



**Student
Family
Handbook
2023 – 24**

The Emerge
School for
Autism



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Principal

Dear Emerge School Families:

We are honored to welcome you to The Emerge School for Autism. We are proud to be the first public school designed to educate children with autism using an innovative educational model to provide your child with the skills needed to transition to a school of their choice.

We know that our success as a school depends on the support of our families, and we look forward to forming positive partnerships with each of you. We will depend on your involvement as well as the efficient leadership of our staff to provide our students with the opportunity to achieve their full potential for learning. By enrolling in our school, you are partnering with a team of knowledgeable and experienced educators. Highly-qualified teachers work with you in monitoring student progress, attendance, and content mastery while providing professional insight, instruction, and support. Our administrative staff is committed to the success of every child in the program.

We are proud of the school's future and the promise of outstanding parents, our community, and faculty support system. We know that choosing the right educational setting for your child is one of the most important decisions you will ever make. Therefore, we encourage you to learn more about our program and how it may benefit your child.

We have carefully designed this handbook to help you become familiar with our school and to serve as a resource for students and parents throughout the school year. While this handbook may not answer all your questions, its valuable information will assist you in understanding our policies, procedures, school structure, and our expectations for the members of our school community. Therefore, we ask that you please take the time to read it carefully and keep it in a secure place in your home to refer to as needed.

Maintaining a quality school environment that you and your child are deserving of, requires full cooperation in adhering to the school's policies and procedures along with your active parental involvement.

For further explanation of the contents of this document, please feel free to consult with any teacher or staff member. We are looking forward to partnering with you throughout the 2023-24 school year.

Sincerely,

The Faculty and Staff of The Emerge School for Autism

The Emerge School for Autism

Student and Family Handbook

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THE SCHOOL

An Overview

The Emerge School for Autism opened in 2018 with 20 kindergarten students. The Emerge School provides special education instruction to elementary-aged children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The teachers and therapists work to prepare students for future education settings with a functional communication system, improved independence, self-help skills, and essential learner readiness skills. Socio-emotional learning will enhance the academic performance of our students and their ability to integrate into society or back to their home school.

OUR MISSION

The Emerge School for Autism offers a specialized therapeutic educational model designed to foster development in Autistic children with high support needs. Our school is a safe, accepting environment that promotes active learning and independence, preparing each child to function, learn, and thrive in a less restrictive school setting.

VISION

A world where all individuals are able to maximize their potential.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Compassion and Respect

- Early and greater access to multidisciplinary services is key to the academic, social and personal growth for autistic students with high support needs
- We believe in the potential of all students, and hold them to appropriately high expectations regardless of the nature of their disability
- High quality services shall not be dependent upon a family's financial situation

Quality and Accountability

- Safety and overall well being are our first priorities and we use the most positive, least restrictive approaches that are safe and promote a nurturing learning environment
- Play and learning are the work of children and all diverse learners deserve equitable access to meaningful opportunities to play, and research-based educational practices to succeed in and out of the classroom
- Students learn best when provided with multiple means of engagement through a variety of group and individual learning experiences that are tailored to their needs and interest

Collaboration and Innovation

- By fostering a culture of open and continuous collaboration between families, educators and therapists, we offer a robust, multidisciplinary approach to learning
- The school contributes to the discovery and development of innovative educational and therapeutic services that support excellence in the area of autism and education
- We believe addressing behavior that interferes with engagement is an opportunity for learning

Empowerment and Growth

- Engaging parents in the educational process and informing them of their rights, equips them to advocate for their child and have a voice in their child's development
- We use a strengths-based approach to learning by encouraging talents, celebrating successes and building self-esteem
- Functional communication, self-regulation and independence are the keys to self-advocacy and lifelong fulfillment

Student School Hours

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00 – 2:45	8:00 – 2:45	Early Release 8:00 – 1:00	8:00 – 2:45	8:00 – 2:45

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Arrival Time- 7:45 A.M.

