Wood County Educational Service Center
L.I.F.E. Skills—Specially Designed Programming for Low Incidence

Parent Handbook

School Year 2026-2027

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MDParentHandbook/GoogleDocs (Rvsd 7/2024)

Table of Contents

Contacts – Supervisors and Transportation	3
Weather Guidelines	4
Attendance Guidelines	5
School Contact Information	7
Program Objectives	8
Descriptions of Program and Services	8-10
Other Services Available for Students and Parents	10
Student Behavior Guidelines	11
General WCESC Program Information	12-14
Parent/Teacher Communication	14
Medication Policy	15-16

It is essential to contact your child's teacher first whenever you have a question or concern. Your child's teacher knows your child and will be in the best position to answer your questions.

If you have further questions or comments, you may call one of the supervisors listed below:

Joe Taylor, Director of Special Education/Student Services
Wood County Educational Service Center
419-354-9010 ext. 232
joetaylor@wcesc.org

Jessie Dible, Director of Special Education/Life Skills
Wood County Educational Service Center
419-354-9010 ext. 140
jdible@wcesc.org

Transportation Telephone Numbers and Contact Person by School District

Remember: Your child is transported to their special education program by the district in which you live. **Please remember that the program your child is enrolled in will follow the school calendar for that district. Parents need to listen to delay and/or cancellation announcements for both the school district in which the program is located and the school district in which the child lives.** Additional information about this policy can be found in the **weather guidelines** section of this handbook.

If you have questions regarding your child's transportation, please contact the Transportation Director in the school district where you reside.

Bowling Green City Schools: Toby Snow	419-354-8509
Eastwood Schools: Nick Hannan	419-833-1493
Elmwood Schools: Allison Betz	419-655-2583 ext. 347
Fostoria Schools: Nicole Lopez	419-436-4105
Genoa Schools: Terri Carraway	419-855-7741 ext. 31101
Lake Schools:	419-661-6658
North Baltimore Schools: Jolyn Buchanan	419-257-3531
Northwood Local: Emilia Bires	567-868-1343
Otsego Local Schools: Eva Vasher	419-823-4381
Perrysburg Schools: Stefanie Fliter	419-874-3127 ext. 2700
Rossford Schools: Tamara Meehan	419-666-8695

Weather Guidelines

School delays and cancellations during inclement weather often cause confusion because the weather does not affect all school districts equally. To avoid confusion, the following procedures will be followed regarding school delays and/or cancellations.

A) The Wood County Educational Service Center Low Incidence Programs follow the calendar and schedule of the school district in which the program is located. Parents need to listen to delay and cancellation announcements for **both** the district in which the program is located and the school district in which the child lives.

   a) Living Classroom students should follow Bowling Green City Schools for delays and cancellations.

B) If the school of attendance is delayed or canceled, there will be ***no*** *s*chool during the delay or cancellation.

C) If the school district in which the student lives is delayed or canceled because of weather, there will be no transportation during the delay or cancellation, even though the school where the class is located may be in session. Parents are welcome to transport their child to the program in this situation.

D) The following radio and television stations carry school cancellations and delays between 6 a.m. and 7 a.m. for your information. The announcements will be listed under the heading of the local school districts. (REMINDER: parents should listen for both the district in which the student lives and the school district in which the child's program is located.)

WSPD 1370 AM, Toledo
WKXA 100.5 FM, Findlay,
WRON 93.5 FM, Toledo
WVKS 92.5 FM, Toledo
WTOL Toledo 11 TV News
WNWO Toledo 24 TV News
WFOB 1430 AM, Fostoria/B.G.
WTVG Toledo 13 TV News
WKKO 99.9 FM, Toledo
, WHMQ 107.7 FM, Findlay
, WTOD 1560 AM, Toledo
WYHK 95.7 FM, Toledo
WRVS 101.5 FM, Toledo

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

Ohio law requires parents, guardians, and other persons having custody of school-age children to be accountable and responsible for their regular school attendance. In December 2016, the Ohio General Assembly passed House Bill 410 to encourage and support a preventative approach to excessive absences and truancy. WCESC follows the student's home district attendance policy, in alignment with HB 410, and also strongly believes that regular attendance is a vital factor in the educational process. **The Wood County Educational Service Center requires parents to notify the school of attendance by phone call to the school (see page 7 for school phone numbers) or call or email directly to the teacher on the same day that their child is absent from school.** It is best to call your child's teacher directly at school, the morning of your child's absence, and not the school's office. **We also ask that you contact your home district's transportation department to notify them that your child will be absent and not attending school that day.** When a student returns from an absence, they are still required to present a written note to the teacher explaining their absence; otherwise, the absence will be considered unexcused. This excuse should include the time or days missed and be signed by the parent or guardian.

