

Linda Nolen Learning Center

Soaring to Greater Heights



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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

HISTORY

What would eventually become the Linda Nolen Learning Center was created in August 1977. The school was originally a large classroom at Shelby County High School, and employed two teachers to serve 10-12 students. After two years of growth, and in need of additional space, the school relocated to the Central Office in 1979 and became known as the Center for Exceptional Children. The school employed four teachers and expanded to four classrooms, serving approximately 25 students. The school continued to grow, and in April 1990 relocated to the renovated Thompson High School facility in Alabaster. On March 9, 1997, the Center for Exceptional Education was rededicated as the Linda Nolen Learning Center in honor of Dr. Linda M. Nolen. Today, the Linda Nolen Learning Center is widely recognized as a leader in the provision of special education services to children with disabilities.

The Linda Nolen Learning Center has received special recognition from the Alliance of Invitational Schools, and is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The United States Department of Agriculture also presented its "Best Practices Award" for the outstanding food and Nutrition Service and exemplary commitment to accommodating students with special needs.

The Linda Nolen Learning Center is located in Pelham in North Shelby County. The school serves students with special needs in self-contained classrooms in the Shelby County School System. Students, ages 3-21 are served in one of three programs: Intellectually Disabled program for students ages 5-21, The STAR Program for students with severe emotional needs in kindergarten through eighth grade, and The Pre-School program serving typical and atypical students ages 3-4.

VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

Vision Statement

To set the standards of excellence in serving students with severe special needs in Shelby County.

Mission Statement

The mission of the administrators, faculty, and staff of the Linda Nolen Learning Center is to serve students with special needs by individualizing programs to prepare these students mentally, physically, socially, and emotionally for independence, thus building a healthy self esteem.



Dr. Linda M. Nolen (1948-1995)

The Linda Nolen Learning Center is a testament and a tribute to the life of Dr. Linda M. Nolen. Dr. Nolen was a dedicated educator, Coordinator of Special Education, and Director of Instruction, who was instrumental in developing the programs and the facility, now known as the Linda Nolen Learning Center. She committed a significant portion of her professional career to providing special education services to the children of Shelby County in a caring and compassionate manner. Dr. Nolen demonstrated a continuing and untiring devotion to her work, and was a constant and unwavering advocate for children with special needs. Her legacy continues to live on through the work of the administration, faculty, and staff, and will remain a significant presence in the life of the Linda Nolen Learning Center.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Students and Parents:

Welcome to the 2019-20 school year at the Linda Nolen Learning Center (LNLC). The faculty, staff, and administration are here to assist you in any way possible. Our goal is to provide a quality education within the unique setting of an Alabama public day school. Our staff is highly qualified and ready to meet the needs of our students and their families.

We have two unique programs at LNLC devoted to designing and implementing individualized education plans for each student. The goals of each plan range from academic skills to social skills or daily living skills and any other specific ability that needs improvement. The academic program is enriched through service learning projects, community based instruction, and field trips related to the curriculum. The students are active in Special Equestrians, contracted Music Therapy and art instruction, photography, cooking class, YMCA and Special Olympics outings are also provided to ensure a rich learning environment.

Again, the intent of this handbook is to provide information for you, although it is not designed to cover every possible detail. Please take a few minutes to become familiar with the information provided in this handbook. The information is designed to ensure a safe, productive, and successful educational environment for each of our students.

If you need further assistance in any matter, please do not hesitate to call or come to the school. I look forward to a very successful year for each of our students.

*Todd Crenshaw
Principal*

SECTION II: GENERAL INFORMATION

NOTICE TO PARENTS

As a parent of a student in a Shelby County school, you have the right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct your child. Federal law allows you to ask for certain information about your child's classroom teachers, and requires us to give you this information in a timely manner if you ask for it. Specifically, you have the right to ask for the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

- Whether the Alabama State Department of Education has licensed or qualified the teacher for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- Whether the Alabama State Department of Education decided that the teacher can teach in a classroom without being licensed or qualified under state regulations because of special circumstances.
- The teacher's college major; whether the teacher has any advanced degrees and, if so, the subject of the degrees.
- Whether any teachers' aides or similar paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if they do, their qualifications.

If you would like to receive any of this information, please call your local school principal.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

1. The staff of the Linda Nolen Learning Center will involve parents in the mutual development and annual review of the Parent Involvement Policy.
2. The staff of the Linda Nolen Learning Center will involve parents in the annual evaluation of the Parent Involvement Policy.
3. The staff of the Linda Nolen Learning Center will involve parents in the process of school review and improvement.
4. The staff of the Linda Nolen Learning Center will provide ongoing, flexible, and unique opportunities for parent involvement.
5. The staff of the Linda Nolen Learning Center will provide parents with comprehensive

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- achievement levels that students are expected to meet.
5. The Linda Nolen Learning Center will routinely provide comprehensive notifications to parents on their child's academic and behavioral progress.
 6. The Linda Nolen Learning Center will provide parents with information on school performance profiles, individual results on standardized tests, and interpretations of testing outcomes.

