

Liberty Christian School

L.E.A.R.N. Academy

Lead.Equip.Advocate.Resource.Navigate

**Student — Parent
Handbook**

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Student - Parent Handbook

Liberty Christian School seeks to offer to the Christian community a place where all young people can receive an academic education in an environment that offers Biblical instruction and Christian fellowship. Therefore, we have established the L.E.A.R.N. Academy for students with unique learning needs sometimes called learning disabilities.

The L.E.A.R.N. Academy is based on the belief that every child is made in the image of God and is unique for God's own purposes. We are dedicated to meeting the needs of those in our student body who have been diagnosed as having learning disabilities/emotional control issues. Students in the L.E.A.R.N. Academy are guided and encouraged to produce their best effort, using the abilities God has given them to pursue their studies 'as unto the Lord.'

What are our goals?

- To meet the spiritual and emotional, as well as educational, needs of your student
- To give continuing reinforcement in reading, writing, and math skills
- To enable students to be successful in mainstreamed classes with accommodations and/or modifications
- To monitor the student in mainstreamed classes

How are students admitted to the L.E.A.R.N Academy?

Any student found acceptable for admission to LCS who has been tested and identified as having a learning disability/medical diagnosis is eligible.

- The first step is to apply for admission to LCS through regular channels. In the written application or at the time of the family interview, request an application for consideration for L.E.A.R.N. Academy placement.
- Submit results of recent (within the last 3 years), comprehensive educational and psychological testing or medical diagnosis, demonstrating the need for this special program.
- The director will evaluate testing and records to determine if the needs of the student can be met by the program. Admission to the school may be determined by the program's suitability for your student.

What is the Cost?

Parents should consider not only the monetary cost of this program, but an investment of time and effort they will be making in their student's life.

Parent support is expected to be evident by continuous support and follow-up of the student's work at home, and by the presence of at least one parent at a L.E.A.R.N. Academy meeting during the school year. On occasions when our school hosts support meetings and speakers we will be sure you are

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informed of these. Parents must demonstrate the necessary “behind the scenes” support in order for their student to remain in the program.

There is a \$2,200 (K-12) fee per year for students in the L.E.A.R.N. Academy.

An additional cost sometimes incurred is that of the initial, comprehensive educational testing.

Modified Contracts (MDF Contracts):

During the first four weeks of a semester, teachers, parents, and the administration will observe the students’ performance to determine the necessity of having a “contract” in various academic classes. If it is decided that a contract to modify curriculum will help a student achieve the success they are working for, this will be initiated by the director. The contract is a four-way agreement between the student, parents, teacher(s), and director. Generally, most contracts include the following:

Student agrees to:

- Exert best effort in all classes
- Keep a daily, written record of all assignments and show it to parents each day
- Finish work to the best of his/her ability and hand it in on time
- Seek help when reaching areas of difficulty
- Actively participate in the learning process

Parents agree to:

- Provide a daily time and place at home to monitor student’s work and study needs
- Hold student to an acceptable standard of quality
- Communicate with the teachers or director as difficulties arise

Teachers agree to:

- Make academic accommodations as directed by the administration
- Hold student accountable to a reasonable standard of quality
- Challenge the student to give his/her best effort
- Monitor the student’s planner if requested

Director agrees to:

- Communicate with the student’s teachers regarding the nature of his/her learning difficulties
- Provide the teachers with specific suggestions to help the student grow and succeed
- Provide parents with reports of student’s progress as needed
- Offer other insights to parents and students as warranted

Assistance and Modifications:

Every effort will be made to help students discover means of adapting course work to their needs. During the first few weeks of school, teachers, parents, and the administration will observe the students’ performance to determine the necessity of modifications in various academic classes.

Modified (MDF) Classes:

If it is decided that adjusted course expectations will help a student achieve the success they are working for, it will be initiated by the director. In this case, the course name on the transcript will be changed to reflect the modified nature of the workload (example: U.S. History becomes MDF U.S. History). This provides for an adjusted curriculum that supports the student who has special needs and is combined with effort and cooperation by the student. **Students who show a pattern of lack of effort in fulfilling the terms of the modified contract will be referred by the teacher to the**

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L.E.A.R.N. Academy Director. If it is determined that the student has violated the contract, a Letter of Probation will be sent home to the parents. Students who do not demonstrate consistency, concern, or effort will not be eligible for "modified" status, and will be required to follow the standard curriculum and assessments.

Modified (MDF) courses meet junior high promotion requirements and high school graduation requirements.

NOTE: For high school students **modified (MDF) courses** are **NOT considered college preparatory**, but do meet high school graduation requirements.

What about students who do not need a contract, but do need special consideration due to their learning disability/emotional control issue?

Some types of assistance do not bring about a change in the title of the course. For example, if a student can be tested orally (rather than written) and show the same level of mastery as the rest of the class, the modifications have not changed the course. Such a class would not be considered "modified." But if the teacher allows the student to meet a different standard than the rest of the class, the course is considered "modified."

NOTE: For high school students, as long as the content of a college prep course is not altered, students may use accommodations necessitated by their learning disability and still receive College Prep Credit.