A. The following are considered **excused** school absences:

- personal illness;
- serious illness or death in the family;
- medical/dental appointments that could not be scheduled outside of school hours;
- absences that are approved in advance.

B. A student who does not have a note explaining his/her absence will be credited with an **unexcused absence.** Attendance policy and guidelines will be followed according to the student's home school district.

C. A student with excessive hours of absences, as outlined in the school's absence policy in alignment with House Bill 410, will be reported to the child's home school district. At this point, the home school district will follow its regular procedure for truancy. ***It is important to notify the IEP team if your child will be absent for an extended period of time. The team must meet to review the IEP after your child has ten or more absences from school. The team must address whether the IEP continues to meet the child's programming needs.***

D. If a child has excessive absences, excused or unexcused, it is policy for WCESC, the home district, and the family to meet and discuss the absences to develop a plan of action. Your child's teacher will notify his or her home school of excessive absences, which will enforce all applicable attendance policies. A manifestation determination may need to be conducted to develop a collaborative, supportive plan to ensure progress in the IEP is occurring and placement is the least restrictive environment for access and progress in the curriculum.

E. **Please be sure those students who have an infectious condition such as:** COVID-19, *lice, chicken pox, conjunctivitis (pink eye), hepatitis, mononucleosis, scarlet fever, strep throat, or a contagious skin irritation such as fifth disease, herpes, impetigo, ringworm, scabies, etc.* **are kept home until proper treatment has been secured from a physician and the student has passed the contagious stage.**

From the Ohio Department of Public Safety
For the protection of all children and staff, please do not send your child to school if they are showing any signs of illness.

Signs and Symptoms of Communicable Disease
(Cause for immediate dismissal from school)
Keep the child home until they are symptom-free for 24 hours

- ***An illness*** that prevents the child from comfortably participating in program activities.
- ***Fever*** - 100 degrees F without fever-reducing medication.
- ***Excretion*** or green mucus from the nose, sore throat, earaches, irritability, persistent crying, lack of energy, difficulty breathing, or other symptoms of possible severe illness.
- ***Diarrhea or stools*** that contain blood or mucus. May return 24 hours after the last occurrence.
- ***Vomiting*** two or more times in 24 hours.
- ***Rash*** with fever or behavior change until a physician has determined that the illness is not a communicable disease.
- ***Purulent conjunctivitis*** (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, often with matted eyelids after sleep and eye pain or redness of the eyelids or skin surrounding the eye), until examined by a physician and approved for readmission, with treatment.
- ***Impetigo (contagious skin rash)*** until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- ***Streptococcal Pharyngitis (strep)*** until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- ***Head lice*** (pediculosis), until after the first treatment (schools have a nit-free policy).
- ***Scabies*** – until after treatment has been given.
- ***Varicella (chickenpox)*****,** until all lesions have dried and crusted, usually 6 days.

School Contact Information
L.I.F.E. Skills – Specially Designed Programming for Low Incidence

Lake Middle School
28150 Lemoyne Rd.
Millbury, OH 43447
419-661-6680

School Hours: 7:50-2:50

Teachers: Autum Grames & Kate Slane

Lake High School
28080 Lemoyne Rd.
Millbury, OH 43447
419-661-6640

School Hours: 8:35-3:30

Teachers: Andrew Bremner & Florentino Vergiels

Northwood Elementary
600 Lemoyne Rd.
Northwood, OH 43619
419-691-3888

School Hours: 8:30 – 3:10

Teacher: Cordie Stone

Northwood AAA Building
700 Lemoyne Rd.
Northwood, OH 43619
419-691-3888

School Hours: 8:30 – 3:10

Teachers: Beth Hall & Betty Wise

Living Classroom
909 Klotz Avenue
Bowling Green, OH 43402
419-308-0610

School Hours: **7:45 – 2:15**

Teacher: Kim Kamelesky

Open House Information

Lake Middle School Please check with Lake Middle School staff for current info	**Lake High School** August 26, 2026 Time TBD
Northwood Schools August 13, 2026 5:30 – 7:00 pm	**Living Classroom** August 18, 2026 3:00p - 6:00p

Program Objectives

The Wood County Educational Service Center's L.I.F.E. Skills Specially Designed Programming for Low Incidence Disabilities offers educational opportunities for your child to acquire the academic, social, and functional skills necessary for a happy, healthy, and productive adulthood. **L.I.F.E.** stands for **L**earning **I**ndependence through **F**unctional **E**ducation. With the input and support of our parents and local school districts, we work hard to offer a continuum of services focusing on each student's preferences, interests, needs, and strengths.

