

Morgantown Learning Academy

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**Parent Handbook
Summer 2024**

Morgantown Learning Academy
Parent Handbook for Summer 2019

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Welcome

Welcome to Morgantown Learning Academy for what we hope will be your best educational experience ever.

Our goal is to provide you with the highest quality educational and fun summer care possible. Everyone in the MLA family is here to provide a caring, committed, educational, and enjoyable experience for you and your children.

This handbook is a reference guide for all the families that have chosen Morgantown Learning Academy for their summer child care. Please take the time to read the following pages carefully. They will probably answer questions you have and may give insight into the MLA community. If you have further questions please do not hesitate to call the school. One of our faculty or staff will be happy to assist you in any way that we can.

Eve Ammons Ward
Director

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History and Philosophy

Morgantown Learning Academy, formerly Morgantown Day School, is an incorporated, private, non-profit school. The school was established in 1963 and has expanded to include preschool, kindergarten, and grades 1-8. The purpose of Morgantown Learning Academy is to provide an alternative education of the highest quality for children of all racial, cultural, religious, and economic backgrounds. The MLA program is based on a child-centered philosophy that is committed to teaching children in the ways they learn best. The MLA summer program adheres to this philosophy and exists to continue to provide educational experiences for children throughout the summer months.

A Glance at Summer Program

The biggest question: What will my child be doing all day? We are always active and busy throughout the day at MLA. Children learn by doing and therefore we “do” a lot. The children learn each week about a different theme. There are appropriate and fun learning activities throughout the week focusing on the particular theme. For example, the theme may be gardening. Throughout the week they may learn about the plant life cycle; create an herb garden; research different kinds of gardens; write a book about flowers in WV; read stories to another class about plants; or discover the benefits of herbal remedies. The children also get a chance to explore the arts each week through daily physical education lessons, music, art, and craft experiences. Of course, we always take time for social interaction as well. There are weekly trips to the pool, and water play days at the facility as well as daily outside play time. Finally, with all of this energetic interactive play time, the students need some “down time” and so we have daily rest time for younger ones and silent reading and quiet game time for the older children.

We Start with the Child

The ways in which the activities mentioned above are structured emerge from an understanding of, and respect for, the ways that children learn. Our program is centered on the various needs, interests and learning styles of the children. Please remember that MLA may not, in all cases, be able to meet the unique needs of a particular student. In these rare instances, MLA and the parents may choose to make other arrangements for the child. Our belief is that school organizations should foster an environment in which children are encouraged to make guided choices, to assist children in setting and evaluating their own goals, and to help children feel a sense of participation in their education. Children will learn, optimally, the necessary independent skills to continue their development into active, confident and eager learners, within the foundation of participatory education.

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We Believe that Children Learn by Doing

Research in child development shows that children come to understand concepts through repeated active exploration of materials rather than solely through abstract descriptions. Our projects and activities are designed to encourage active, hands-on exploration and experimentation. A wide variety of manipulative materials are provided, and direct experience is emphasized so that a child is “doing” in addition to watching and listening. Children are encouraged to solve problems actively, to set their own goals, to evaluate their own progress, and to develop an ability to apply skills in real situations.

We Value Peer Interaction and Cooperation

At Morgantown Learning Academy, students learn from each other and stimulate one another’s interests. We teach children to work as members of a group. Cooperation, rather than competition, is fostered such that students are able to feel confident about their own contributions and abilities and are able to respect and learn from others.

We Create a Positive Self-image

Morgantown Learning Academy strives toward an educational atmosphere that emphasizes the development of self-confidence, self-direction, positive self-esteem, enthusiasm for learning, and self-initiated exploration.

We Use a Positive Approach to Discipline

Morgantown Learning Academy is a community of children and adults who spend many hours together each day. In order to ensure the safety of all, to create an atmosphere that builds respect for others, and to teach responsibility for one’s own actions, the school uses a positive approach to discipline. Corporal and psychologically abusive statements are considered inappropriate and are not used. Children are reminded of rules in positive ways: the reasons for rules are explained and the children are given support to resolve conflicts and solve problems as independently as possible. When necessary, the children are redirected to more appropriate activities. Students are included in the process of establishing limits and expectations, as well as the consequences for inappropriate behavior. Teachers take care to set classroom limits and expectations that are appropriate for young children.

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Policies and Procedures

Admissions Policy

Morgantown Learning Academy philosophy stresses the concept of education as a lifelong process involving the total person. MLA encourages students to reach their potential intellectually, artistically, socially and physically within an environment that fosters ethical behavior and social responsibility. MLA looks for children who demonstrate good character, intellectual ability, curiosity and a breadth of interests and who offer a promise of success and contribution to Morgantown Learning Academy.

For age levels in which there are more qualified applicants than openings, those qualified applicants will be placed in a waiting pool. If a vacancy occurs, the summer director will review the applicants and notify them of the vacancy.

Consideration will be given to the following factors, in no particular order, and decisions will be made based on the needs of each class and the best interest of the school.

- cultural and ethnic diversity
- gender balance
- qualified students for whom a place was not found in the previous year
- siblings of students previously enrolled
- children of alumni
- children of faculty and staff
- students with exceptional abilities or talents

Behavior Policy

Children and teachers will work together to create some classroom rules, in addition to school wide rules and consequences. The children attending summer day camp will also be participating in the behavior bank program. Failure to obey these rules will result in the following disciplinary action:

- Level 1 - Misbehavior at this level is taken care of within the classroom as per the list of rules generated by children and teachers.
- Level 2 - Misbehavior at this level is more serious and the child will be taken to the Director for a “cooling down” period and discussion. The parents/guardians will be notified, in writing.
- Level 3 - Misbehavior at this level occurs when the behavior by the child has either been repeated or is more serious. During this the parents will be notified, a conference will be set up, and the parents/guardians, teacher and child will write a contingency contract to be kept in the student’s file.

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- Level 4 - Misbehavior at this level occurs when a child breaks a contingency contract or is seen as a danger or threat to any faculty member or student, determined by the faculty. The parents/guardians will be notified immediately and will be asked to remove the child from the school environment. Level 4 misbehavior results in a one to three day suspension at the discretion of the faculty.
- Level 5 – Misbehavior at this level occurs when a child is suspended two times or has continued to show repeated misbehaviors with no improvements. If a student has reached this level, the Directors and parents will be notified and the child will be asked to leave the school permanently.

Illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, handguns, or other weapons are strictly forbidden on the campus of MLA. Any student possessing these substances will be immediately suspended and his or her continued enrollment reviewed by the Directors.

Medication Procedure and Policy

The policy regarding the administration of medicine, prescribed and over-the-counter, is as follows:

All medicine, including vitamins or herbal/nutritional supplements, must be registered with the Director or Office Manager in the office. A prescription from a doctor must accompany any medicine to be administered. A medication slip must be filled out and must accompany the medicine. This slip may be obtained from the office and kept on file in the office. On the slip you will be required to fill in the student's name, the date and time the medication is to be administered, the specified dosage that is to be administered, and the name of the medication. The medication must be in its original container with the instructions for dosage and administration clearly written on the label. Prescription medication must contain the name of the prescribing physician. Any MLA faculty member may administer medication. The person administering medication will be responsible for recording their action in a log kept in the office. All medicine will be kept in a locked area of the Director's office, unless refrigeration is required. Refrigerated medicines will be kept in the kitchen refrigerator. