

# Extraordinary Education Handbook

## 2011-2012

### ***Welcome to the Extraordinary Education Community!***

Thank you so much for becoming a part of this exciting endeavor! We are looking forward to an extraordinary school year as we explore and learn together. Our prayer is that your family will be enriched and encouraged in your educational pursuits and in your walk with God through your involvement with our program.

### **COMMUNICATION**

As a part-time co-op program, Extraordinary Education relies on parent participation to make our program run smoothly. All of our administrative and office staff are volunteers as well as homeschooling parents. Therefore, our preferred method of communication is via our website, online calendar, email and printed notices delivered in your Family Mail Slot. It is imperative that parents and students assume the responsibility for checking our website, their email, and their Mail Slot on a regular basis and reading information that is provided to them. The Extraordinary Education website will help you stay connected with other EE families as well as teachers.

### **WEBSITES & EMAIL LOOPS**

Parents are responsible for keeping their own current contact information updated for all services including ***ClassJuggler*** and ***Yahoogroups***.

Each family will need to join our ***Yahoogroup "Announcement Loop"***. You will not receive an invitation to join this email group, and you will not be automatically added to the group. Simply log into the *Yahoogroup* site via the link in the ***Connections*** section of the Extraordinary Education website and click the "Join this Group" link. You will need to create a Yahoo ID if you do not already have one in order to join the group. Our *Yahoogroup* announcement loop will help you keep up with all the latest news, events and announcements. We do not print a newsletter. The email loop is our newsletter. The announcement loop is for official information only. It is open to administrators, coordinators and teachers to post, but it is not open to all members as a general discussion loop.

We also have a ***Yahoogroup "Chat Loop"*** where all members may post. This email list is for family and homeschool-related chats, and it is optional. You will also find a link to this loop in the ***Connections*** section of the EE website.

Each family will also have a log-in ID for the ***ClassJuggler*** website. This is where you can view your current financial statement and see the classes in which your child is enrolled. You can also update your own contact information such as address, phone numbers, email, etc, as well as student information such as doctor's name. Your email address will serve as your ClassJuggler ID and you will set your own password when you create an account. The system can also email your password to you if you have forgotten it. There is a link to the ClassJuggler login page on the EE website in the ***Connections*** area.

Please keep your email address updated on the ***Yahoogroup*** message loop and your ***ClassJuggler*** account. You can easily maintain your own subscription information by logging into these sites via the links on the Extraordinary Education site.

### **OFFICE COMMUNICATIONS**

Please communicate with our office via one of the following methods. These are listed in order of preference. You will usually get a quicker response by email than by phone.

**1. EMAIL** - This is the quickest and most efficient method for reaching our staff. Our staff are also homeschool parents, and they have many other family responsibilities to take care of in addition to EE matters. **Please direct office email to: [office@extraed.org](mailto:office@extraed.org)**

**2. MAKE AN APPOINTMENT** - Our staff are pulled in many different directions throughout the day, so it is imperative that you **make an appointment** even if you only need to "catch someone" for "just a minute." If you drop in to the office at a random time, it is unlikely that you will be able to meet with the person you need at that moment.

*Please make appointments through the appointment system on the EE website.*

**3. PHONE** - Please use the phone and phone messages sparingly. We are very busy during the school day and do not have a lot of time to spend on the phone. On non-class days, during the summer and on breaks, we do not have office hours. Phone calls on these days will not normally be answered and may not be returned in timely manner. *Email is a much better way to reach someone most of the time.*

## **CORRESPONDENCE WITH TEACHERS AND OTHER FAMILIES**

### **Family Directory**

The EE Family Directory includes all families currently enrolled as well as teachers. A current version of the Directory is available on the EE website. The Family Directory is password protected. Currently enrolled families will receive the password after the first day of class.

### **Mail Center / Mail Slots**

The goal of the Mail Center is to provide a central communication center to facilitate communication between everyone involved in EE activities. With such a wide variety of classes and schedules, we need a way to connect our families that is simple yet functional. Official printed EE communication will be passed out in your Mail Center slots. This may include office correspondence like registration information and account statements, as well as memos and other important information from the EE administration and leadership.