The students in the classes have been identified under different categories of eligibility, including: multiple disabilities, intellectual disability, visual and/or hearing impairments, orthopedic handicaps, traumatic brain injury, autism, and other health impairments. The common need is that each child requires a significantly modified, adapted, and functional curriculum to learn basic academic and life skills. WCESC's specially designed programming for low incidence focuses on access to the community through instruction, support, and resources. Programming at all levels emphasizes functional life skills and integration with same-aged peers, utilizing as much community-based instruction as possible.

Although each child's individual abilities are considered before placement and programming, the following are some general goals we work to accomplish in our program:

- To provide opportunities to develop skills leading to independence as an adult to each individual's maximum potential.
- To provide developmentally-appropriate learning activities in a positive environment with same-age peers.
- To teach/reinforce math, reading, and writing skills in daily living activities.
- To assist students in developing appropriate social skills in a variety of situations.
- To assist students in accepting responsibility and managing their own behavior.
- To provide activities and experiences to develop vocational skills.
- To develop skills in communication using strategies and technologies appropriate to the needs of each individual.
- To provide training in functional living skills, pre-vocational/vocational skills, functional communication, and adaptive behavior.
- To prepare students for the responsibilities of adulthood while establishing appropriate actions/strategies to stay safe in all situations.
- To provide resources, information, and strategies to develop a seamless transition into post-school living.
- To integrate the academic standards – extended into students' curriculum.

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM SERVICES

The following is a description of the WCESC Life Skills Program services provided to students who meet the eligibility requirements for special education, as stated in Ohio's *Model Policies and Procedures for the Education of Children with Disabilities.*

Wood County ESC serves students with significant disabilities who reside within the nine school districts in Wood County and outlying school districts. Children in the Wood County Low Incidence program have identified educational needs that can best be met in a self-contained, least restrictive environment with smaller class sizes. Due to significant deficits in basic academics, adaptive behavior, functional communication, social skills, and/or sensory needs, specially designed instruction focuses on direct, individualized instruction and strategies. Students benefit from a community-based instructional approach and a functional curriculum aligned with the Ohio Academic Learning Standards, Extended with significant modifications and accommodations.

Each classroom has one teacher and one full-time paraprofessional (assistant). Some classes may have additional paraprofessionals (attendants) depending upon the needs of the children.

Speech and Language Therapy

Speech and Language therapy is provided by a licensed speech/language pathologist as a supplement to the child's basic educational program. Speech and language therapy may be conducted on a one-on-one, in small groups, or in whole classes. The speech pathologist works with your child's teacher to:

- Develop classroom modifications, including picture schedules and graphic organizers so your child learns to complete tasks and activities as independently as s/he is able.
- Understand and develop individualized communication systems so that each child can learn to express their choices, wants, and needs.
- Work with individual children and small groups to develop each child's skills in the areas of receptive (understanding) and expressive (speaking) language.
- Help children develop articulation (making sounds correctly) and pragmatics (using language appropriately in social settings), speech, and language skills.

Physical Therapy

Physical therapy is provided by a certified physical therapist. The physical therapist can use exercise to:

- Increase or maintain balance, muscle strength, and joint mobility.
- To encourage proper motor and reflex development.
- To improve perceptual motor (where the body is in relation to the environment) and reflex development.
- Improve wheelchair mobility and transfer training in order to enhance a child's maximum functioning on a physical level in his environment.
- Treat or advise on the control of pain.

Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapy is provided by a certified occupational therapist. The occupational therapy team collaborates with the classroom teacher to:

- Identify the sensory and motor needs of your child and, when needed, develop sensory diets and schedules based upon a student's individual needs.
- Sequence activities to improve the student's ability to respond to the environment and process the information received from it.
- Develop activities to improve the student's ability to respond to the environment and process the information received from it.
- Develop activities to improve small muscle control essential to writing, daily living, skills (dressing, eating), and work station tasks.

