



# **Ebenezer International Christian Academy**

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Hasta aquí nos ha ayudado el Señor - Samuel 7:12

**EBENEZER INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN ACADEMY**

**FACULTY HANDBOOK**

# Ebenezer International Christian Academy

## Teacher Handbook 2024-2025 School Year

### Intent of Handbook

Welcome to Ebenezer International Christian Academy. This handbook is intended to be used by teachers and other certificated staff to provide general information about Ebenezer International Christian Academy and to serve as a guide to the District's policies, rules, regulations, benefits of employment, and performance expectations.

References in this handbook to "teachers" are intended to apply to all certificated staff. This includes administrative staff to the extent that the handbook deals with professional expectations and conduct.

Each teacher is responsible for becoming familiar with the handbook and knowing its information. Although the information found in this handbook is detailed and specific on many topics, the handbook is not intended to be all-encompassing to cover every situation and circumstance that may arise. This handbook is intended to supplement other documents that deal with your employment, including your employment contract, the negotiated agreement between Ebenezer International Christian Academy, and the policies and regulations of the Board of Education. In reading this handbook, please understand that state or federal law, the negotiated agreement, and Board policies and regulations will control where a direct conflict exists.

This handbook does not create a "contract" of employment. Staff positions and assignments that do not legally require a certificate or are otherwise not protected by the teacher tenure laws may be ended or changed on an "at will" basis, notwithstanding anything in this handbook or any other publication or statement, except for a contract approved by the Board of Education.

The administration will be responsible for interpreting the rules in the handbook and shall have the right to make decisions and make rule revisions at any time. Should a situation or circumstance arise that is not explicitly covered in this handbook, the administration will make a decision based upon applicable school district policies, state and federal statutes and regulations, and the District's best interests.

This handbook will be in effect for the 2020-2021 and subsequent school years unless replaced by a later edition.

### Faculty Purpose Statement

**Learning for Life:** Ebenezer International Christian Academy (EICA), working with the families and communities it serves, is committed to educational excellence for all students, promoting creativity and love of learning within a caring and secure environment where the students are in control of their futures.

EICA seeks to provide an essential education by developing and maintaining:

- Qualified and competent administrative, teaching, paraprofessional, and operational staff;
- Integrated, planned curriculum that prepares students to achieve state standards and such additional standards as are established by the Board of Education and to reach the student outcomes identified above;
- Comprehensive support programs and services that meet the diverse needs of students;
- Safe, clean and supportive facilities and learning environments;
- Implementation of a curriculum that meets the following:
  - Is based on state standards in reading, writing, speaking, listening, mathematics, science and social studies/history and

essential learning in visual and performing arts, world languages, technology, health and physical education, and career and technical education and such additional standards as are established by the Board of Education.

- Is appropriate for the developmental level of the students;
  - Addresses diverse learning needs;
  - Instills a passion for learning and the importance of life-long learning;
  - Develops problem solving and critical thinking skills, decision making skills, data gathering, and critical use of information;
  - Develops expected work ethics, as well as group participation and leadership skills;
  - Incorporates character education and multicultural education, including respect for diversity;
  - Provides for application of technology in all learning areas;
  - Provides access to advanced courses; and
  - Is organized in a schedule that is functional and meets student needs in all curriculum areas.
- Providing a supportive learning environment which includes:
    - a welcoming and inviting environment that is emotionally safe, nurturing, supportive, and disciplined; that promotes respect, trust, integrity, and regard for self and others; and that honors diversity;
    - learning as the central purpose with students engaged in meaningful, relevant, and productive learning experiences; and
    - Implementation of policies and practices that result in an orderly environment with emphasis on consistent school-wide positive behavior.

## I. GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

### A. Teacher Absences

The Board of Education has established a policy concerning the teacher's absence due to illness and emergencies. Each teacher is allowed ten days of sick leave without a deduction in salary. This is accumulated to 55 days.

Absences resulting from personal illness, snowbound conditions, serious family illness, or funeral in the immediate family are considered excused absences. Others are not. Specifics may be found in the most recent negotiated agreement between the EICA and the Board of Education.

