** signs up for at least one volunteer position. These volunteer positions average 8-10 hours per year. A buy-out option is available for those who cannot participate.

## **Peace Church**

Peace Church actively seeks out community partners as a way to use their facilities to bless the kingdom by offering like-minded ministries use of their building and resources. Our friendship with Peace allows us to provide an amazing opportunity to partner with homeschool families. We want to maintain this friendship by being good stewards of the facilities, materials, furniture, and landscape areas. Leaving rooms and spaces better than how we found them is our way of saying “Thank You” for this tremendous gift. EPIC operates independently of Peace Church, not as a ministry of the church, but as a partner in furthering the kingdom.