Students should arrive at the school entrance no later than 8:00 AM. Students may be dropped off as early as 7:45 AM. Students are not allowed into the building before that time as they will not be supervised if dropped off earlier. The Emerge School for Autism is not responsible for students dropped off prior to 7:45 AM. A staff member will open car doors and assist your child into the school building.

We are excited to partner with you to support your child's success in school. The first step in supporting your student's success is to ensure that he or she is at school all day, every day. In order for our program to be successful, it is absolutely essential that students be present in school on a consistent basis. The attendance policy at The Emerge School for Autism has been formed to ensure that this remains the case. The school reserves the right to make exceptions to this policy in the instance of an extended absence due to medical reasons. Additionally, if a student accrues an excessive number of absences or tardies, the School Leader or designee will contact the parents and the student may not be invited to return to The Emerge School for Autism the remainder of the year or for the following school year.

Parents and guardians are expected to notify the school as early as possible if their child will not be attending school for any reason. Earlier written permission is both welcomed and appreciated. Emails should be made as far in advance as possible and can be sent to the classroom teacher's email address as well as the child's therapists. In emails, phone calls, voice mails, and notes, please indicate your child's name, your relationship to the child, and the reason for and date(s) of the child's absence.

Absence

Unexcused absences will result in the following consequences:

4 times- Letter from Principal noting absence number concern and upcoming consequences

10 times- Student may not be allowed to return to The Emerge School for Autism for the remainder of the year or the following year

TARDY POLICY

Late Arrival- 8:00AM

Parents must escort late students to the front lobby and sign them in at the front desk. A staff member will then assist your child to class. The front door will remain unlocked until 8:30 AM. After 8:30 AM, please ring the doorbell and someone will assist you and your child. Late arrivals disrupt class for all students in the class and therefore should be avoided if possible. ***Three late arrivals will count as the equivalent of one absence for the purposes of our attendance policy. Excessive unexcused tardies may result in student not being allowed to continue at The Emerge School for Autism for the remainder of the year or the following year.***

DISMISSAL POLICY

Dismissal Time- 2:45 PM

Parents must arrive to dismissal no later than 3:00 PM. Our teachers have meetings and scheduled commitments that begin after dismissal. To minimize disruptions to class, we ask that notification regarding early dismissals be made as far in advance as possible, but no later than 8:00 A.M. of the day of the early dismissal. We also ask that doctor and dentist appointments be limited to non-school hours to avoid students missing class and therapy time. Parents should inform the classroom teachers of early dismissals in written form by sending a note in the backpack or emailing the classroom teacher.

All persons picking up students will need to be on the student's "safe list" and IDs will be checked if The Emerge School for Autism staff does not recognize the adult(s).

The school will record dismissals before 12:00 PM as absences. The school will record dismissals after 12:00 PM but before 3:00 PM as present but dismissed early.

On Wednesdays, students will dismiss at 1:00pm for teachers to participate in professional development.

STUDENT CARPOOL DROP OFF

Morning Carpool: Families are requested to pull up to the designated carpool area. A staff member will be there to greet the car. The staff member will escort the child safely to the school building. Parents should not exit their vehicle. Students should remain in passenger restraint until vehicle comes to a complete stop. Students should be ready to exit the car when staff approaches. Students should not open the car door and exit the car without a staff member. For the safety of your child and other people in the parking lot, please do not TEXT or TALK on your cell phone while in carpool line. Parents must remain aware of foot traffic in the parking lot and approaching entrances.

STUDENT CARPOOL PICK UP

Afternoon Carpool: Parents/Guardians or their designees may pick students up directly from school at dismissal time. The designated area for pick-up is in the front of the school under the awning. A carpool sign (tag) will be given out at the beginning of the school year. All parents picking up a student must hang the tag on the rearview mirror so that it is visible to staff members. Please contact us if additional hang tags are needed. Parents or guardians should remain in their vehicle in the pick-up line. Individuals without carpool tags or who are unfamiliar to The Emerge School staff will be required to show identification. Early check out is prohibited after 2:30 pm. School staff are not allowed to buckle the students in cars, so parents will be required to buckle their children once they are in the car. Parents who do not pick up their child by 3:00 will be subject to a late pick up fee.