The Mail Slots should also be used as the communication hub for EE families, teachers, staff and coordinators of various activities. Teachers may deliver class-specific notices, homework, etc. by way of the Mail Slots and parents and students may deliver completed assignments, notes, etc. to teachers and staff by way of the Mail Center as well. Families may even deliver notes, books, small items and information to other families by way of the Mail Center.

In general, parents should always retrieve papers and other items from their Mail Slot. Students should generally not be asked to retrieve things from the Mail Center. Some of the information that will be in the Mail Slots will be important papers and other notices which your child should not be handling. If a child is found removing things from the Mail Slot they will normally be asked to put them back and go get a parent to retrieve the items. Students may, however, place notes/papers throughout the day into their Family Mail Slot to be taken home at the end of the day. The slots are not large enough to use as long-term storage. Lockers are better for this purpose. Please clear your box on a regular basis so that our Mail Center remains a useful and attractive part of our daily routine.

### **ClassJump.com**

We are working to get all teachers, classes, clubs, committees and special groups within EE set up with their own **ClassJump.com** web page. This will be the hub for locating class or club information, assignments, notices, events, etc. Additional information about how to access your classes on ClassJump will be sent to enrolled families after the start of classes.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Our teachers work very hard to prepare interesting and exciting classes for their students. Most of them write their own curriculum and bring materials for special class activities each week. It can be very discouraging when a student does not show up for class. Although our classes are affordable, it is still a significant investment in your child's education. To ensure that you receive the best value for your investment, please plan to attend all class periods except in the case of illness. Equally frustrating for a teacher is when a student comes to class late, disrupting the current class activity.

Please make every effort to schedule doctor and dentist appointments at times other than class time. Please also make an effort to schedule family vacations and trips so that you avoid missing class. We realize this is not always possible, but the fewer classes missed the more your child will get out of their classes.

If your child is sick or must miss class for any reason, please notify the teacher as soon as you become aware of the need to miss class. You may access the Family Directory including email addresses and phone numbers via the EE website. It is preferred that you contact the teacher directly. If an emergency occurs on the same day as the class and you cannot contact the teacher, please call our office at 281-652-5918 and leave a message (if no one answers) or send an email to [office@extraed.org](mailto:office@extraed.org) and let us know about the absence. We will then pass the information on to the teacher.

## **CLASS WORK / HOME WORK**

One or two class periods a week is simply not enough time for a student to master the material in our core classes, so we depend on our students completing class work outside of class. And while many of our enrichment classes do not require homework, core classes such as Math, English, Science, History, Spanish and even Drama do require homework in order for your child to achieve their class goals. Individual class expectations will be detailed when classes begin.

It is imperative that each student complete their assignments by the date they are due in order for the class to move along as planned. When even one student does not keep up with their assignments, the entire class suffers. If your child is unable to complete his assignments, you are always encouraged to contact the teacher for additional help or to double-check the instructions. Our teachers love what they do and they want their students to succeed. They are only an email or phone call away. Please take the time to consult with your child's teacher if you or your child have any questions about their assignments.

Progress reports will be sent to the parents during October and March, with a report card issued at the end of each semester. Progress reports and report cards will be sent by each teacher and will be individualized according to the specific class.

## **SAFETY & BEHAVIOR ISSUES**

The following guidelines have been set up to ensure the safety and comfort of all of the students participating in Extraordinary Education's classes and programs.

### **General Guidelines for Behavior**

All students and adults are expected to abide by the following behavior guidelines for all Extraordinary Education events. EE events include all classes, club meetings, team meetings and competitions, as well as activities such as field trips, park days, small group functions, group meetings, performances, book sales, Mom's night out, etc.

- No alcoholic beverages, tobacco or illicit drugs will be permitted on campus or at any Extraordinary Education activities, on-campus or off-campus.
- No use of profanity, suggestive or offensive language, innuendoes, or jokes.
- No weapons of any kind will be permitted on campus or at any Extraordinary Education activities.

