

# PARENT HANDBOOK

The Meeting Place  
Learning Center  
Cleveland, Ohio 44104

## The Meeting Place Learning Center

Growing Minds

Changing Lives



## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Provide meaningful opportunities for learning, resulting in academic, emotional, social and spiritual growth in children and their families. Learning Center staff will work with parents, teachers, and other professionals to assess the needs of each child and to tailor a learning plan that is specific to that child.

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# Welcome!

Welcome to The Meeting Place Learning Center. We look forward to working with you and your family this year. Our mission is to provide meaningful after school activities and interventions to support academic, emotional and social growth in your children.

## **Our program is structured primarily to:**

1. Encourage your child to develop and use effective study habits
2. Help your child complete their homework assignments
3. Identify those skill areas your child may need special help in
4. Offer individualized and small group tutoring to improve basic skills
5. Prepare your child for all in-school tests, reports and projects
6. Expose your child to a variety of educational enrichment activities and programs
7. Enhance your child's computer literacy
8. Support your child's emotional and social growth

## **OPEN DOOR POLICY**

The Learning Center in Cleveland maintains an open door policy as it relates to all our youth programs. We encourage parents and guardians to visit and participate at any time to see how your child is doing. You may also call the office at 216-938-9400. We always have openings for volunteers in the program.

## **WE WILL WORK WITH YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL**

In order for our staff to work effectively with your child, we will need your permission to work with your child's school. Periodically, we may need to talk with your child's teacher about his performance or progress in school. The conversations are necessary to ensure that our programming matches expectations of the schools. Often, teachers will provide necessary specific work assignments they would like us to use, so that we may work more effectively with your child. This is extremely beneficial to your child and to our staff as well.

As each grading period ends, we will need a copy of your child's report card to see if our intervention has been beneficial to your child. If there are low grades we can immediately plan a strategy to help your child improve their grades.

# LEARNING CENTER

## MISSION WORTHINESS

If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? ~James 2:16

God has placed in our hearts a vision to reach the people of inner-city Cleveland, specifically the East Side. This once thriving urban area is now ravaged by unemployment, homelessness, crime, gangs, drugs and prostitution. We have a desire to love on the people, to share fellowship with them, offer them opportunity, and promote living a Christian life. Then raise up leaders and teach them to do the same.

It is imperative for children to receive a good education and the opportunity to be empowered by being mentored or tutored one on one with an adult. Helping them see the value of their life and what they can add to their world around them.

The establishment of The Meeting Place Learning Center is an attempt to create a program that will strike at the root of the cycle of poverty – lack of basic educational skills. The New York Times, March 15, 1999, reported that a "new study has shown that by starting early – in grades one through six – to foster an interest in school and learning among children, many of these risky behaviors (violence, drug abuse, teen pregnancy, etc.) can be averted and school attendance and performance can be improved." By intervening before the child is used to failing, he/she is more likely to succeed.

If a child doesn't fully grasp reading comprehension in the second grade, he/she will never fully grasp math story problems in the third grade or science problems in the fourth grade. It is a vicious cycle, which leaves the child feeling stupid and worthless. The "streets" hold more appeal because the children often understand the streets far better than they understand their textbooks. Fortunately, in many cases, children only need light tutoring in grade one to understand concepts that may lead to success and avoid failure in later grades.

It is the Learning Center's aim to reach these children before they are used to failing, and, as adults, become statistics of our social welfare programs. By sharing the love of Christ through educational empowerment, we give them valuable tools to avoid the traps of poverty, drug abuse, unwed pregnancy, etc.

# LEARNING CENTER

## PROGRAM PROFILE

### **MISSION**

The Learning Center's mission is to provide meaningful opportunities for learning, resulting in academic, emotional, social, and spiritual growth in children and their families. Learning Center staff will work with parents, teachers, and other professionals to assess the needs of each child and to tailor a learning plan that is specific to that child.

### **TARGET POPULATION**

The target population consists of academically and socially at-risk school-age children from low to moderate-income families.