WEATHER CLOSINGS

The Emerge School for Autism follows The Emerge Center in regard to school closure due to weather, so if the Emerge Center is closed, The Emerge School for Autism will also be closed. You will be notified through Class DoJo if the school is closing due to any weather conditions.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION

In the event of an emergency on campus that requires building evacuation where re-entry is prohibited, The Emerge School for Autism will make phone calls and/or send text messages to families regarding student safety and location.

STUDENT SUPPLIES

The easiest way to manage supplies in primary classrooms without disrupting classroom time or having unprepared students is to have shared supplies within the classroom. We are asking parents to donate the school supplies during the first two weeks of school. A school supply list will be sent to you in early August.

These supplies will be collected by the teacher and passed out to students as they need them throughout the school year. If we receive all our supplies in the first month, we hopefully won't have to ask for supplies again this year. Please do not write your child's name on these supplies because the supplies will belong to the homeroom instead of to any individual child.

Parents are welcome to choose whatever brand they would like for the above items and are also welcome to bring more than the suggested number of each item above. We can always use more supplies!

If your child has special art supplies (for instance, a pack of stamping markers or a jumbo souvenir pencil), please leave them at home unless the teacher specifically requests that students bring in additional supplies.

TOYS, CELL PHONES, and ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students will not have an opportunity to play with toys during the day so they should be left at home. Students who bring inappropriate items to school, including, but not limited to, toys, portable music devices, laser pointers, games, will have such items confiscated. These confiscated items will not be returned to students; a parent or guardian will be required to come to the school to retrieve them.

Students are not permitted to carry a cell phone to school at any time. Parents should do their best to communicate with their child before and after school. The Emerge School for Autism is committed to keeping the phone lines open for emergencies. Please do not call the school during the day to leave messages for students unless it is an emergency.

UNIFORM POLICY

We show respect for our appearance and our cohesion as a community through our uniforms. Students in our community are expected to follow the school dress code in order to be allowed in class. Students are to wear the following uniform:

- A light blue polo shirt with school logo (long-sleeve or short-sleeve).
- Khaki or Navy shorts, skirts or pants (cotton twill only)
- Students may wear only white or gray undershirts beneath their polo shirts.
- Emerge T-Shirt and/or sweatshirt (may be ordered at Parent Meeting in August)

Special Occasions

We will have some days that will be designated as optional special occasion dress days. On these days, uniforms will be optional

Shoes:

Students must wear sneakers with socks to school. This is for student safety on the playground and in the classroom. Students may not wear shoes with lights and may not wear boots to school. Students may not wear sandals or crocs.

Hats, Sweaters, and Jackets:

During cold weather, students are permitted to wear hats, sweaters and jackets outside. When in the school building, students can wear sweaters, if needed. Hats and jackets are not to be worn in the school building. Please label your child's sweaters and jackets with their name.

Purchasing Uniforms

Uniforms will be available at:

- Inka's: 11626 Sherwood Forest Ct, Baton Rouge, LA 70816. 225-922-9495
- School Time: 7745 Jefferson Hwy, Baton Rouge, LA 70809. 225-926-5371
- Young Fashions: 1111 Coursey Blvd, Baton Rouge 70816. 225-766-1010

Bathroom Accidents

Parents are required to send two extra pair of pants, extra underwear, and extra socks to school and the extra clothes will be kept in the child's back pack at school. Accidents sometimes occur during our long school-day, even for students who do not normally have accidents, and your child can quickly and easily change clothes only if parents have provided a change of clothes in their child's backpack. If a child has an accident and does not have a change of clothes, the parents will be contacted to bring a change of clothes for the student.

PROGRESS REPORTS, REPORT CARDS, AND FAMILY-SCHOOL MEETINGS

Teachers and staff will use progress reports and report cards to communicate students' academic and behavioral performance. Progress reports and report cards will be sent home with students and parents are asked to sign the envelope containing the report cards every nine weeks. Please return the signed envelopes back to school the next school day. In certain circumstances, a student's report card or progress report may not be distributed in class and may need to be picked up at the school by the student's parent or guardian. Parents will also be expected to meet with their children's teachers during the two Family-Teacher Conferences held each year in the Fall and Spring. At least one parent/guardian is also encouraged to attend an orientation conference before the start of the school year.