All applicable paid leave will be used before any unpaid leave is taken. All paid leave must be used before and in conjunction with the FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act).

### B. Purchases

All purchases in the name of EICA will be arranged for through the superintendent's office. Any purchase made otherwise will ordinarily not be paid for by the Board. If you wish to make a purchase for your department, first come to the office.

### F. Payment of Salary

Salary payments will be made to all certified employees in twelve equal installments on the 20th of each month. If the 20th falls on a non-school day, all employees will be paid on the last working day before the 20th of each month.

### G. Grievance

Any school employee who feels aggrieved because of the actions of a school official shall first take the matter to the principal. If satisfactory action is not obtained from the principal, then the aggrieved party may take the matter to the superintendent.

### H. Travel Policy

Ebenezer International Christian Academy has implemented the following rules for travel reimbursement. It is the responsibility of the building principal or the appropriate administrator – hereafter named “administrator” – to make lodging reservations and coordinate travel for those attending. If people from two different buildings are going to the same conference, the appropriate administrators are responsible to coordinate travel with each other to minimize expenses. Given adequate notice, the superintendent's secretary will make lodging reservations if the appropriate administrators so wish.

#### **Meals:**

Non-Overnight and Overnight Travel: Daily Maximum - \$25.00

The District will not reimburse for meals that were included in registration. **Receipts must be turned in.**

#### **Lodging:**

Administrators are responsible for obtaining appropriate lodging reservations at a reasonable expense.

**Expense Reimbursement:**

An expense summary reimbursement form is to be completed by the traveler and signed by the administrator. The administrator will forward the expense summary to the superintendent's office.

**Documentation:**

The district will accept the following documentation for meals and expenses:

Original Receipts  
Copies of Receipts  
Travel Log

At times, when dining with people from different organizations, you are unable to obtain a receipt or a copy. If this occurs, please list the date and time of the meal (breakfast, lunch, supper), as well as the people you were with and the cost of the meal.

**I. Smoking by Staff**

The use of tobacco products in the District's buildings and on school grounds, all owned or leased facilities and vehicles, is prohibited.

1. Be sure all equipment is cared for, lights turned off, and doors locked when you leave. Check out required keys from the principal.
2. There is a custodian on duty in this building at night. Contact him/her if you need help in an emergency.
3. Report any special problems noted in the use of areas to which you have been assigned.

ALL SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, BOTH IN THE BUILDING AND AWAY FROM THE SCHOOL, MUST BE APPROVED AND SCHEDULED IN THE PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE.

**PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT****A. Professional Ethics Standards**

- III.** EICA expects its certificated employees to adhere to the professional ethics standards established by the Florida Department of Education, as such standards may be modified from time to time. The professional ethics standards which certificated employees are expected to adhere to include those set forth below.

## **Preamble**

The educator shall believe in the worth and dignity of human beings. Recognizing the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, the devotion to excellence and the nurture of democratic citizenship, the educator shall regard as essential to these goals the protection of the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal educational opportunity for all. The educator shall accept the responsibility to practice the profession to these ethical standards.

The educator shall recognize the magnitude of the responsibility he or she has accepted in choosing a career in education, and engages, individually and collectively with other educators, to judge his or her colleagues, and to be judged by them, in accordance with the provisions of

this code of ethics.

### **Principle I - Commitment as a Professional Educator:**

Fundamental to the pursuit of high educational standards is the maintenance of a profession possessed of individuals with high skills, intellect, integrity, wisdom, and compassion. The educator shall exhibit good moral character, maintain high standards of performance and promote equality of opportunity.