Adapted Physical Education

Adapted physical education is specially designed instruction in physical education to meet the unique needs of each child during individual and/or group instruction. In an educational setting, adaptive physical education services include:

- Evaluation of abilities of motor and physical development as part of the multi-factored evaluation.
- Instruction to improve basic motor abilities, coordination, and physical and social-psychological performance.
- Teach appropriate life-long leisure skills for free time activities (for example: playing ball, golf, and running).

Students in our Specially Designed Programming may take APE only, regular physical education, or both, as increased opportunities for physical exercise have been proven to be beneficial for school-aged children.

Work Experience & Community-Based Instruction

The Life Skills Specially Designed Programming for Low Incidence maintains a focus on generalizing daily living skills with a goal of developing independence for adult life to each student’s maximum ability. A community-based instructional model is incorporated as much as possible so that students can engage in direct opportunities to generalize and use the skills learned in the classroom to real-life situations. Although students will be instructed within a classroom/school setting, teachers will also structure opportunities within the community environment so that students can not only generalize direct independent living skills, but indirect skills (ex. socialization, self-help, problem solving, etc.) can also be taught as we prepare students for a successful adult life.

As students begin to get older, they will also have the opportunity to engage in work experiences within the school and community environments. The WCESC Life Skills program emphasizes the best practice of work exploration and teaching meaningful work skills so students can be prepared for transition into adult life. Students will be informally assessed on a continual basis to best match their preferences, interests, needs, and strengths to explore a variety of jobs and job tasks throughout their vocational training. The transition domains of employment and independent living skills are intertwined; thus, work experiences will not only be used to teach work skills, but independent living skills as well.

Circles and Healthy Relationships

Circles is a visual program designed to teach young adults & children about healthy social relationships with an opportunity to practice social skills he/she will need at school, at home, and in the community. WCESC programs believe social relationship skills are an integral component to healthy adult relationships, and these skills are a consistent focus in direct and indirect instruction daily at all levels. The Circles curriculum is integrated with the Healthy Relationships curriculum and has become a required part of the curriculum for students of middle school age and older. This program is individualized for student need/ level and has become the foundation to teach human growth and development (also known as sex education - a required component of the regular education health curriculum), to our junior high and high school students. These skills are being taught to keep our students safe, prepare them for the responsibilities of adulthood, and help them interpret, act, and react appropriately to social situations. The skills within the curriculum are designed to support parents in the area of human growth and development, as we believe that parents and guardians are the primary teachers for their children in this area, but we should work together as a team in all educational programming.

Internet Safety

WCESC is committed to keeping our students safe in current and future environments. With the increased focus on social media in today's society, our students are exposed to more and more information, interactions, and decision-making opportunities. We are committed to teaching an appropriate awareness and use of social media to our students based on age and developmental level. Our teachers, at all grade levels, will provide instruction in the areas of: internet safety, appropriate behavior on social networks, cyberbullying, and any other topic in which a need arises. WCESC uses Netsmartz (a national resource online) as the foundation of this instruction, but teachers will add additional material/resources as appropriate.

Transition Opportunities

- Students with disabilities are able to remain in school until their 22nd birthday if the IEP team determines that this is in the best interest of the student.
- Starting at age 14, the IEP team will work to develop a meaningful transition plan (required as part of the IEP) that will prepare a student to enter an appropriate vocational program and/or connect to adult service agencies in support of an independent adult life specifically matched to the student's preferences, interests, skills, needs, and level of independence.
- Students being served in WCESC Specially Designed Programming for Low Incidence will attend classes housed in one of our Wood County local school districts while they are in grades K-12. Students who receive their high school credits and are 18 years old can then transition to Penta Career Center or the WCESC 18-21-year-old program, the Living Classroom, which is housed in a local townhouse and serves as a community-based classroom site. WCESC students ages 18-21 receive program services with a strong focus on vocational training, employment opportunities, and independent living skills via community-based instruction.
- Some students may be eligible for Penta programming and may participate in a vocational assessment during high school. This decision is determined by the IEP team.
- Some students may leave high school and transition to Adult Services and enter into a job-training program.