PROMOTION POLICIES

Each student's IEP team will determine whether the child is retained or promoted to the next grade level. Factors that are considered in this process are grade-level standard mastery, attendance and overall reading level.

Students who accumulate more than 10 absences during the school year will be considered for

retention in their current grade-level. Please refer to the attendance policy section of this handbook for more details on this policy.

A CULTURE OF ACHIEVEMENT

The Emerge School for Autism is unequivocally committed to providing a safe and orderly environment in which students can maximize their academic achievement. Students whose behavior does not meet the school community's clearly defined standards for reasonable and acceptable behavior will not be permitted to disrupt the education of others.

Without a firm and consistent discipline policy, none of what we envision for the school can happen; therefore, we cannot over-emphasize the importance of providing a firm and consistent discipline policy. Students and families have a right to attend a safe and orderly school. Therefore, for every infraction, there will be a consequence. This is the basis of our student code of conduct.

In order to create a safe and structured environment we have developed the following disciplinary policies. These policies are in place so that our teachers and staff can provide a solid educational foundation to EVERY student enrolled in our school. These policies will ensure that teachers can take full advantage of every instructional minute in the day and that our students will leave our school fully prepared for the challenges and rewards of the world.

We appreciate your support with our discipline policy and teachers and staff make themselves available for questions or clarifications as needed.

The Three Cs of Culture:

1. Communication
 - a. Students: Advocate for themselves, express through words or communication devices, maintain eye contact while speaking and being spoken to.
 - b. Teachers: Provide consistent messaging of relevant information for parents, students, and staff.
 - c. Teachers: Explicitly teach communication through modeling appropriate and effective communication strategies.
2. Caring
 - a. Students: Express age-appropriate social norms related to peer interaction, and respect others.
 - b. Teachers: Show concern and compassion for students and fellow staff members.
3. Community
 - a. Students: Demonstrate respect and responsibility for the school, students, and staff with a calm body, quiet voice, direction following, and performing behaviors on-task.
 - b. Teachers: Create a collaborative team environment and a safe space for students.

CONSEQUENCES

Safety, and order are fundamental to learning at The Emerge School for Autism. While students need a challenging curriculum, dedicated teachers and proper materials, they must also have a secure environment in which to learn. It is the policy of The Emerge School that a safe environment conducive to learning will be maintained at school in order to provide an equal and appropriate educational opportunity for all students.

School staff will provide a fair and consistent approach to student discipline, within the context of students' rights and responsibilities.

When a student exhibits continuous negative or unsafe behaviors, the staff working with the student (teachers, therapists, BCBA, etc.) will work on a behavior intervention plan. Each student's discipline issues will be handled on a case by case basis.

Due Process Procedures

Students with disabilities have the same rights and responsibilities as other students, and may be disciplined for the same behavioral offenses listed above. If a student with disabilities has an IEP that includes disciplinary guidelines, then that student will be disciplined according to those guidelines, as required by Individuals with Disabilities Education Act IDEA. Students for whom the IEP does not include specific disciplinary guidelines may be disciplined in accordance with the standard school policy listed above.

In rare cases, a student may be subject to a long-term suspension or expulsion. A student's family may elect to appeal a decision to impose a long-term suspension or expulsion to the School Disciplinary Committee and may elect to appeal a decision by The Emerge School for Autism Disciplinary Committee to the Board of Directors. The family may make a final appeal to the Board of Directors. The family may bring counsel with them if they so desire. In all events of expulsion, the School Leader of The Emerge School for Autism will work in conjunction with the family to find the best possible alternative educational setting.

BUILDING SAFETY AND SECURITY

There are many basic procedures the school has in order to ensure the safety and security of its students and staff. Cooperation on everyone's part will go a long way in guaranteeing that the business of the school – teaching and learning – can take place.

