

The West Branch Learning Tree Handbook for Parents

Dear Parents,

Welcome! The West Branch Learning Tree is excited and encouraged by your choice to home school and be a part of our co-op. The following policies and procedures are designed to support and administer the vision and governing values of the West Branch Learning Tree. Thank you for your attention concerning these policies.

Please be mindful that because we are continuously changing and growing, it may become necessary for us to re-evaluate certain areas of the co-op. In light of this, and to serve you better, we reserve the right to change policies and procedures without notice.

The West Branch Learning Tree Leaders

Statement of Faith

- We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the inspired Word of God, and adhere to its teachings as a guide to our lives.
- We believe in one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- We believe that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, lived on earth without sin, and the central purpose of the coming of Jesus Christ was to pay the penalty for man's sin through His death on the cross, the successful accomplishment of which was attested to by His subsequent bodily resurrection.
- We believe salvation is offered as a gift, free to the sinner. This gift must be responded to in individual faith, not trusting in any personal works whatsoever, but in the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ alone.

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Building Usage

1. Entry / Restricted Areas

We will be using the second to the last side-door on the right of the church as our main entrance. We are only allowed to enter through this door. We have been asked to not use the hallway the offices are in – there will be Do Not Enter signs up.

2. Classrooms

- No Gum!
- No food or non-water drinks.

3. Restrooms

Please keep the bathrooms clean!

4. Parking Lot

Parents and teachers are permitted to park in the back lot behind the church. Parking in front of or alongside the church is **not** permitted. Parking in a handicapped area is not permitted unless you have a handicap-accessible sticker.

Students are to be accompanied by adults at all times while playing outside in the parking lot. Individual parents will be held responsible for any mishaps involving your child that may occur during this time.

5. Elevator

There are two elevators. They are to be only used by those with special needs and circumstances. There will be signs up.

6. Telephones

There are several phones located throughout the Fellowship Hall area and Nursery. These phones are the church's business phones and are strictly for church use. Personal calls made during co-op hours are limited to cell phone use only.

Remember, we are guests in this building. If we are not courteous and respectful, we may not be invited back.

Communication

E-mail through our website is our preferred form of communication. Our newsletter gets sent through our site, and we also provide mailboxes and post announcements during our co-op time. Please check your mailbox prior to leaving co-op each week for any updates or changes.

Conflict Resolution

Matthew 18:15-20 "Moreover, if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."

Unfortunately, personality conflicts and misunderstandings can happen. Though rare, it is important that we agree on how to deal with these situations should they arise.

The offended party must first seek to resolve conflict, in private, between the two parties. If either party is unsatisfied or resolution cannot be met, they then need to seek the assistance of an objective party (typically the President or another member of leadership) to mediate.

If necessary, the conflict will be taken to the other members of leadership and they will make the final decision.

Cancellation Policy

In case of severe weather, we will follow the Northwest Local School District school-closing schedule. In the event of a delay, we will meet at our regular time. If Northwest Local Schools are closed, we will not meet. In the case of a building conflict, we will send notices via Facebook, email, and text. In case of bad weather on President's Day, the Directors will decide by 7 AM whether or not co-op will meet.

Lunch

Lunch is held from 12:00-12:30 in the Fellowship Hall (Gym). All students must remain in the Fellowship Hall during lunchtime. All students should remain in their seats for the entire time. Parents & students are responsible for cleaning up their eating area prior to 4th hour. Each family will also serve one week on lunch cleanup duty. **Food and non-water drinks are not permitted anywhere in the building other than the Fellowship Hall.**

Visitors

If you're planning on bringing non-registered kids with you as visitors, please notify Debi Parker as soon as possible (minimum of 24 hours notice!) If they will want to participate in any classes, that will have to be approved before co-op starts. Our classes tend to be very full, and we can't always add kids to classes, even as visitors.

Payment Policy

Our fee structure is as follows:

Yearly Tuition - Tuition is \$90 per student per year.

Class Fees - Some classes will charge an extra fee. Read the Class Descriptions carefully to see if the classes you are registering for have fees.

Nursery (0-24 months) is free.

Teachers get one child's tuition free (\$90 discount) for each class they teach.

Families pay for a maximum of 3 children.

Tuition and Class Fees must be paid online or a payment plan made by the second week.

The co-op's classes are not prorated and we are not offering half-day membership. Therefore, whether you register your child for 1 class or for 4 classes, you are required to pay full tuition.

Refund Policy

If you withdraw your registration prior to August 15th, West Branch Learning Tree will refund 90% of tuition paid. Any withdrawal after that will result in no refund being issued. Class fees are non-refundable.

Returned Check Policy

In the unfortunate event that a check does not clear due to insufficient funds, a *Returned Check Notice* will be given to you in your mailbox. You will be responsible for the original amount, plus a service charge, in the form of cash or a money order.

Class Change Policy

If it is necessary, a student may drop or add a class with the understanding that availability of a replacement class is not guaranteed. In order to not upset class flow, it is strongly recommended to make changes by the third week of the year. If a class change is desired, the parent must go to Debi or Amy to make sure the change is okay.

Please do not call the church office for any reason.