### **Clothing/Dress Guidelines**

We value the opportunity for students and parents to express their individuality and to wear clothing that they like and that they are comfortable wearing. We do not have a strict dress code or uniform policy, however we require students and parents to adhere to the following clothing guidelines.

Please dress modestly, in good taste, and appropriate to the activity.

- Under garments should not be visible on any person (adult or student) at anytime. Younger girls should wear shorts under dresses so they can play freely.
- Bermuda-style shorts and mid-thigh or longer skirts may be worn. Short-shorts or short skirts should not be worn.
- Midriffs, halter tops, crop tops, spaghetti straps, strapless tops, etc. are not to be worn. Straps on tops should be wide enough to cover bra straps completely.
- Clothes that are ripped or have holes should not be worn.
- No cleavage (either end) or bare midriffs.
- Clothing with inappropriate graphic designs or slogans are not be worn to class or Extraordinary Education events. (i.e. having to do with alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, violence, sex, profanity, new age/occult, or gangs).
- Close-toed shoes are required on the playground, for archery and fitness classes and for anyone who will be outside in the Habitat. Students should wear shoes at all times while on the property whether inside or outside. For safety and hygiene, students should not wear flip-flops or other shoes that do not stay on the feet or protect the feet. We are "in the country" with potentially hazardous plants and wildlife, including snakes.

### **DROP-OFF / PICK-UP & PARKING POLICIES**

Students 12 years old and younger need to be signed in and signed out each day by their parent. (Parents need to walk into the building with their children and sign in at the front desk.) With the parents' permission, students 13 years old and older may be dropped off and are then required to sign themselves in and out at the front desk. **It is very important that everyone sign in so we know who is on campus at all times.**

- Please drive slowly and carefully as students may be crossing the drive-thru and yard areas at all times during the school day.
- The drive-thru circle is a ONE WAY drive. Please enter at the "Y" end closest to the property entrance. The drive-thru is also considered a fire lane. It is for student drop off, deliveries and temporary unloading from teachers' cars only. It is not for parking. Drivers should remain at the wheel at all times while in the circle drive with the exception of teachers or staff who are temporarily unloading items.
- Vehicles should be parked in the fenced parking area on the pasture side of the drive across from the playground. Please do not park in any grassy areas of the property. *Limited parking of office staff vehicles only is allowed near the office entrance.*
- The small paved parking area next to the circular drive is reserved for handicapped parking. Please do not park in this area unless you have a handicapped parking sticker.

- The driveway at the rear of the building is reserved for recess play, deliveries and unloading of teacher vehicles. Please do not park here or block this drive.
- Students may not wait outside unsupervised for their rides to pick them up. All students must wait in the library for rides.
- No student of any age is allowed to be outside at any time without a directly responsible adult.
- Older students who drive themselves to/from school must remain on campus until their classes are over for the day.
- Non-driving students are ONLY allowed to leave the property with a directly responsible adult or an older sibling who has been designated to drive them to/from school. You should let the house mom know when you check in whether another adult will be picking him or her up at the end of the day.
- Driving students are not allowed to transport other students in their vehicles unless Extraordinary Education has written permission on file from the parents of both students involved.

### **LUNCH & FELLOWSHIP/STUDY HALL**

#### **Lunch Policies**

With as many as 50 or more students and parents on site during lunchtime and only 30 minutes for lunch, it is important that students bring lunches that are "ready to eat" and do not require refrigeration or heating up in the microwave. If your child has special dietary needs or health issues, please discuss the situation with the Director upon registering.