The parents or teachers will refer the students to the center. They have been labeled as needing homework assistance, academic reinforcement, and remedial work.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The Meeting Place Learning Center objectives are as follows:

- Academic Growth
  - o Provide homework help and assistance*
  - o Provide tutoring in areas in which the child is deficient*
  - o Provide meaningful activities that promote reading, writing, and problem solving*
  
- Emotional Growth
  - o Provide a positive atmosphere in which adults model Christian living*
  - o Help children to develop self-esteem, communication skills, and emotional maturity*
  
- Social Growth
  - o Provide recreational activities that support team building and cooperation*
  - o Provide arts, crafts, music, drama, etc. to enhance social growth*
  - o Provide an example, through staff, for students to emulate*
  
- Spiritual Growth
  - o Provide a caring, Christian environment in which children feel safe and loved*
  - o Provide a model, through staff, of Christ-like behavior*
  - o Take opportunities to teach spiritual values and biblical truths*

## **GOALS**

The Meeting Place Learning Center goals are as follows:

- *Establish and nurture a partnership between the school, parents, children, and the Learning Center's staff*
- *Create an individualized plan of study for the child, based on teacher conferences*
- *Provide recreation*
- *Bring students to passing grades on their report cards by the end of the school year*
- *Help students to complete homework every day*
- *Help students to achieve computer skills by the end of the school year*
- *Help students achieve acceptable social skills by the end of the year*
- *Provide a safe and supervised environment for students*

## **METHODS**

The Learning Center's approach will consist of a blended learning model which includes individual tutoring, academic enrichment work, and use of computers. A professional staff, which will provide assistance and evaluation, will monitor the student's academic progress. Once the student enters the program, an individual plan is determined.

## **STAFF**

During formal Learning Center hours, when the children are in attendance, each staff member will be involved in daily operation of the Learning Center – homework assistance, individual tutorial sessions, academic remedial work, and computer instruction.

The role of the team leader is to work, in conjunction with the Director, and with school personnel (teachers, counselor, social worker, and school administration) and parents in identifying individual learning development profiles. The team leaders will use this information to create an individualized program of study, based on each student's needs.

In addition to the duties described above, the staff will be responsible for the student's social and emotional development, and will plan daily activities to improve self-esteem through recreation, arts, crafts, and group activities.

# EVENTS OF THE DAY

Welcome, snack, announcements and attendance

Homework - The students show the staff members their homework and receive help, as needed to complete it. Students are expected to complete their own work. Parents are asked to emphasize the importance of homework completion to their children. In addition to completing homework, the students must study for upcoming test.

Once the students successfully completes his/her homework, the student will have reading time and work on a computer or other planned activities to advance needed skills for the rest of the homework period.

Centers, Computers, Tutoring – The students will be divided into grade level teams. They will rotate between activities. The activities are defined as follows:

CENTERS © - Includes academic enhancement work and creative arts (small motor development and stimulation of the imagination). At this time, the students work in a structured, independent environment.

COMPUTERS © - Students receive computer instruction and interact with educational software. Their specific activity depends on their developmental needs.

TUTORING (T) – this is an individualized tutoring program based upon prescriptions developed by the child’s teachers.

Clean up – The students will help with clean up. The staff will greet the student’s parents and discuss the student’s progress and achievements for the day.

Dismissal – students will check out and those needing a ride will be taken home. Parent who will be picking up their students must be at the Learning Center no later than 5:15.

**\*\*Learning Center starts at 2:30 pm and ends at 5:30 pm. All students need to arrive and depart within those times.**



# Registration

Admission to the program is made, after the enrollment application, parent/ guardian agreement is signed. Confirmation for space available will be given on a first come basis.

- 1. All necessary forms included in the registration packet must be completed and on file before your child may attend the program.**
2. Students MUST come on a consistent basis in order to be successful at the Learning Center and in school.
3. There is a \$25 administration fee to enroll your student in The Learning Center. This must be paid before your student is enrolled.