Absenteeism

Parents are strongly encouraged to ensure that students do not accumulate unnecessary absences from school. Upon return from any absence, students must provide a doctor's excuse or note from parent within 3 school days.

Accidents

In spite of all precautions and supervision, accidents do sometimes occur. Please be sure that the school office has a current telephone number of emergency contact personnel in case parents cannot be reached. Any accident that occurs in the school building, on school grounds, or at any event sponsored by the school must be reported to the office immediately.

Arrival Time

School begins at 7:50 a.m. each day. Students arriving at school after 7:50 a.m. must be checked in by a parent. Please do not drop students off at school before 7:30 a.m.

Cafeteria

The school cafeteria provides a nutritious breakfast and lunch daily to students. Student breakfast costs \$1.50. Student lunches cost \$2.25 for Elem and \$2.50 for Middle/High. Each student is issued a meal ID number. You may put any amount of money in your child's account for them to use for breakfast or lunch. Checks should be made payable to OMMS (Oak Mountain Middle School). Students may choose to bring their lunch. Sack lunches should contain a balanced meal. Milk may be purchased in the cafeteria for \$.40.

Check-in/Check-out

Parents wishing to check a student in or out, must report to the office. Only a legal guardian or parent designee will be allowed to check a student out of school. Please have a valid photo id to present to our staff.

Custody Issues

In most cases, divorced parents continue to have equal rights, such as access to confidential information regarding their child's education. If you have a court order that limits the rights of one parent in matters such as visitation, please bring a copy to the office. In the absence of this documentation, equal rights will be provided to both parents. ***If changes in custody occur during the school year, please provide documentation to the school office.***

Dismissal Time

School is dismissed at 2:50 p.m. Students may not leave school without first being checked out by a parent, legal guardian, or parent designee, with proper photo ID.

Fire Alarms

A fire alarm is signaled by an audible fire alarm horn and visible flashing strobes located in the hallways. In the event of a fire alarm, students should evacuate buildings immediately, using pre-designated routes and exits. Directions to designated areas are posted in every classroom. Students should move quietly and calmly, leaving all books behind. Students will gather at designated assembly points, and each teacher will take roll and report names of any missing students to the principal.

Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather, please listen to local radio and television stations for school information. If school must be dismissed early due to bad weather, regular bus routes will be followed unless other information is given by the media.

In-School Detention

In-school detention (ISD) is designed as an alternative to out-of-school suspension. Students, guilty of misconduct, are subject to ISD at the discretion of the assistant principal. Failure to comply with rules of ISD may result in student suspension.

Library Media Center

The library media center is available to students on a daily basis. A wide variety of reading material is available. The librarian develops a library schedule to allow structured class visits to the center each week. Books may be checked out for classroom use, but books may not be taken home. Students are responsible for the care and safe return of all books. ***Students must pay for lost or damaged books.***

Medical and Dental Appointments

Parents are encouraged to make medical and dental appointments for students after school hours or on those days when school is not in session. If a child misses school or is checked in/out, a doctor excuse must be turned in within three (3) school days of the absence.

Medication Administration

All medication consent forms must be completed prior to the administration of any medication. Prescription medication will not be administered without written permission and instruction from the child's physician.

Progress Reports

Progress reports are sent home once during each 9-week grading period. This report gives the parent an account of the student's academic progress. Parents are encouraged to schedule parent/teacher conferences to discuss any concerns regarding their child's academic progress.

Report Cards

A computer-generated report card is issued every 9 weeks during the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule parent/teacher conferences to discuss any concerns regarding their child's academic progress. Report Cards will be issued on the following dates:

October 16, 2020

January 8, 2021

March 19, 2021

May 27, 2021

Severe Weather Alarms

We have a very distinct signal for a tornado. Directions to designated areas are posted in every classroom. In the event of a severe weather alarm, students should move immediately to predesignated areas. Students should move quietly and calmly, leaving all books and personal belongings behind. Students are to sit with their backs to the wall, and place their head between their knees. Students should listen for further instructions from teachers and school staff.

Visitors

All visitors must report to the office before entering any part of the school building. Visitors must sign in and obtain a visitor sticker prior to visiting any part of the building. Unauthorized persons on the Linda Nolen Learning Center campus may be subject to the Alabama Trespassing Law.

SECTION III: RULES AND POLICIES

In addition to complying with the Shelby County Dress Code and the Code of Conduct, students must adhere to the following policies at all times:

Dress Code

Defiance of these policies will result in disciplinary action.

- A. Shirts must be tucked in at all times.
- B. Pants must be worn at the waist. Belts must be worn with pants that have belt loops.
- C. Shirts/tops that have symbols or slogans that represent alcohol, drugs, violence, or anything of a sexual nature are not allowed.
- D. Jackets may not be worn in the school building.
- E. Jewelry can be worn if it is appropriate.
- F. Any items confiscated in violation of the dress code policy will be held until the student's last day of school.