- Students may eat at the outside picnic tables or in the CAFE when there is inclement weather. Students may not eat in other areas of the building. This includes hallways, classrooms (unless as a class activity under the supervision of an adult), on the stairs, etc. Students and adults are expected to clean up after themselves. Our lunch mom volunteers are there to supervise your children, not to clean up after them.
- All students must have supervision from a directly responsible adult at all times, even during lunch. Any student on campus during lunch must be enrolled in Lunch. Siblings who are on campus during lunch must be under the direct supervision of their parent at all times.
- Students are not allowed to use the microwave. Adults who use the kitchen will be required to cover anything microwaved, clean any spills, and wash, dry and RETURN all utensils used to the proper storage area. Failure to do so will result in loss of privileges.
- Students are not allowed to use the refrigerator. Teachers and co-op parents may use the refrigerator. Please keep in mind that there is one refrigerator and 50+ teachers and co-op staff. There is not space to store much food. *Teachers and co-op staff should not store their children's items in the refrigerator.*
- We do not have a water fountain, but we do have a water cooler on site for students who need a drink. Students are also encouraged to bring a water bottle. Please write the student's NAME on EACH bottle in permanent marker.

#### **Fellowship Hall, Free Time**

- Only students who are enrolled in classes, study hall, or siblings under the direct supervision of a parent are allowed to remain on campus.
- All students (and siblings) on campus must either be in attendance in a class, supervised on the grounds by their parent or a designated adult, at lunch, or in Fellowship Hall in the Library. At no time should students or siblings be roaming around campus unsupervised.

- Students should only be in a classroom with an adult present. Students should never be in a classroom alone. Books, toys and other items in classrooms belong to EE or to individual teachers. Students should never play with items in a classroom without permission from the teacher.
- Our Library may be used as a Fellowship or Study area for students who have an open hour between classes. Students will be expected to play or work quietly while in the library. A Monitor will be supervising the room. We have a large variety of books, board games, and other activities for the students' use. We prefer and will encourage students to interact with each other and with adults through playing games, building creations and "inside" talking when appropriate.
- Please note that students must be enrolled in Study Hall in order to 'hang out' in the Library area before, between or after classes. It is not a place for children who are not part of our program to stay while a sibling is in class.
- The designated recreational areas during Lunch, Recess and Free Time breaks are the Playground area, the circle area in front of the house or the patios. Students may also play ball or frisbee, etc. in the open grassy area by the barn when a designated adult is supervising them. During inclement weather, students will be allowed to play in the Library or Cafeteria.
- Students at the EE House are never allowed to play in the driveways or anywhere beyond the driveway (pasture, pond, barn, woods or habitat area) unless accompanied by a designated adult.
- Please respect the property! NO running, yelling, throwing items, leaving trash around, or disrespecting or damaging property in any way will be tolerated. Parents will be held financially responsible for all damage caused by their child/ren while at Extraordinary Education programs whether accidental or otherwise.

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES, CELL PHONES, MP3 PLAYERS, AND LAPTOP COMPUTERS**

- **Electronic entertainment devices**, including hand-held games, MP3 players, iPods, etc. will not be allowed on the EE campus starting Fall 2011.
- **Cell phones** only are permitted on campus *with certain restrictions*.
- Cell phone use will not be allowed in class at any time. They must stay out of sight in the student's back pack or book bag. Teachers or other staff may collect any device that they deem disruptive to their class. The device will only be returned to the parent by a teacher or other staff member.
- Cell phones are permitted on campus for emergency use only and should be set to vibrate. No texting or game playing is allowed.
- **Laptop computers** are permitted on campus *with certain restrictions*.
- Computers are only allowed on campus for classes and homework-related activities. Computers may not be used for entertainment or games while on campus.
- Parents must complete a Computer Permission Form if their student will need to bring a computer on campus.
- Our internet service is password-protected and limited. Students will not be permitted to access the internet on their own computer or cell phone while on campus. Students may be allowed to access the internet as part of a class activity or assignment on an EE computer.
- Parents who wish to have internet access while on campus should consult with the office. Permission will be given to teachers and other adults on a very-limited basis.
- **Cameras** are permitted on campus *with certain restrictions*.
- If a student takes photos or videos of another student or adult, they are required to ask permission of all parties involved before publishing those images or uploading them to any internet site (i.e. Facebook, Youtube, etc.)

- EE is not responsible for damage to or loss of any device. If a parent is concerned, then the item should be left at home.