## **Hours of Operation**

The Learning Center will be open Monday–Friday from 2:30-5:30 p.m. during the school year.

**The Center will only be open when The Cleveland Municipal Schools are in operation. The Center will be closed on snow days.**

## **EVALUATION**

- Learning Center staff will review student's report cards and academic assessments with the student, parent, and teacher.
- At the end of each report card period, and monthly throughout the reporting period, the staff will analyze the percentage of students receiving passing grades.
- Daily count will be taken of students completing homework to verify that 100% are completing homework assignments
- The parents will participate in parent/student conferences, verbally or physically present.
- Parents are encouraged to participate in parent workshops/seminars.

**IT IS MANDATORY THAT ALL STUDENTS HAVE ALL FORMS SIGNED AND ON FILE BEFORE THE CHILD CAN BE ADMITTED TO THE PROGRAM.**

Please be aware that any information gained from the school about your child is held strictly confidential, and will not be shared with anyone but the immediate Learning Center Staff. We understand and appreciate your need for privacy, and be assured we will make every effort to maintain it.

## HEALTH RELATED ISSUES

The health and well being of everyone involved in the Learning Center program is of utmost importance. We ask that if your child shows any sign of illness during the day that he/she not come to the program for that afternoon. We are unable to accept children with untreated cases of head lice.

It is imperative that we are able to reach you and/or your emergency contacts at all times. It is vital that you keep the staff up to date on any address or phone number changes. A staff member will complete an incident report with in 24 hrs. of an injury. A parent will receive a copy to sign. A copy of the report will be kept in the child's file.

### **Illness/Communicable Disease**

If a child exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease, the parent, guardian, or previously designated emergency contact person will be expected to pick up the child as soon as possible. A child who is ill or is suspected of having a communicable disease will be separated from the group, but within the sight and hearing of an adult.

## **THE LEARNING CENTER STAFF IS NOT ALLOWED TO ADMINISTER ANY MEDICATION.**

If your child should become ill while at The Meeting Place Learning Center, the Learning Center Director will first call the parent/guardian listed on the Emergency Medical Form, enclosed in this packet. If they cannot be reached, the second choice person will be called. If no one can be reached, the child will be transported to the closest hospital.

### **PHOTOGRAPHIC RELEASE**

Please sign the photographic release form in this packet. This form gives us permission to use photography, slides, TV spots, video, newspaper, or radio spot of your child while with us at the Learning Center.

### **FIELD TRIPS & OUTINGS**

There may be times when your child has the opportunity to participate in a walking field trip. This could be to the local library or Local Park. We may also transport your child to a local museum or other interesting place. A field trip form will be sent home to you, prior to any field trip informing you of the date and the nature of the trip. No child will be allowed to go on any field trip without the permission slip signed and returned by his/her parent/ guardian.

# RELEASE OF YOUR STUDENT FROM THE LEARNING CENTER

The Learning Center has implemented an electronic system to take attendance and to sign out the student each day. For our student's safety, the system gives a time stamp upon arrival and dismissal, tracking attendance. It also designates who is permitted to pick up the student. It is the student's responsibility to sign in and sign out each day at our attendance station to ensure that the Learning Center has an accurate record of attendance.

The Learning Center staff will not release a child to a person other than the custodial parent or guardian without prior verbal or written notice that is dated and signed by the custodial parent or guardian. A rare emergency may be granted if the parent or guardian calls due to an emergency. The person designated to pick-up the child will be asked to show a photo I.D., and will be asked to sign the child out of the center. The child will not be released unless the person who is picking up the child has proper, complete, and current identification. Your child will not be released to any individual who is under the age of 18, or to any non-custodial parent or designated emergency pick up person who appears to be "under the influence" of alcohol or other mood altering substances.