Accommodations

Note-takers

Students with disabilities that hinder classroom note-taking may have copies of teacher or student notes available when requested. The procedures are as follows:

- Parents and/or students make a request to the director to have a note-taker.
- If the director approves, the student and the teacher find a suitable partner.
- Students are still expected to pay attention in class and to take notes on main points and important concepts.
- The student designated as the note-taker will be given instructions by the director.

Audio Books

Another accommodation sometimes available is that of using audio books. Required curriculum novels may have audio versions that can be listened to for the benefit of students with reading disabilities. These are available by approval through the director. Once approved, students will listen while following along in their own book.

Extra Time

Extended time on tests, projects, and writing assignments will be allowed based on the results of the students testing recommendations.

Oral Testing

Students may have tests read to them by a proctor or they may answer orally depending on the testing recommendations.

Note: In order to receive any accommodations/modifications for tests/quizzes a student must sign up two days in advance or they will not receive any services for that test. There is a test sign-up sheet in the L.E.A.R.N. Academy office on a daily basis.

Tracking Grades

Sycamore Student Information System has been instituted in order to clearly communicate students' progress. It is updated regularly and gives current grades and assignments. Report cards are issued to all students to hand-carry to their parents at quarterly intervals.

It is the responsibility of students to carry the report cards home on the designated dates and give them to their parents. It is the responsibility of parents to note the dates and make certain the reports are received.

Full-inclusion/Exiting

Whenever possible, our goals include preparing students to be fully included in regular classes and preparing them to succeed in the mainstream. Many students will overcome and outgrow their need for modifications during high school. Having learned to compensate for learning differences, they will be able to maintain acceptable grades in their classes without a contract. A student will be considered for exit status at an evaluation meeting, based on favorable performance in regular class settings and by showing the lack of need for a contract.

Hard Work and Self Esteem

Students' self-esteem is enhanced when they are given the opportunity to rise to a challenge and meet it. It is reduced when they are given 'free' grades with the knowledge that they did nothing to earn the grades.

Student effort and parent-school cooperation are the key ingredients for your student's success at Liberty Christian. Many L.E.A.R.N. Academy students earn A's and B's because of their diligence and effort. Students will feel success for consistent, visible effort. At the same time, students who are consistently lax or who fail to turn in work on time will be considered to have broken their contract, and will receive grades reflecting their poor performance.

Unsatisfactory Grade Policy

A L.E.A.R.N. Academy student who earns a grade of "D" or "F" on any report card in a "Modified (MDF)" class is in jeopardy of being dropped from the L.E.A.R.N. Academy. An evaluation will be performed at the conclusion of each quarter and the student may be placed on academic probation. A student earning these grades has demonstrated a lack of willingness to adhere to the expectations of the L.E.A.R.N. Academy. **If a student is dropped from this program, this could entail subsequent dismissal from Liberty Christian because there would be no way of meeting the student's special academic needs.**

Medication

Please inform the director if your student is taking any medications to help with their special needs, whether or not s/he needs to take a dose during the school day. Please note our school policy concerning medications on campus taken during the school day.

Any student who is required to take prescribed medication during the school day may do so by an authorized school employee IF the school receives:

1. A written statement from the physician telling the method of taking, the amount of, and the time schedule of the medication.
2. A written statement from the parent requesting assistance.
3. Medication delivered by the parent/guardian or other responsible adult.
4. Medication in the original pharmacy labeled container.

The student should come to the school office at the recommended time for the medication. This should be at break or lunch time whenever possible. Call slips will NOT be sent from the office as reminders.

College Entrance Information

Students with diagnosed learning disabilities should not count out a college education. Community colleges, trade schools, colleges and universities are all required by law to provide special services to help accommodate different learning styles and needs. Most schools require the student to apply through standard admissions procedures; some also have a special admissions application with altered criteria for entrance.

Once a student enters these special programs there are many services colleges provide, such as:

- Assistance with registration
- Tutoring
- Computer centers to assist in writing, math etc.
- Note-taking help
- Disability management counseling
- Accommodations for testing to meet the student's needs
- Financial aid

The director can give you and your student further information about arranging for intake appointments with the *Disabled Student Service Departments* of various colleges, psycho-educational testing requirements, etc.

Also, students with diagnosed learning disabilities who presently use accommodations in their classes may qualify for special administration of College Board entrance tests such as the (*PSAT), SAT I & SAT II, and AP exams, and other standardized tests such as the ACT test.

Accommodations include things such as:

- extra time
- note-takers/scribes
- audio books/texts

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- larger print
- test readers
- access to computers for essays
- hand-scored answer forms (rather than machine-scored Scantron forms)

See your counselor well in advance of the test date to apply for special administration of these tests.
*The PSAT is a practice SAT I test, and cannot be used for college entrance, but may be given with accommodations to prepare for the SAT I test.

In Conclusion...

“Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you LEARN to know God better and better.”
Colossians 1:10

We believe in God’s workmanship, instilling in every child His gifts
which are not always measurable by human means.
We look forward to working with your student, as we explore together the greatness of our Lord,
striving to encourage and build one another up.

**Director- Jannette Martes, M.A. Special Education, mild/moderate
Special Needs Assistant/Resource Specialist- Kitty Lapporte, B.S. ECE**