**We reserve the right to amend the electronics policies at ANY TIME !**

### **FIELD TRIPS AND OTHER OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES**

Parents are responsible for the behavior of their children during both on-site and off-site Extraordinary Education activities. Children (or parents) who behave in a manner that is out of control and therefore damages the reputation of the group will lose the privilege to attend future functions.

- Please refrain from running in buildings and climbing on structures that are not playground equipment.
- Be sure that tour guides and others are listened to attentively.
- Show respect for property by disposing of all trash and by leaving the property as it was found.
- Field trip participants will be required to follow all EE guidelines and rules, including dress code and electronic devices policies.

### **REGISTRATION, FEES, & CLASS POLICIES**

Extraordinary Education is a non-profit, volunteer-led organization. We strive to keep our fees as low as possible, but our primary source of funding is the fees collected for our classes. Our program can be a low-cost option to private schooling and for enriching your home studies.

As a non-profit family cooperative with a volunteer staff, Extraordinary Education depends on tuition, registration, supply fees, fundraising activities and private donations to provide the funds needed to pay the facility rent, liability insurance, teacher's fees, curriculum and supplies, copies, website and advertising expenses, bank fees, regular office expenses, and much more.

#### **Tuition and Other Fees**

- REGISTRATION FEES - A non-refundable REGISTRATION FEE of the amount of one month of class tuition per class is required to hold your child's spot in a class. This fee is due for all students including the children of teachers, staff, and volunteers. As class sizes are small and space is limited, registrations without the appropriate Registration and/or Supply Fee are considered tentative and your child's spot may be taken by someone else who pays the fees. *Registration Fees are non-refundable except in the case of a class cancellation by EE.*
- SUPPLY FEES (also known as CURRICULUM FEES, BOOK FEES and/or COMPETITION FEES) are due for each registered class. Class Fees are shown on the class description for each class. *Class Fees* are used to cover the costs of the materials and resources necessary to provide the class, club, team or activity. These costs may include workbooks, copies, experiment supplies, craft supplies, uniforms, competition fees, teacher's editions, special "kits" and some student textbooks (many classes do not use textbooks.) Many resources are things that are not used by a single student such as teacher's editions, curriculum resource books, videos, DVDs, lab equipment, etc. *Supply Fees are non-refundable except in the case of a class cancellation by EE.*

- **TUITION FEES** - Tuition is due for each class in which a student is enrolled. Discount tuition is available for students enrolling in three or more classes. A limited number of Co-op positions are available on a first-come/first-serve basis. *Tuition Fees* are used to pay our extraordinary teachers. Many of our teachers are professionals in their field. While some of our teachers "co-op" their time in exchange for their child's classes, most of our teachers are paid to teach their classes. *The quality of our program depends on being able to attract and retain extraordinary qualified teachers. This is why we choose to compensate our teachers at a competitive rate.*

### **Payment Policies**

Enrollment is for the full school year (or semester for one-semester classes) and not on a month-to-month basis. A monthly payment option is offered as a convenience to families.

- SUPPLY FEES and BOOK FEES (if applicable) must be paid in full prior to the beginning of the semester. Deadlines will be published on the web site.
- TUITION FEES are due to be paid in full or a payment agreement signed at least 10 days prior to the first day of class. Tuition may be paid in full at the beginning of the semester by check, cash or credit/debit card (MasterCard & Visa.) Tuition may also be paid in installments. *Installment payments must be arranged with our Office Manager by the Tuition Due Date.* Installment agreements will require submission of post-dated checks for the agreed amounts OR a signed credit card agreement.
- Enrollment is for the entire year unless the class description says otherwise. Tuition can be divided into monthly payments as a convenience for the family. Monthly tuition is averaged for the full term and is NOT based on the number of classes in a particular month.
- Year-long courses are divided into 10 installments. The first installment is the Registration Fee which is equivalent to 1/10 of the total class tuition. The remaining installments are due August-April on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.
- Semester-long courses are divided into 5 installments. The first installment is the Registration Fee which is equivalent to 1/5 of the total class tuition. The remaining installments are due August-November on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month for the Fall Semester and January-April on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month for the Spring Semester.
- Extended Session classes will meet for 3 additional weeks (1 week in December and 2 weeks in May) and one additional tuition payment will be due in May for these classes.