Facebook

During the registration process, families choose whether their child's photo can be used on Facebook, with the agreement that students will not be identified by name. We appreciate that almost everyone allows us to use their child's photo, as it helps us in choosing photos that best show off our program. A big activity on Facebook is "tagging" photos to identify those in the photo. We want to make sure we respect those families who don't mind their child's photo on Facebook but don't want his or her name associated with the photo. Once photos are posted to Facebook, we ask that you tag only your own child (if you want to!). Please do not tag other people as they may not want their names shown.

Special Needs

We can occasionally accommodate minor special needs students who are high functioning. There is an Educational Accommodation Form on our website that must be filled out for every child every year. If a special needs child is able to participate in a class, at whatever age or grade level fits his or her need, that child is more than welcome. However, we are not a special needs school. We are not equipped with either the manpower or training to provide one-on-one instruction to any child. Sometimes there are children who have needs that cannot be accommodated by our program. If a child is not able to participate without repeatedly disrupting the class, or posing a threat to others, the parents will be asked to remove the child. The need for removal will only be considered as a last resort and will be decided upon by the teacher involved, the Dean of Students, and the WBLT leaders.

Responsibilities of Helpers

You are expected to be in the class on time every week. If you are going to be absent, you need to let your teacher and your Grade Level Chair know. You will also need to arrange a sub for yourself. NO CELL PHONES IN CLASS. This is a rule for students, but it's just as important for you. You are there to help the teacher make the class a positive experience for everyone, and if you're on your phone, you can't do that. Be ready to jump in and help in whatever way the teacher needs. Each class will have different needs – check with the teacher to see what they need from you.

Discipline Policy

1. Each teacher is responsible for his or her own code of conduct within his or her class.
2. If a teacher deems a student's behavior inappropriate, the student will be sent out of the room. Students will be sent to their parents. The Incident Report form will get filled out & given to the Dean of Students.
3. Parents may be asked to attend class the next time if inappropriate behavior continues.
4. The West Branch Learning Tree reserves the right to expel any student from the co-op if disruptive behavior fails to be curtailed. No refunds will be given.
5. We reserve the right to ask a student to leave the co-op if it is felt his/her needs are not being met, or if the student's behavior is unmanageable or detracts from the experience of others in the co-op.

Fire Drills/Other Emergencies

When the fire alarm goes off, whether for a known drill or for real, here is what needs to happen:

Classroom helpers – keep kids calm and together. Support the teacher in what can be a scary and trying time.

Parents who are not in a classroom – go to the preschool area. Help get little ones outside. Teachers will know where to go, but they will need extra hands. Do not try to go get your children! Their teachers will take good care of them.

If lights go out, stay put until/unless a Board member comes to tell you otherwise.

We are a nut free facility due to the number of allergies.

Responsibilities of Parent

1. All parents have a responsibility to respect all guidelines (we are all hall monitors and traffic/noise control).
2. Arrive at least ten minutes early. Have your children ready for class on time. If you are scheduled to work, arrive before the children and be prepared for them.
3. If you cannot attend on a given day, and are not a teacher:
call your Grade Level Chair
if you are helping in a class, call the teacher and let them know
arrange a substitute
If you are a teacher:
call your Grade Level Chair
call your helpers
arrange a substitute
4. Parents of younger children should eat with their children and help monitor the lunchroom. Older children may sit with friends, but parents are still responsible for their behavior.
5. All parents must be willing to sub once per semester as needed.
6. All parents are responsible to help clean the building during and after co-op whenever necessary.
7. All parents must stay in the building while their children are in class. We ask that parents NOT leave the premises during co-op hours.
8. Please check your child's backpack and your mailbox each Monday for notes from teachers. Be sure your child has all needed supplies each week. Please feel free to check with teachers about homework given & your student's progress.
9. Parents are responsible for checking their mailbox and email each week – especially Sunday evening. Please check the website periodically.
10. All parents are required to help each week in some capacity – teachers need to help for 3 hours, non-teachers for 4.
11. Some classes require outside work, while others do not. To find out how much outside work is expected, check the class descriptions on our website. Please take this into consideration when signing your kids up for classes.
12. We ask all attending adults 18yo and up to get a background check. This will be done every two years. You cannot use background checks from other companies. It is free to you, and is all done online. If you have any problems, let Debi Parker know.
13. If you are unable to attend, but want your children to attend, we ask that an adult family member who is able to step into your helper positions bring them. That way, there's not an extra strain on the people in your classrooms.

Dress Code

1. Cooperation is expected from parents/guardians as well as students.
2. Maintain an appearance that is clean and modest.
3. Shirts must be hip length.
4. Muscle shirts, tank tops, halter tops, and spaghetti straps are not permitted.
5. Shirts should have enough of a sleeve to approach the curve of the shoulder.
6. Showing excessive cleavage will not be tolerated.
7. Shorts must be no shorter than six inches above the knee.
8. No writing on the backside of shorts or pants.
9. Skirts or dresses must be no shorter than three inches above the knee.
10. Stockings or "leggings" are not permissible as pants unless they are covered by a skirt, shorts, or dress that approaches the knees. Leggings are anything that are skin tight and stretchy.
11. Shoes must be worn at all times, unless requested by teacher, i.e. Tae Kwon Do. (No wheels!)