In fulfillment of the educator's contractual and professional responsibilities, the educator:

1. Shall not interfere with the exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities of students, colleagues, parents, school patrons.
2. Shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, marital status, age, national origin, ethnic background, or handicapping condition.
3. Shall not use coercive means, or promise or provide special treatment to students, colleagues, school patrons, or school board members in order to influence professional decisions.
4. Shall not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact for which the educator is responsible.
5. Shall not exploit professional relationships with students, colleagues, parents, school patrons, or school board members for personal gain or private advantage.
6. Shall not sexually harass students, parents or school patrons, employees, or board members.
7. Shall not have had revoked for cause in another state a teaching certificate, administrative certificate, or any certificate enabling a person to engage in any of the activities for which a special services counseling certificate is issued in Florida.
8. Shall not engage in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud, deceit, or misrepresentation in the performance of professional duties.
9. Shall report to the Superintendent any known violation of paragraphs G, E, or B above.
10. Shall seek no reprisal against any individual who has reported a violation of this rule.

### **Principle II - Commitment to the Student:**

Mindful that a profession exists for the purpose of serving the best interests of the client, the educator shall practice the profession with genuine interest, concern, and consideration for the student. The educator shall work to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the student, the educator:

1. Shall permit the student to pursue reasonable independent scholastic effort, and shall permit the student access to varying points of view.
2. Shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter for which the educator is responsible.
3. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions which interfere with the learning process or are harmful to health or safety.
4. Shall conduct professional educational activities in accordance with sound educational practices that are in the best interest of the student.
5. Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information that has been obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes, or is required by law.
6. Shall not tutor for remuneration students assigned to his or her classes unless approved by the Board of Education.
7. Shall not discipline students using corporal punishment.

### **Principle III - Commitment to the Public:**

The magnitude of the responsibility inherent in the education process requires dedication to the principles of our democratic heritage. The educator bears particular responsibility for instilling an understanding of the confidence in the rule of law, respect for individual freedom, and a responsibility to promote respect by the public for the integrity of the profession.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the public, the educator:

1. Shall not misrepresent an institution with which the educator is affiliated and shall take added precautions to distinguish between the educator's personal and institutional views.
2. Shall not use institutional privileges for private gain or to promote political candidates, political issues, or partisan political activities.
3. Shall neither offer nor accept gifts or favors that will impair professional judgment.
4. Shall support the principle of due process and protect the political, citizenship, and natural rights of all individuals.
5. Shall not commit any act of moral turpitude, nor commit any felony under the laws of the United States or any state or territory.
6. Shall, with reasonable diligence, attend to the duties of his or her professional position.

### **Principle IV - Commitment to the Profession:**

In belief that the quality of the services to the education profession directly influences the nation and its citizens, the educator shall exert every effort to raise professional standards, to improve service, to promote a climate in which the exercise of professional judgment is encouraged, and to achieve conditions which attract persons worthy of the trust to careers in education. The educator shall believe that sound professional relationships with colleagues are built upon personal integrity, dignity, and mutual respect.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the profession, the educator:

1. Shall provide upon the request of an aggrieved party, a written statement of specific reasons for recommendations that lead to the denial of increments, significant changes in employment, or termination of employment.
2. Shall not misrepresent his or her professional qualifications, nor those of colleagues.
3. Shall practice the profession only with proper certification and shall actively oppose the practice of the profession by persons known to be unqualified.

### **Principle V - Commitment to Professional Employment Practices:**

The educator shall regard the employment agreement as a pledge to be executed both in spirit and in fact. The educator shall believe that sound personnel relationships with governing boards are built upon personal integrity, dignity, and mutual respect.

In fulfillment of the obligation to professional employment practices, the educator:

1. Shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or responsibility on the basis of professional preparation and legal qualifications.
2. Shall not knowingly withhold information regarding a position from an applicant or employer or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment.
3. Shall give prompt notice to the employer of any change in availability of service.
4. Shall conduct professional business through designated procedures, when available, that have been approved by the employing agency.
5. Shall not assign to unqualified personnel, tasks for which an educator is responsible.
6. Shall permit no commercial or personal exploitation of his or her professional position.
7. Shall use time on duty and leave time for the purpose for which intended.

B. Evaluations

Evaluations of teachers will be conducted in accordance with the school's evaluation policy. Supervisors reserve the right to observe, appraise or evaluate teachers more frequently than required by policy on an as-needed basis. Teachers are expected to participate constructively and positively in the evaluation process and to accept and implement constructive suggestions and improvement strategies developed by the administration.

