

## **Parent Involvement, Observation and Volunteering Policy**

The Founders of LCS envision a true community of learners, which necessitates the active involvement of parents. We do not just want parents to help with typical school volunteer activities, as important as those are. Rather, we hope to put on regular workshops and training opportunities that serve several functions. At one level, it could serve as further study skills seminars—specifically for parents to know how to help their children succeed in such a vigorous school. Depending on the demographics of families, this could branch out to a series of life/home management skill seminars.

These could be parent-led or volunteers from the local community could support this program.

Beyond that, however, we envision a community in which parents are also learners—perhaps some parents would like to take two Saturdays to learn how to read and pronounce Latin. If interested, they could continue in a Saturday Morning Latin Series. Perhaps others will want to read a short story together and come to a Socratic seminar to experience what upper class LCS students experience in such a seminar. Or perhaps parents would like to take a class on the writing program, either to become better writers or to simply understand what their children are being asked to do.

We see endless opportunities for these seminars. We understand that this program depends both on available funding and parent interest and resources.

We are excited, however, at the possibilities for real community that this could provide.

LCS is a school of choice. When parents have the opportunity to choose the kind of education they prefer for their children, they find the necessary energy, time, and resources to devote themselves to this education. LCS anticipates that parents will be directly engaged in tutoring, coaching, preparing resource materials, providing other necessary and invaluable assistance, including sponsoring, chaperoning, and leading Loveland Classical Schools' sanctioned off-site events.

### **Volunteer Policy**

On site parental assistance is encouraged in order to assist LCS in meeting its goal of volunteer involvement equal to 50% of the budgeted teaching hours for grades K-6 and 10% of the budgeted teaching hours for grades 7-12. To achieve LCS' goal, each family is encouraged, although not required, to volunteer 4 hours per month for each K-6 student enrolled, and 1 hour per month for each student enrolled in grades 7-12. Volunteers must complete a volunteer application and information form and comply with all guidelines and rules for volunteering outlined in the charter contract. This pertains to volunteers who participate in LCS

sanctioned off-site events.

Volunteers are an integral part of Loveland Classical Schools. Volunteers are not only welcome, but also crucial if we are to have high quality teaching of the entire curriculum each year. Elementary volunteer activities are coordinated by LCS' Classroom Volunteer Coordinators. All volunteers must have a signed and current volunteer form on file with the school. All volunteers will submit to the district's regulations on background checks.

The teacher's individual teaching style sets the tone for the classroom. Volunteers who wish to volunteer in the classroom need to learn the teaching style of the teacher they wish to assist. If the teaching style conflicts with a volunteering style, the volunteer will need either to adjust his/her style or find a more compatible setting within LCS to volunteer. The teacher has primary responsibility for student learning in the classroom. All teachers will submit to the district's regulations on background checks.

Any grievance or concern a volunteer has with a classroom or a teacher will be handled by the procedures defined above. Under no circumstance is it ever acceptable for a volunteer to confront a teacher about an issue when students are present. Due to the nature of our curriculum, volunteers who tutor in a specific subject or skill may be required to receive prior training.

Off-site volunteers must be registered to ensure the safety of all LCS students. If a student participates in off-site school related activities, that student's parents are responsible to make sure that the school has sanctioned the event, ensuring volunteer registration. A list of all LCS sanctioned off-site events and activities will be available in the front office.

LCS encourages every adult—parents, stepparents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and community members—to take a special interest in the lives of LCS' students, to act as mentors and tutors, and to instill in every student a love of learning. Volunteers work in conjunction with the faculty to ensure the most effective education possible for their children. To this end, volunteers are responsible for knowing and understanding the contents of LCS' Charter and are encouraged, but not required, to participate on school committees and provide other volunteer services.

### **Community Involvement**

LCS will establish professional and positive relations with its school district and try to serve as a model school for the Thompson School District R2-J.

LCS will seek to reach out to local businesses and community organizations in an effort to learn more about the educational ideals and concerns that currently exist in the Loveland/Berthoud area, as well as to find ways to better serve at-risk and diverse population groups. LCS will also make inquiries at Front Range Community College and Colorado State University to find professors that may be interested in supporting our classical/liberal arts model at LCS.

Loveland Classical Schools is a charter school. As such, there are many new ideas being implemented. The classroom itself is the context for several of these innovations.

There is great emphasis on parent volunteers in this school. There is also a need to establish a learning environment that best serves the students. At LCS we have defined the general parameters for parents volunteering in our classrooms:

1. Parent volunteers are an integral part of LCS. Parents are not only welcome, but they are crucial to the success of our students. The LCS Volunteer Coordinator coordinates volunteer activities. All persons volunteering at LCS must have a current, signed volunteer application, agreement form, and volunteer oath form on file with the School. Volunteer applications are subject to background checks.
2. The teacher has primary responsibility for the classroom and student learning within the classroom.
3. The teacher's individual teaching style sets the tone for the classroom. This includes everything from delivery of the educational program to classroom management.
4. Parents who wish to volunteer in the classroom need to learn the teaching style of the teacher they wish to assist. If the teaching style conflicts with the parents volunteering style, the parent will need to either adjust his or her style or find a more compatible setting within the school to volunteer.
5. Each elementary class has a Classroom Coordinator. The Classroom Coordinator is responsible for organizing and delegating the volunteer needs of the teachers, classroom, and parents.
6. Any grievance or concern a parent has with a classroom coordinator or a teacher will be handled by the procedures defined in this handbook.
7. Under NO CIRCUMSTANCE is it acceptable for a parent volunteer to confront a teacher about an issue in the classroom, or any other part of the school, when students are present.
8. Parents are not permitted to bring non-LCS students or preschoolers to the school while volunteering. We encourage parents to coordinate with each other to find appropriate care for their children while volunteering.
9. LCS encourages all adult parents, stepparents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles to take a special interest in the lives of LCS students, to act as mentors and tutors, and to instill in every student a love of learning.

Parents work in conjunction with the staff to ensure the most effective education possible for their children. To this end, parents are responsible for knowing and understanding the contents of the LCS Charter, and are encouraged, but not required, to participate on school volunteer teams and provide other volunteer services, as they are able.

Parents are welcomed and encouraged to participate in the school, and to reasonably observe and assist the teacher. However, any parent whose presence or actions are deemed by the teacher and Principal to be a distraction, to exhibit hostility, or to interfere with the instruction or learning of the students, will be barred from the school.

In order to create a consistent school atmosphere for learning, parents wishing to observe a class must arrive before class begins. Each class will have two teacher-provided chairs for observers. Observing parents do not participate in classroom activities unless invited to do so by the teachers, and observers must not interrupt teachers or students. Observers may take a few notes, however, computers, tape recording, etc., may be a distraction to students and are not permitted. Parents wishing to be active in the classroom and volunteer in various ways must go through procedures given by the Volunteer Coordinator. Parents will receive specific training in areas of interest to them so they may be the most efficient helpers.

All parent volunteers are required to check in at the front office before class begins and wear their volunteer ID badge until they check out at the end of their volunteer time.

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