## **Parent Responsibility / Handling Absences**

The public schools do not notify us of daily absences therefore we depend on you to notify us. To ensure the safety of the child, it is necessary that you contact the Learning Center when your child will be absent from school, or will not attend The Meeting Place Learning Center. Call the Director at 216-938-9400, no later than noon of that day whenever any of the following situations arise:

1. Your child is ill and will not be attending the program on that day.
2. There will be a late drop off/ early pick-up for your child that day.
3. Your child will be absent due to vacation.
4. Your child is participating in other extracurricular activities.
5. Your child has been suspended or detained at school.

# THE LEARNING CENTER ACTIVITIES

Included in this packet is a Learning Center Calendar. Listed on this calendar are dates to remember along with vacation days when the Learning Center will be closed. THE LEARNING CENTER WILL BE CLOSED ON ANY/ALL DAYS THAT CMSD IS CLOSED, AS WELL AS FOR THE SNOW DAYS.

## LEARNING CENTER RULES

ALL STUDENTS DESERVE A SAFE, COMFORTABLE ENVIRONMENT. ALL PARTICIPANTS ARE EXPECTED TO INTERACT WITH FELLOW STUDENTS AND THE LEARNING CENTER STAFF IN A RESPECTFUL MANNER. EACH STUDENT MUST:

1. RESPECT THE PRIVACY AND INTEGRITY OF EACH PERSON
2. RESPECT THE PROPERTY OF OTHERS
3. RESPECT THE PRIVACY AND QUIETNESS OF THOSE STUDENTS STUDYING
4. RESPECT OTHERS BY NOT ABUSING THEM VERBALLY OR PHYSICALLY

Students are not allowed to bring gum or food of any kind into the Learning Center unless authorized by the staff. Cell phones, ipods, toys, or other personal items must be left in the students backpack while they are on The Meeting Place Learning Center premises or in the van.

Verbal arguments and physical fighting will not be tolerated. This includes before, during, and after the program time, inside or outside the building and on the property.

A nutritious snack will be served at each meeting of the Learning Center. The menu varies daily. It remains our goal that all snacks are nutritious as well as tasty. Good table manners will be expected, and will be taught to the children as necessary.

Positive comments are a wonderful addition to our program. Strong negative comments or put downs as well as use of profane language is not acceptable at any time. The children are expected to do as the team leader ask, and not talk back to them. If this becomes a problem, we will contact the parent or guardian.

Students are required to provide the Learning Center staff with a list of homework assignments at each meeting. Each student must complete his or her homework while at the center if possible. Any student without homework will be given an appropriate assignment.

# DISCIPLINE POLICIES

To maximize the enjoyment and learning experience of the Learning Center program, we believe it is necessary to have a fair and consistent discipline policy. It is our desire that your child take advantage of all the programs and activities offered in the schedule. Appropriate, respectful behavior will help in making this possible. However, if there is a discipline problem, the following course of actions will be taken:

1. Verbal warning
2. Time out-no longer than 5 minutes exclusion from the group.
3. Re-set system goes into effect. Reset slip is filled out, and given to the Director to be placed in child's file. The child must write what he did wrong and sign the form as well.
4. Second incident, the child fills out their portion of the form, and signs it. The form is then mailed directly to the parent/guardian, with a follow up phone call. Parents/guardians are asked to sign and return the form. Please feel free to call the office at any time to talk to the director.
5. After a third incident, a Positive Guidance Plan is created. This plan is created with the Site Director, Team Leader and Pastor as well as the parent. This involves the parent being a part of the plan and attending a meeting with all of the above staff. The Positive Guidance Plan (PGP) should not be longer than 30 days. A student can receive only one PGP. If a student has not been successful, the decision may be made to suspend or disenroll the student from programming.

**The following are considered, but not limited to disciplinary problems:**

Inappropriate language and or gestures  
Verbal threats  
Fighting  
Theft  
Property damage  
Smoking

**Any student, who has been found on the premises, using drugs, alcohol, discovered carrying a weapon, or making a threat to another student/staff will be immediately dismissed and removed from the program. The police may be called and an official report will be filed.**