OTHER SERVICES AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Board of Developmental Disabilities (DD)

The Wood County Board of DD offers a variety of programs for students and adults. These programs include but are not limited to: Family Resources, Service and Support Administration, and Adult Vocational, Residential, and Transportation Services. Once a child or adult is determined eligible for services, a service coordinator may be requested by the family and assigned to that student. A service coordinator will be able to

help families locate and navigate the financial and support resources available for a child and his or her family at the local, state and federal level. Furthermore, a service coordinator will be able to help families connect with resources and instructors to assist with a child's behavioral and daily living needs in their home. The Wood County Educational Service Center collaborates with the Board of DD staff to offer comprehensive services for our students and their families. In order to receive more information about eligibility determination, please contact Katie Kramer (Wood Lane Industries) at 419-352-5115 ext. 3268.

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities—OOD

OOD is a state agency that helps students and individuals with disabilities transition from school to work. OOD is a part of the Rehabilitation Services Commission (RSC), and many people know this resource agency as BVR—Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation. An OOD counselor will be invited to your child's IEP meeting at some point during his/her transition years in school (14-21), with your permission. This service can help us develop a strong transition team to create a seamless transition from school age to adult services. Some of the activities that OOD can help coordinate for your child are job shadowing, volunteer experiences, community or work-based observation, job development, and summer opportunities.

Parent Mentor

Through the joint efforts of several committees, made up of parents and professionals, the Parent Mentor concept was developed several years ago as a way of providing services to parents. With the support of these parents and professionals, the Ohio Office for Exceptional Children was able to identify funds and establish the Parent Mentor program. Parent Mentors are working in school districts and Educational Service Centers throughout Ohio with state and federal funds. The **Parent Mentor** program is a support network to parents of children with disabilities and has the following responsibilities:

- Is employed, supported, and supervised by the WCESC.
- Is available to any participating district at no cost to the district or parents.
- Is available to explain special education policies and procedures in understandable language.
- Provides support to parents, answers questions, and listens to concerns.
- Researches and provides information on specific disabilities.
- Organizes and conducts workshops for parents and educators.
- Helps parents find and access community resources.
- Maintains a lending library of resource materials available to parents and educators. A listing of the books, tapes, and videos for parents to borrow is available upon request. The lending library is located at the Wood County Educational Service Center—there is no fee for borrowing materials.
- For more information about the **Parent Mentor** services, please call **WCESC at 419-354-9010.**

STUDENT BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

The L.I.F.E. Skills Specially Designed Programming for Low Incidence is intended to provide each student with the optimum opportunity to acquire an education and eventually transition into adult life. Although behavior issues can be a component of a child's disability, when the behavior becomes the primary focus, alternative methods and strategies may be necessary. Behavior that is unsafe to others and/or is a hindrance to the classroom routine or learning will need to be addressed by the IEP team. The team will determine whether or not a behavior plan must be implemented or modified, changes made to the IEP, or if additional action needs to be taken to ensure appropriate placement in the least restrictive learning environment.

WCESC maintains a no-restraint policy in our Low Incidence programs; therefore, if behaviors become unsafe or an obstacle to an individual's learning or ability to access his/her environment or that of others, an alternative placement or emergency removal will need to be considered.

Responsibilities for Behavior

A. *Student*

- The student is responsible (with any necessary supports) for his/her own actions and conducting himself/herself in such a way that a positive learning environment is achievable by all students in the classroom.
- The student must follow the school district's Code of Conduct.
- The student will not be allowed to bring weapons or drugs to school for any reason or at any time. (Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (20 U.S.C. 7701)

- Students may be allowed to be in possession of electronic devices used in compliance with building regulations. Students violating District procedures for the use of electronic devices may have their device confiscated and may be subject to discipline. WCESC/school district assumes no liability if these devices are broken, lost, or stolen.

B. *Parent*

- The parents/guardians are partners with the school in the learning process.
- The parents may contact and meet with teachers when concerns or questions arise.
- Cooperation and follow-through in the home environment concerning behavior is a vital component of consistent behaviors in the classroom environment.

C. *Teacher* (with assistance from educational/paraprofessional staff)

- It is the responsibility of the teacher to create and maintain a classroom environment that promotes safe student behavior consistent with learning.
- Behavior expectations/rules are to be written using words, pictures, and symbols so that all students can understand them; rules are to be fairly enforced, consistently applied, and have clearly defined consequences.
- Teachers are to keep the parents, supervisor, and home district informed when a student is violating the rules of the classroom/school, if unsafe behavior has occurred, or if injury results to staff or student(s).
- When appropriate, the teacher will initiate an IEP review to discuss the need for a Functional Behavior Assessment; WCESC may invite consultants to assist in the development of a more extensive behavior plan.