VISITOR POLICY

All visitors are required to ring the door bell and sign in with an administrator. Parents are encouraged to visit the school. Parent involvement is discussed in more detail later in this handbook. Parents interested in volunteering at the school may be required to pass a background check.

STUDENT SEARCHES

In order to maintain the security of all its students, The Emerge School for Autism reserves the right to conduct searches of its students and their property. If searches are conducted, the school will ensure that the privacy of the students is respected to the extent possible, and that students and their families are informed of the circumstances surrounding and results of the search.

School cubbies and desks, which are assigned to students for their use, remain the property of The Emerge School for Autism and students should, therefore, have no expectation of privacy in these areas. Such areas are subject to canine searches and to random searches by school officials at any time.

FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURES

During the first month of school, and frequently throughout the school year, students and staff will participate in fire drills to ensure that the entire school community is familiar with the appropriate response in the event of an emergency. The school will also have practice inclement weather drills,

safety drills and practice these throughout the school year as well.

GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

To Contact Us

Call us at 225-343-4232 Ext. 1905 (Linda Brown) or 1914 (Phil Espinoza)

Website: www.emergeschool.org

FAMILY COMMUNICATION

It is vitally important that the school have methods of contacting parents or other family members always. This is of critical importance in case of emergency, illness, or behavior requiring immediate family contact. Parents are advised to notify the office of moves, changes of home or emergency telephone numbers, and/or places of employment.

In case of an emergency, parents or guardians should contact the teacher, principal or SPED Coordinator by phone or in person. Under no circumstances should parents or guardians attempt to withdraw students from the building without notifying and receiving permission from staff members.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Parental involvement in a child's educational life is critical to a child's success. We encourage parents to develop strong positive partnerships with the school. Research has shown that children whose parents are involved at school perform better academically.

Conference and Observation Procedures

Parents are required to attend at least one conference each semester to review Report Card and progress reports. Conference Days are October 21 and March 17 this year. Your child's teacher will connect with you to schedule a time.

Classroom observations can also be scheduled rather quickly. Please send a note or phone call to request an observation. We can generally accommodate such requests within a few days. All visitors must sign in before going to the designated activity area.

Classroom Communication Procedures

Classroom teachers are unable to answer phone calls between the hours of 8:00 AM and 3:00 PM as this disturbs students and interrupts instruction. If you must reach the teacher for an emergency, please contact the principal or SPED Coordinator immediately. Teachers check email daily before 8:00 AM and after 3:30 PM. Emails can generally be answered the same day, however please allow a full 24-48 hours.

MEETING WITH A TEACHER

If you need to meet with a teacher we ask that you make an appointment. Appointments can be made directly with the teacher via email or Class DoJo messaging. Parents should not expect to meet with a teacher without a prior appointment. Whenever possible, appointments should not take place during the instructional day.

FAMILY ORIENTATION SESSION

The 2023-24 orientation session led by the Principal, is scheduled with parents to discuss the policies, procedures, and expectations of The Emerge School for Autism. The Principal will explain vital information about class rules and discipline systems, class specific policies, give an overview of the general daily schedule, and answer any general questions that parents have about the classroom and school. Following the general meeting, parents will go to their child's assigned classroom to meet the teacher and learn more about the classroom procedures. This will also be an opportunity for parents to meet other parents within the school. This is an adult only meeting, no children are allowed at this meeting.

LOST AND STOLEN PROPERTY

We strongly encourage families to ensure that children do not bring valuable objects or toys to school. Any items that students bring to school that may cause disruption will be confiscated at the school. We make every reasonable effort to return all personal property to the appropriate parent; however, the school is not responsible for replacing lost or stolen property, or compensating the family for the value of that property. Please make sure your child's name is written on jackets, coats, etc. to help find missing items.

SCHOOL LUNCH

The Emerge School for Autism does not provide school lunch. All students should bring a lunch and two snacks from home each day along with a water bottle. Soda and candy are never permitted at school. Please note we are a nut free school which includes lunch.

FOOD ALLERGIES

The Emerge School for Autism is a nut-free school. We do not allow peanuts or tree nuts of any kind in the classrooms or the café.