C. Role Model

Teachers serve as role models for students and their actions and conduct reflect on the school as a whole. Teachers are in all respects to conduct themselves in a professional manner.

D. Relationships

It is important for teachers to maintain an effective working relationship with the administration and all co-workers, including other teachers and support staff. Teachers are also to maintain appropriate relationships with students. Appropriate relationships are established by extending social courtesies, following through on commitments and promises, being honest and consistent, and not intruding into personal matters outside the scope of duties or gossiping or spreading rumors about others.

E. Professional Attire

It is important for teachers to project a professional image to students, parents and co-workers. Appropriate attire and grooming is one of the means of projecting a professional image. Teachers are expected to maintain conservative and professional attire and grooming when on duty. As professionals, teachers are expected to be aware of the standard to be maintained. As a minimal guide, teachers should not wear clothing which students would not be permitted to wear at school. The administration may establish more detailed guidelines for individual teachers should that be necessary.



## ACADEMIC MATTERS

### A. Purpose and Goals of Academic Achievement

Ebenezer International Christian Academy is committed to providing a quality education for all EICA Schools students consistent with the school's mission statement. Effective, quality instruction by teachers is an essential means of meeting the District's mission of providing a quality education.

### B. Teaching to Student Understanding to Assure Learning

Each teacher is responsible for teaching in a manner to meet the mission of the District and to assure student understanding and learning of the principles and concepts to be presented to students within the curriculum adopted by the District. Teachers will model classroom instruction on the educational model implemented by the District and reflected in the teacher evaluation instrument adopted by the Board of Education. Teachers are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the instructional model and the principles of instruction set forth in the evaluation instrument. The administration shall provide periodic in-services regarding the instructional model.

### C. Instruction in the Curriculum

Teachers shall instruct students in the curriculum, including the use of curriculum materials, adopted and implemented by EICA.

### D. Measuring and Reporting Academic Achievement

Grades and Grading. Measuring and accurately reporting the level of each student's academic achievement is of critical importance to students, parents, staff, the board of education and community. To this end, each teacher shall develop a variety of assessment instruments and techniques to measure student achievement in the curriculum adopted and implemented by the school district, record the results of such assessment, and report such results on Report Cards. Teachers should endeavor to measure student learning and understanding on a frequent basis during each quarter to provide an accurate evaluation of each student's academic achievement for that period. It is recommended that the teacher record at least two grades per week. It is generally preferable to give numerical grades for tests, quizzes, and daily work. **GRADES MUST BE RECORDED FOR ALL CURRICULAR AREAS.**

Recording Grades. All instructors are to report grades at the end of student coursework. At a minimum, all courses must contain a homework portion, a quiz portion, and assessment portion. It is the responsibility of the instructor to develop their own class content with the resources provided by EICA. If any resource outside of those provided by the institution is to be used, the school Principal must approve of it prior to use.

#### Grading Scheme

Course grades are to be divided as follows:

Lesson:	10%
Quizzes/Projects:	30%
Assessments:	60%
Total:	100%

Grade Scales. Teachers are to use only the grading scales set forth below. The building principal must approve any deviation from the approved grade scales.

**STUDENT EVALUATION SCALE:** The grade scales to be used for reporting student progress in grades 9-12 are as follows:

<b>POINTS</b>	<b>GRADE</b>
100-90	A
89-80	B
79-70	C
Below 69	F
Inc.	Incomplete

Conditional - indicates credit for students achieving to, or near their capacity and yet not achieving a passing mark according to grading standards (not counted as college requisite course). Credits are awarded provided future work is satisfactory.

Every student is a challenge to the teacher. Students who fall outside the classification of A-F require special attention. We should make each student feel they have been challenged, are of value, and have achieved some measure of success during the school year.

Failing grades are very easy to place behind a student's name. Giving a student a failing grade is only advisable if every effort has been made to find the solution to their problem.

If a student needs to improve their work, the following steps should be followed.

1. Have a personal conference with the pupil.
2. Give the pupil exceptional help.
3. Check teacher expectations.
4. Check the intelligence test.
5. Consult the principal and pupil's parent.

Before failing a student for the semester, the principal should be consulted. If the student fails for the semester, the teacher should be sure he/she has retained definite evidence of the student's work.

At least two grades should be placed in the grade book each week for every pupil.

The preceding grade scales are expected to be used according to the following guidelines:

1. No other grade scales are to be used on official records or reports.
2. "Failing," "unsatisfactory," or equivalent terms indicate that student performance does not meet the minimum requirements established for the course. A final mark of "failing" or "unsatisfactory" in a credit-bearing course means that credit hours will not be granted.
3. The mark given at the end of each reporting period is considered an evaluation of the pupil's status at the time (for example, the final mark in a semester course is an evaluation of the pupil's status as of the close of the semester; not an average of two nine-week marks).
4. Teachers may exercise professional judgment in distributing marks.

Reconsideration of Grades/Marks: Questions raised concerning duly assigned grades will be resolved cooperatively in a conference which includes the teacher(s) involved and the Principal. In the event a grade is questioned by parents or students, the parents/guardians and/or student may be included in the conference.

Failure to resolve the issue will result in a second conference involving the Superintendent or designee and the participants in the initial conference described above. The grades designated by teachers will not be changed unilaterally by the Superintendent unless the Superintendent determines that the grade is not consistent with the requirements of law, Board policy, or the best interests of the District.

Reports to Parents: Grades and credit are assigned monthly (4 weeks). Reports are sent to parents at the close of each four weeks during the school year.

The grade reports are produced from information supplied by teachers and distributed to students at school or are mailed to parents.

All grades are calculated on a cumulative basis.

Students probably know how they stand in such areas as citizenship, attitude, cooperation, attendance, preparation of assignments, etc. The parents need this knowledge. If any such factors significantly affect the student's grades or their relationship with teachers, notes should be sent to parents. Arrangements will be made to place these teacher-written notes with the grade report forms. The notes may call attention to deficiencies, faults, or failures or be commendatory. If carefully prepared, they can be most valuable. Parents need to have information about areas of strengths, areas needing improvement, and progress being made by their child. For their instruction and our ultimate well-being, if and when problems arise, the reports must be as informative as possible. Teachers should, in all cases, plan to keep duplicate copies of the notes sent to parents on file.

Please accept, cooperatively and professionally, the responses that parents may make after the distribution of term or mid-quarter reports. Parents are only sometimes helpful or reasonable under these circumstances, but they do need information and direction. Please encourage parents to discuss their student-centered problems with you and give them all possible assistance.

#### E. Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are critical for teachers to dialogue with students' parents (or guardians) regarding student achievement and learning. To this end, parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled for the first quarter. Teacher attendance at Parent-Teacher conferences is mandatory. A teacher may only be excused from attendance at Parent-Teacher conferences in writing by the Superintendent.

Teachers are expected to be prepared for such conferences. Being prepared includes having completed grade books, which include all student assignments, work, or tests completed within five (5) days of the date of the Parent-Teacher conference.

#### L. Lesson Plans

All teachers will submit lesson plans for the week to the office before they leave school on Friday night or before school starts on Monday. Well-written plans should be made available to substitutes when regular staff is ill or absent. They should (1) guide instruction on a daily and weekly basis; (2) include content and instructional methods; (3) indicate necessary resources to be procured in advance; (4) provide continuity with prior learning; and (5) be flexible to meet individual student's needs. Lesson plans submitted late will be documented in the teacher's evaluation file if the practice becomes habitual.

Be careful with your language. Profanity or abusive language should not be used by you. Be a good role model for students. If a student uses such language, you should correct the student and take such disciplinary action as is appropriate, which may include making a report to administration.

### Student Searches

Office administration should also be contacted before performing searches of students or their belongings. You may direct a student suspected of having an item in violation of school rules to wait with you until another adult is present, or to follow you to the office if you can leave your assigned area without causing risk of harm to others. Do not use physical force to detain the student or to make the student accompany you except as reasonably necessary to protect the student or others.