School Bus Rules

- A. Students will be picked-up and dropped off at their residence or designated bus stops only.
- B. Students must be at the bus stop at least 5 minutes prior to designated time.
- C. Once students arrive at their school bus stop, they become the responsibility of the school system.
- D. Students must obey instructions given by the driver.
- E. Be courteous to fellow pupils and the bus driver.
- F. Horseplay, threats, and fighting are not permitted on or around the bus or at the bus stop.
- G. Remain silent when approaching and crossing railroads.
- H. Talk only in a normal voice and do not use profane or obscene language.
- I. Remain properly seated, do not change seats, and keep head and hands inside the bus.
- J. Do not eat, chew gum, drink, smoke, or strike matches on the school bus.
- K. Do not carry weapons of any kind.
- L. Do not tamper with any of the equipment on the bus, especially the emergency door.
- M. Do not litter on the bus or throw objects within or outside the bus.
- N. Do not leave the bus, except at your regular stop, without permission from the administration.
- O. Do not bring glass or possible dangerous items on the bus.
- P. Books, packages, coats, and other items should not be in the aisle or in the driver compartment and should not be left on the bus.

Behavioral Interventions

- A. Verbal reprimand
- B. Time-out (in the classroom)
- C. Removal of reinforcements/points
- D. Withholding of privileges and/or activities
- E. In-school suspension
- F. Punishment implemented that is determined and agreed upon by the parent and teacher
- G. Physical restraint (when in danger of harming self or others)

SECTION IV: PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Intellectually Disabled Program

The Intellectually Disabled Program at the Linda Nolen Learning Center is designed to meet the needs of students with multiple disabilities ages 5 to 21. Performance based assessments are used to develop Individualized Education Plans to assist each student in reaching their maximum potential. Plans are designed using developmentally appropriate and age appropriate skills. Skills such as applied academics, self-care, daily living, leisure choices, socialization, and communication are included in the student's daily routine.

Community Based Instruction (CBI) is the portion of instruction that occurs in the community after classroom instruction has taken place. CBI is intended to ensure that students achieve functional skills in the environments where those skills will be used naturally. Work related skills, such as cooperation, task completion, and acceptance of supervision are emphasized in the vocational training program. Communication skills through the use of voice output devices, picture symbols, and speech/language therapy are designed to assist students in expressing needs and wants as well as improving their ability to interact socially. Inclusion activities with similar age peers provide training in social skills and behaviors within natural environments. Social settings provide a wide variety of situations for interpersonal interaction. Transition planning begins at age 14 to bring together students, parents, and professionals to identify and develop the skills and resources necessary to ensure successful post school adjustment.

STAR Program - (Students •Transforming • Achieving • Resilient)

The STAR Program is a program designed for students in grades K-8 who exhibit chronic/severe disciplinary or emotional problems and do not experience success within their traditional elementary/middle school

settings. The program is highly structured and utilizes a variety of motivational and behavioral techniques, including a level system and a token economy. The goal of the program is to teach students the social, emotional, and academic skills required to become productive, contributing citizens in an ever-changing society. The STAR Program focuses on each student's individual needs and recognizes the uniqueness and inherent worth of each child.

Shelby County Pre-School Program

The Shelby County Pre-School Program is an inclusive pre-school program for 3 and 4 year olds with and without disabilities. This an innovative program that is offered to preschoolers who reside in areas served by the Shelby County School System. The Program is based on the philosophy of Developmentally Appropriate Practice which means the emphasis is on learning through a play-based, child-initiated approach. Instruction for each child is age appropriate as well as individually appropriate. The focus is to teach children how to learn rather than what to learn in order to facilitate their development and transition to kindergarten.

CLASSROOM POINT SYSTEM

Infraction	Points Lost
A. Profanity toward staff	5
B. Defiance toward staff	5
C. Bullying or name calling	5
D. Invading others' boundaries	5
<i>(Destruction of property, stealing, trading or selling of possessions, sexually acting out or inappropriate notes or drawings)</i>	
E. Hitting, profanity, horseplay, or threatening peers	5
F. Other inappropriate behavior on bus	3
G. Any other inappropriate behavior determined by staff	3
H. Need more than 2 staff cues	2
I. Feeding into peer negativity, provoking/annoying, name calling	2
J. Violation of dress code	2
K. Threatening Peers	1/2 day ISD

LEVEL PRIVILEGES

Entry Level

- No individual privileges
- Must eat in ISD Room with assigned aide/interventionist

Level 1

- Free time after academics
- Lunchroom privileges

Level 2

- Field trips
- Monitored Computer time

Level 3

- Seat preference on bus (for field trips)
- School helper
- Additional time for special activities arranged by staff
- Listen to music during free time

Level 4

- All Privileges
- Classroom leader
- Voting Member of Peer Review Committee
- Consideration for transition
- Seat preference in cafeteria
- Tea with lunch

STAR PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION

Philosophy

We believe in providing students with individualized educational opportunities and in developing self-motivated and self-disciplined students capable of responding to life's challenges in a socially acceptable manner; that given a safe, nurturing, and structured environment, with family and community as partners in education, all students are capable of learning.

Mission Statement

The goal of the STAR PROGRAM at the Linda Nolen Learning Center is to facilitate positive and lasting changes in a child's emotional and behavioral development in order for the child to function successfully in their family, school, and community.

Notes



Dr. Lewis Brooks, Superintendent
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