

# *The West Branch Learning Tree Handbook for Teachers*

Dear Teachers,

Welcome! The West Branch Learning Tree is excited to have you 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.

We do appreciate you going over these rules, and we look forward to a terrific school year!

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. Classrooms**

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

### **2. Restrooms**

Please keep the bathrooms clean!

### **3. 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.

***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.

## **Copy Procedure**

A designated person will be assigned to generate copies in the copy room. Unauthorized persons are not permitted to use the copier. The copier is to be used for classroom and co-op purposes only. Pre-planning is necessary. Turn in your masters with clear instructions (using the *Copy Request Form*) to the appropriate person at least one week in advance. The copy person will check to make sure that you have permission to copy the master. If it is copyrighted material, it will not be copied.

## **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, Amy & Debi 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.**

## **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**

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.

## **Fire Drills/Other Emergencies**

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

Teachers – grab the attendance sheet for your class and take it with you. Take attendance when you get outside to make sure you have everyone, and take it again when you get back to your class to make sure no one got lost. Don't take belongings – the goal is to get outside safely, not with the most stuff. There is a poster in your classroom with emergency exits marked – follow the map. That is where we will expect to find you.

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.

### **Responsibilities of Teacher**

1. We expect all teachers to reflect the vision and governing values of West Branch Learning Tree.
2. Be prepared and on time for your class. If you are teaching 1st hour (and start at the normal time), please arrive by 08:45.
3. West Branch Learning Tree reserves the right to approve all teachers and curriculum.
4. Teachers are required to submit a class description, class syllabus, and substitute teacher lesson plans. These should all be submitted before co-op begins. You must also complete a background check every two years.
5. Teachers are responsible to find a replacement if they cannot attend. You must also notify your Grade Level Coordinator about your absence, and who your replacement is. In an emergency, call Amy. **Do not phone the church.**
6. Have open communication with parents & the Dean of Students concerning disruptive behavior, chronic tardiness, and/or incomplete work. There will be forms available and we do ask that you use them. This way, we can keep consistent track of repeat problems, and deal with them early – before they get so bad a teacher wants to quit.
7. No eating in classrooms. If food is given as a reward, it must be cleared with all parents ahead of time and must be wrapped for transportation.
8. Turn in all copy requests with a *Copy Request Form* to the appropriate mailbox at least one week in advance.
9. If your class charged a class fee, you can purchase materials up to that amount (class fee x # of kids) and get reimbursed for it. There are reimbursement forms in the Copies Box. If your class did not charge a class fee, you can spend up to \$25 and get reimbursed for it. If you need more, you will need to talk to your Grade Level Chair and get approval before spending any money. We are set up as a tax exempt organization with both Staples and Home Depot.
10. Teachers are responsible for notifying students/parents to let them know what books, materials, and/or supplies will be needed for class. Please don't assume students will pass info on to parents – young ones, especially, tend to forget.
11. Do **not** allow any new students into your class without making sure parents and leaders know.
12. If you have questions or concerns, contact Amy, Debi, or your Grade Level Chair.

### **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.

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

**Please do not call the church office for any reason.**