GENERAL WCESC PROGRAM INFORMATION

STUDENT RECORDS

This information is taken directly from "A Guide to Parent's Rights in Special Education"
"The school district must allow you to review your child's education records without unnecessary delay and before any IEP team meeting or any due process proceeding in which you are involved. The district cannot wait more than 45 days from the date of your request to allow you to view the records."

Within our WCESC programs, your child's original educational records are kept in their home school district (the District in which you reside) for your child's educational career. The classroom teacher and the supervisor will have copies of the current ETR, IEP, and progress report,s as well as any correspondence and notes related to your child's educational program. The home district must keep these original records for the entirety of the time your child is enrolled in school.

Free and Reduced Breakfast and Lunch Programs

You will find a link to complete Free and Reduced Breakfast and Lunch Forms via Final Forms. These forms must be completed by **all students** in our programming. The school where your child's class is located will determine if your child will qualify based on federal guidelines. If you plan to utilize the free and reduced program, it is very important that you submit the application as soon as possible, as well as any changes in your information. Failure to do so may result in you being charged for your child's breakfast and/or lunch.

Emergency Phone Numbers Needed for Illness or Accidents at School

If a student becomes ill or is involved in an accident, making it necessary for the child to go home, the parent/guardian will be contacted. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency medical and emergency phone numbers will be used to contact someone. Since many of the students in the program have serious physical or emotional problems that may need immediate attention, parents are asked to provide the names and telephone numbers of three people who would be willing and able to take responsibility for the child in a crisis situation. **In the event that a parent cannot be reached, it may be necessary to contact the Children's Services Section of the Department of Human Services in order to secure supervision beyond the school day.**

Dress and Appearance of Students

Our teachers and paraprofessionals work with families to teach children to be as independent as possible. It is important that your child's clothing allows them to use the restroom with minimal adult help when possible. For this reason, please be sure that your child's clothes fit properly, are easy for him/her to get on and off, and are comfortable. For our students, we have found that if a child's clothes are too tight or difficult to put on and take off, the child's ability to be independent in the bathroom and learn effectively in school is significantly affected. In general, most schools do not permit caps, tank tops, mesh shirts, clothing that is torn, any garment that fails to cover the midsection, clothing that is sexually suggestive or drug or violence related, and any other item that may be found to be inappropriate. It is also important for each child to wear shoes and clothes that are clean, comfortable against their skin, and the appropriate size. Children are easily distracted by clothes that are ill-fitting or falling off them. Many classes go outside when weather permits, so it is important that your child has outside clothes when necessary. **Please provide the school with an extra set of seasonal clothing for your child.** This will be helpful if your child has a toileting accident or becomes sick at school. ***It may be necessary for school staff to change your child's clothes even if you have not provided an extra set of clothes***. If the situation arises, discretion will be utilized by the educational team. As a component of our life skills programming, extra clothes, as provided by the staff, may be laundered at school to teach independence.

School Supplies and Snacks

Individual teacher supply lists will be sent home to parents and families by the first week of August. In some cases, teachers may request that supplies be sent throughout the school year as supplies are depleted. We appreciate it when families can provide school supplies and hygiene care supplies as often as their child requires, but if this is a hardship, please contact the teacher.

Occasionally, children may be asked to bring in money for lunch when the class is on a field trip or there is a special event. Please contact your child's teacher if it will be a hardship for your child to bring in snacks, school supplies, or money for special lunches, so other arrangements can be made.

If you wish to send in food for a holiday treat or snack, please ask the teacher about any possible allergies that anyone might have. We are requesting that you send in snacks and treats that are healthy and could include fruits, cut-up vegetables, cheese, and whole grain cereals and crackers.

Community-Based Instruction

During the school year, students may have opportunities to participate in community-based instruction. Your child may go on community-based trips by bus, taxi, or on walking. A field trip permission form signed by the parent or guardian at the beginning of the year must be on file before the student may participate in any trip.

The students will always be accompanied on each community outing by the classroom staff. If a child needs to stay behind for medical or behavioral reasons, a parent will be notified so arrangements can be made. There will always be an appropriate number of adults with the students on each trip. The staff will remain with the students at all times. Student safety is our primary concern and responsibility.

Please return community-based forms by the first week of school. A copy of the Community-Based Permission Form can be obtained from your child's teacher if you did not receive one. Students who do not have permission slips on file will not be able to participate in community-based trips and will be asked not to attend school on the day of a trip, since staff will be with the class for community instruction.