The school will make all reasonable efforts to accommodate students with food allergies. Parents are required to inform the school of all food allergies and their severity. Once parents have informed the school, school officials will meet with the family to develop an Individual Health Care Plan. Sharing of food is prohibited for all students.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Please contact the classroom teacher for any birthday celebration. We cannot allow birthday celebrations to interrupt the academic day or allow birthday celebrations at lunch, considering that classes are eating all together in the cafeteria. Parents will be informed if there is a food allergy in the class. If such an allergy exists, we ask parents to be considerate and avoid that food product in birthday snacks. **We ask that all celebration food be store bought and not homemade.**

Children may not distribute invitations to parties within the school building unless every member of the class is invited.

IMMUNIZATIONS

At the start of each school year, the school will review of all vaccination records for entering Kindergarten students, new students and for all updated vaccination records for returning students. Parents should update immunization records for students as needed. Immunizations records can be given to the child's teacher or administrators.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

At the start of each school year, parents are responsible for submitting a health information form for each child attending The Emerge School for Autism. Students with chronic conditions that require medical treatment or adaptations during the course of the school day may sign a release of medical information form to access medical records.

HEALTH RECORDS

It is essential that parents cooperate with the school in bringing all medical records up to date. Children whose records are not up to date in accordance with state law will be excluded from school. Thank you in advance for your cooperation in helping us to protect your child.

ILLNESS

Parents will be contacted immediately for any child who is at school with any of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Uncontrolled Asthma
- Ringworm
- Unspecified Rashes
- Pinkeye
- Head Lice
- Infectious Disease
- Moderate Trauma

Scrapes and minor bruises will be attended to at school and child will return to class.

Children with the above symptoms must be picked up within a reasonable amount of time. If parents cannot be reached, alternate names from the Emergency Contact form will be called. The school may require a physician's note to return to school. If a note is not required, students may return to school when they are symptom-free for 24 hours.

*Your child must be symptom-free without medication **for 24 hours before returning to school.** Written permission to return must be obtained from your doctor if your child has been diagnosed with a highly communicable disease OR if your child has been admitted to a medical facility for an outpatient procedure or hospitalization.*

CHRONIC ILLNESS/ALLERGIES

All students with chronic conditions such as: asthma, allergic reaction, diabetes, respiratory distress, seizure disorder, urinary frequency or incontinence must meet with the special education coordinator at the beginning of the school year to discuss a health/emergency care plan which must accompany orders signed by the child's physician for medication or treatment in school.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE/SEVERE INJURY POLICY

A student sustaining severe or life-threatening injury or illness at school will be triaged by the staff and transported to an appropriate medical facility. Parents will be notified prior to transfer and the students will be accompanied by trained school personnel if parent is not available immediately. In the event parent is unavailable to ride in ambulance with child, the parent is expected to meet staff at the respective hospital.

INCIDENTS

Incident reports will be generated for all injuries that occur on school property. Parents will be contacted for all incident reports. All accidents involving disciplinary measures will be addressed by the principal.

LICE/SCABIES/COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Any student suspected of having any of the above will be excluded from school until satisfactory treatment has been given. Discretion is used to check other students in classes where there is an outbreak. Written notice will be sent home regarding outbreaks while maintaining confidentiality.

STUDENT MEDICATION

No medication can be administered or consumed at school unless it is related to an emergency situation (i.e. Epi-Pen, Emergency Seizure Medications, etc.). The Emerge School for Autism strongly encourages families to dispense both temporary and maintenance medications outside of school hours. Ask your physician for a medication schedule that will accomplish this. Any medication that must be dispensed during the day requires a doctor's note and a parent to administer that medication.

All emergency medication needs to be in the original container with the appropriate prescription label (including the name of the student, the name of the medicine, the date, the dosage information, and directions for administering the medication) and the appropriate Student Health Authorization for Administration of Medication Form.