### **Withdrawal & Refund Policies**

- Class withdrawals and additions must be made *IN WRITING to our central office staff*. Tuition is due and payable until a class withdrawal request is received. Verbal class changes cannot be accepted.
- Please use the **Drop Form** on the EE website if you need to drop a class. The Drop Form is located in the **Classes & Camps** section of the website.
- Please **add classes** via the Shopping Cart within your ClassJuggler account.
- **ALL FEES are non-refundable except in the case of extenuating circumstances.** This would include such things as loss of a job, job transfer, death or major illness in the immediate family, etc. Trying to cut back on expenses, too many commitments, transfer to another school/public school, or your child losing interest would *not* fall into this category. If you have serious concerns or complaints about the teacher, the curriculum or the class in general, these concerns should be brought to the attention of the Program Director as soon as possible so that the issues can be dealt with. If the class or the teacher turns out not to be a good fit for your child, it may be possible to switch the child to a more appropriate class.
- CLASS CREDIT will be issued for a dropped class when there are valid reasons for dropping the class. NO CASH REFUNDS will be given for dropped classes without board approval.

- If significant details about the class change you will be given the option to receive a refund, remain in the same class or transfer to a different class. Significant details mean class day, class time or major changes in the class description. A refund will also be given in the case of classes that are cancelled due to low enrollment. A minimum enrollment of 5 students is generally required for a class to make although some classes may be held with fewer students. This is the teacher's decision.
- Families are expected to pay for and attend the full year except in the case of extreme extenuating circumstances. In that case, families will need to discuss extenuating circumstances with the Director who will take the case to the Board. The Board will review the situation and, if appropriate, the remainder of the fees due may be forgiven. If pre-paid, the remainder of pre-paid tuition may be refunded under extreme circumstances. Families who simply "drop out" for any reason will be expected to fulfill their financial commitment to their teachers for the remainder of the semester, and will not be allowed to enroll in future Extraordinary Education classes unless/until their outstanding balance is paid.
- **A LATE PAYMENT FEE** will apply in the case of **returned checks** OR in the case on **non-honored debit cards**. A Late Fee of **\$10 per week** will be added until the balance is paid.

### **PERSONAL ITEMS & LOCKERS**

Lockers are considered a privilege and should be treated as such. Students will be given locker priority according to the number of classes in which they are enrolled and the order in which they have paid registration and supply fees.

- Every student will be assigned a locker or "cubbie" space where they are to store their personal items such as books, jackets, lunches, backpacks, etc.
- A locker deposit of \$10 for large lockers and \$5 for small lockers will be collected at the beginning of the year. No deposit will be due for cubbies. *The locker deposit will be returned at the end of the year IF THE STUDENT CLEANS OUT THE LOCKER.*
- Please select your backpack and notebooks with your locker in mind. Backpacks with wheels do not fit in our lockers, and they are not needed in our small facility.
- Students may not place locks on lockers at any time.
- Students are not to open a locker that has not been assigned to them.
- Nothing should be placed in the locker that is permanent, such as stickers, writing, or painting.
- Students should not place signs or pictures that would be considered offensive.
- No open containers of food or drink should be left in lockers at any time. This includes take-out food items such as Styrofoam cups with lids/straws since these items will leak if they are knocked over.
- The EE Director or Board has the right to remove locker privileges at any time.

### **CLASS TUITION CREDIT / FINANCIAL AID / SCHOLARSHIPS**

Parents who volunteer for specific long-term jobs including teaching or serving in a co-op position may earn tuition credit. Please consult with the director for more information about this opportunity. If you have additional questions, concerns or comments about EE policies, fees, etc. please direct them to the Program Director in writing or via email.

We are looking forward to a great school year! As a family cooperative, we welcome your input on how we can better serve our families.

*Elise Eaton, Director / Administrator*  
*Teri Peoples, Board of Directors President*  
*Renee Vasher, Board Secretary*