### Student Rights

Students should be treated fairly and given the same treatment without consideration of race, color, religion, gender, or disability. Students who need special accommodations should be given those accommodations as needed for them to participate in school and school activities. Further, students have the right to have their school records kept confidential. Such information should be shared only with other school staff with a need to know the information to perform their duties.

## B. Managing Student Conduct

Discipline is everyone's responsibility. It begins with the student being responsible for his/her own behavior and understanding the consequences it may cause. The teacher is responsible for articulating classroom expectations at the beginning of the school year, implementing the classroom expectations on a consistent basis, and being familiar with the student handbook. All staff are responsible for **all students** in the hallways, in the rest rooms, at assemblies, at pep rallies, and during lunch. Consequences for inappropriate behavior may include students making up time before or after school, a student or a parent conference, or a referral to an administrator.

The following guidelines will assist in maintaining appropriate student conduct and complying with the process required for student discipline.

1. On the first day of class make students aware of class expectations. Students will accept them if they know in advance and if they are fair and consistent. Students often appreciate giving input on class rules. These expectations should be in writing. Give one copy to the students, post one copy in the room and provide one copy for the principal.
2. It is important to document student behavior in your class, calls to parents, referrals, and/or communications with a student.
3. If, after attempts to improve student behavior, the problems continue, talk to the Principal about possible alternatives in discipline procedures. Be attentive and respond to "bullying."
4. If a student continues to cause problems, inform the administration for disciplinary action using the approved reporting forms. Be sure to state the problem clearly and expectations in terms of assistance, as at times the student's and teacher's stories are different. Be prepared to provide documentation.
5. Follow up on any referral.

#### D. Reporting Child Abuse

Florida State Law and school policy mandates school officials to make a report to the proper law enforcement agency or the Department of Health and Human Services (Child Protective Services) when there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected or a child is in a situation which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect. According to Florida State Law, abuse or neglect means knowingly, intentionally, or negligently causing or permitting a minor child to be:

1. Placed in a situation that endangers his or her life or physical or mental health;
2. Cruelly confined or cruelly punished;
3. Deprived of necessary food, clothing, shelter, or care;
4. Sexually abused, or
5. Sexually exploited by allowing, encouraging, or forcing such person to solicit for or
6. Engage in prostitution, debauchery, public indecency, or obscene or pornographic photography, films, or depictions.

Teachers are to inform their principal or supervisor that they intend to make a report. Administrative staff may sometimes choose to make the report for a teacher. However, informing a principal or supervisor does not end the teacher's responsibility; teachers must ensure a report is made if they do not do it themselves.

The report must be made as accurately and as soon as possible. To assure accuracy, you are encouraged to document the date of the incident and specific statements or explanations made by a child regarding an abuse/neglect concern. Timeliness in making a report will assist in minimizing further risk to the child by allowing the police or Child Protective Services workers to interview the child during the school day and before an evening or weekend. In cases of physical injury (e.g., bruising or other marks), the police must observe and document the injury. A counselor, the school social worker, or an administrator will help you.

#### E. Examinations

Course examinations may be given at the option of the teacher. Class tests may be given as often as a teacher finds them necessary to evaluate their teaching and student comprehension and retention, as long as a minimum of two (2) overall assessments are provided

#### G. Faculty Meetings

Faculty meetings will be scheduled to provide information, in-service activities, and other items pertaining to the welfare of the school and faculty. The superintendent of schools is given a copy of the meeting agenda.

**Receipt of 2024-2025 Teacher Handbook  
Of Ebenezer International Christian  
Academy**

This signed receipt acknowledges receipt of the 2024-2025 Teacher Handbook of EICA. This receipt acknowledges that I understand I am to read and be familiar with the handbook, that I know the handbook contains a disclaimer of contract, and that the manual includes the district's policies of non-discrimination and equity. The handbook's specific complaint and grievance procedures should be used to respond to harassment or discrimination.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: Building Principal

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