We store and administer the medicine in a secure location. Please be aware that the medication cannot travel back and forth to school – once it's given to us for your child's use, it must remain with us until it needs to be refilled. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to ask for two separate prescriptions when at the doctor's office with your child. Students are not allowed to have medication (prescription or non-prescription) of any kind in their possession at school and it should not be placed in their book bags. Adults should bring the medication to the principal. For further information on medication or any health-related issues please contact the school.

STUDENT PRIVACY

The Emerge School for Autism will comply with all Louisiana state regulations regarding student privacy. We respect the privacy of all parents and students regarding student records.

NONDISCRIMINATION

The Emerge School for Autism does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race, color or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI); on the basis of sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504

of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1974 (ADEA).

HARASSMENT

The Emerge School for Autism is committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. Harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals at school or at school-sponsored events is unlawful and is strictly prohibited. The Emerge School for Autism requires all employees and students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect to their fellow employees, students and all members of the school community.

Definition of Harassment

In General. Harassment includes communications such as jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct that offends or shows disrespect to others based upon race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.

By law, what constitutes harassment is determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. What one person may consider acceptable behavior, may reasonably be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to others when a particular behavior or communication is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile or offensive.

Harassment and Retaliation Prohibited

Harassment in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. This includes harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals in school or at school related events. In addition, retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or other inappropriate behavior to the attention of the school or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this policy is unlawful and will not be tolerated by The Emerge School for Autism.

Persons who engage in harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the school administration and/or Advisory Board, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEPS) AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Emerge School for Autism is founded in the belief that providing a therapeutic environment and a variety of approaches to learning provides a better education to children with autism. The Emerge School for Autism's academic program is designed to support students with autism toward academic, social/ emotional, and behavioral success. Our school environment supports the holistic needs of all students through our strong special education program, staff, and services. Our special education program offers a continuum of resources to serve the needs of students identified as exhibiting need of special education services courtesy of an Individual Educational Plan (IEP). An Individual Educational Plan (IEP) solidifies compliance with all federal, state and local special education laws and regulations.

Commitment to Excellence

PARENT	SCHOOL
<p>As a parent at The Emerge School for Autism, I agree to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Make the school a safe and orderly environment by supporting the school as it enforces the school's code of conduct (as spelled out in the student handbook), including policies regarding immediate conferences.2. Ensure that my child arrives at school before 8:15 a.m. and attends school regularly. I have read the attendance policy in the student handbook and understand the school's policy regarding lateness, excused and unexcused absences, and annual absences in excess of 10 days. I understand that 3 tardy arrivals will be counted as 1 absence.3. Ensure that my child wears the appropriate school uniform daily, as explained in the dress code section of the student handbook.4. Communicate regularly with my child's teachers & therapists regarding my child's academic and behavioral performance and attend the following events at the school: August orientation, a minimum of two parent conferences, and any specifically requested conferences.5. Check my child's weekly folder for important information.6. Utilize the Class DoJo App to communicate with the classroom teacher and stay aware of important events in the school. <hr/>	<p>As a representative of The Emerge School for Autism, I hereby certify that the school agrees to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Make the school a safe and orderly environment by enforcing school rules as consistently as possible and by doing our part to instruct our students regarding appropriate and inappropriate behavior in school.2. Ensure that valuable school time is utilized thoughtfully and efficiently so that the school can provide our students with an education that is academically rigorous and that meets or exceeds the requirements of the Louisiana Standards.3. Communicate regularly with parents regarding their child's behavioral and academic performance through progress reports, report cards, parent conferences, telephone contact, and email and by welcoming parents to the school.4. Assign, collect, and evaluate assignments designed to support classroom instruction, teach responsibility, and ensure that students are held accountable for finishing those assignments on a daily basis.5. Constantly monitor the strengths, weaknesses, and progress of our students, both academically and behaviorally, provide extra academic and remedial help to our students. <hr/>



STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

The Emerge School for Autism

I have received and read a copy of The Emerge School for Autism Family Handbook for 2023-24 and understand the rules, regulations, and procedures of the school. I understand that if I ever have any questions regarding school policies, I can always ask any member of the school community for a further explanation.

Student's Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Please sign and return this page to your child's classroom teacher by September 1, 2023.