Playground/Free time

Students of appropriate age will have the opportunity to use the playground equipment during recess and free time as designated by each teacher. It is important to remember that appropriate dress will be necessary. This includes shoes or sneakers. Please send jackets, boots, gloves, and hats when the weather requires it. During this time, students are under the direction of assigned personnel.

Classroom Visits

Any class visits must be pre-approved by the program supervisor and in line with the host district's visitation policy. Approval will be subject to the current conditions and needs of the students in the classroom.

Parent-Teacher Communications and Conferences

Please remember that a teacher's most important job is the safety and well-being of your child. They are the leaders of instruction in the classroom, and it is essential that they spend as much of their time as possible within the classroom working with your child and guiding the paraprofessionals to create maximum learning opportunities for each student. Since the teacher develops the IEP, it is important that questions and communications are directed to the teacher first, then to the WCESC Supervisor. Since the teacher is responsible for all personnel, students, and instruction in the classroom, WCESC's policies direct that communication occur with the lead teacher and not paraprofessionals. When appropriate, the teacher or supervisor can arrange for additional dialogue.

- Parents are encouraged to communicate often with their child's teacher through notes, email, communication logs or by leaving phone messages at school. A teacher will return non-emergency phone calls either before or after school. A teacher will return emergency phone messages as soon as possible. Teachers will make all attempts to respond to written notes and phone messages on the same day they are received, unless they are absent from school or other priorities occur that day.

- Parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled during the school year according to each school calendar. The purpose of the conference is to allow parents and teachers the opportunity to discuss student progress in a personal and informal setting.

- An annual review of the student's IEP will be scheduled before the anniversary date of the IEP. District representatives will attend this meeting. **Parents may request an IEP review meeting at any time.**

- Upon request of WCESC administration or the Partner District, a meeting can be scheduled to determine if placement in the WCESC programming continues to be appropriate.

- **It is best to discuss your child's educational progress, questions, and/or express concerns, either before or after school or during a scheduled meeting time. Please do not discuss any educational programming during the school day unless previously arranged with the teacher, as this is instructional time for all students. Please also talk directly to teachers and not paraprofessionals.**

- When entering the school, you **must go to the school office first and sign in.** You will be given a visitor's badge to wear during your visit. Please wear this badge as a safety precaution in your child's school.

- Please write a note if your child has been hurt at home or away from school. It is very common for children to get bumped and bruised while playing or moving from one place to another. This is especially true for children with impaired sensory and movement skills. Since the children in our program typically cannot tell us how a bruise or injury occurred, we are required to call or contact you about unusual bruises or marks on the body and ask you about it. It is not our intention to offend you by asking; it will be a great help to us if you can write a note or call when your child has been injured away from school. We will write you a note and send an incident report home when your child receives an injury at school. In addition, the teacher is likely to call you at work or at home when this happens. In the case of a head or other serious injury, you will be phoned immediately.

- In the case that concerns in regards to your child have not been adequately addressed by the classroom teacher, the next step would be to contact the WCESC Program Director.

- **The staff is required by law to report any suspicion or report of child abuse or neglect to the authorities.** In Wood County, this report would be directed to the Wood County Job and Family Services at 419-352-7566.

Confidentiality

- The WCESC staff respects the confidentiality of information regarding the physical, emotional, and educational needs of each child. Information given to the teacher and paraprofessionals will be shared with the supervisor and staff who work directly with your child.
- Please do not ask for personal information regarding other children or staff. The staff will not share any information or discuss other children and adults with you. For the same reason, the teacher and staff will

not provide the names, addresses, telephone numbers, or personal information of other children in the class. You will receive a listing of your child's classmates by first name only if requested for special occasions.

- If you wish to help with a class event or celebrate your child's birthday at school, please contact your child's teacher to make arrangements. The teacher will be aware of any concerns regarding diet and allergies and can offer you appropriate suggestions for treats.

Grades and Student Progress Reports

- Progress reports are issued a minimum of four times a year at approximately nine-week intervals. Parents are welcome to schedule an appointment with the teacher, related service provider, and/or supervisor to discuss a child's progress at any time.
- Teachers appreciate parents' interest in their child's progress. Many of our teachers write notes home, and appreciate it when a parent is able to respond in writing or by phone before or after school.
- Students in High School will receive high school credits in the areas of reading, writing, math, social studies, science, and general electives. These credits will count towards your child's graduation requirements from High School and will be communicated to your child's home school district via a transcript.

State Assessment Programs

According to Federal Guidelines, **No Child Left Behind,** each state is required to test the academic achievement of all children. This information is used by the Ohio Department of Education to identify students needing intervention and to rate each school district's ability to meet state standards set for Ohio's Public Schools.

The IEP team has to decide whether the student will participate in the state achievement tests or whether they will take an **Alternate Assessment.** The IEP team will complete the Alternate Assessment Participation Decision Making Tool as a guide to determine which state testing the student will participate in each year.

Athletics and Extracurricular Activities

Students are encouraged to participate in activities at both their home school district and the school in which their program is located whenever possible. Students who wish to participate in team or club sports should contact their Home School District Principal to find out about participation and try-outs. Families will need to make transportation arrangements for students needing special transportation to a sport or an after-school event.

MEDICATION POLICY

The Wood County Educational Service Center has established the following policy (JHCD-R) concerning prescription medication for students enrolled in the Wood County Special Education Programs. A copy of the Medication Permission Form can be obtained from your child's teacher if you have not received one.

GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF REGULATIONS REGARDING DISPENSATION OF MEDICATION

1. Students needing medication will be encouraged to receive the medication at home, if possible.

   A) The WCESC classroom teacher or WCESC supervisor will receive a written request, signed by the parent, guardian, or other person having care or charge of the student, that the drug be administered to the student.

   B) The parent or guardian will provide the WCESC classroom teacher or WCESC supervisor a statement, signed by the physician or other person licensed to prescribe medication, which includes all of the following information:

      1) Name and address of the student;
      2) School and class in which the student is enrolled;
      3) Name of the drug and the dosage to be administered;

4) Times or intervals at which each dosage of the drug is to be administered;
5) Date on which the administration of the drug is to begin;
6) Date on which the administration of the drug is to cease;
7) Any severe adverse reactions should be reported to the physician and one or more telephone numbers at which the person who prescribed the medication can be reached in case of an emergency.
8) Special instructions for administration of the drug, including sterile conditions and storage.

C) The parent/guardian or other person(s) having care or charge of the student agrees to submit a revised statement, signed by the physician who prescribed the drug, to the WCESC classroom teacher or WCESC supervisor if any of the information provided by the physician or other licensed professional changes.

D) The parent's signed permission to administer medication and the physician's statement described above (section B) must be on file in the student's classroom record.

E) The drug will be received by the classroom teacher in the container in which it was dispensed by the prescribing physician or other licensed professional.

2. The WCESC supervisor, along with the school, will establish a location in the school building for the storage of drugs to be administered. All such drugs shall be stored in that location in a locked storage place. Drugs that require refrigeration may be kept in a refrigerator in a place not commonly used by students.

3. No person who has been authorized by the Governing Board to administer a drug and has a copy of the most recent statement which was given to him prior to administering the drug will be liable for administering or failing to administer the drug, unless that person acts in a manner which constitutes gross negligence or wanton or reckless misconduct.

4. Students have the right to possess and use a metered-dose inhaler or a dry-powder inhaler to alleviate asthmatic symptoms or before exercise to prevent the onset of asthmatic symptoms. The right applies at school or at any activity, event, or program sponsored by or in which the student's school is a participant.

5. In order for a student to possess the inhaler, he/she must have written approval from the student's physician and parent or other caretaker. The program administrator or teacher must have received copies of these required written approvals [Amended 5/30/00].

Parents of students with a health care concern are asked to work with the classroom teacher and health care professional to develop a Classroom Health Care Plan for the student's file. It is recommended that parents sign a "release of information" form between health care professionals & the school so all entities can serve the child, being given the same information.

Discrimination Policy

The Wood County Educational Service Center complies with the law and the Governing Board policy, which ensures nondiscrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, color, national origin, or physical or mental disability.

Disclaimer

The information within this Program Handbook is intended to provide guidance regarding WCESC Program policies and procedures. This information is subject to change depending upon changes in Wood County Educational Service Center policies and programming, Ohio Department of Education Rules and Mandates, and Federal Guidelines. This information isn't an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student but only reflects the current status of the rules and policies.

Finally, each individual student's preferences, interests, needs, and strengths are taken into consideration at all times. The goal of the Wood County Educational Service Center is to work collaboratively with each local school district to provide the best educational program possible in the student's least restrictive environment in preparation for adult life.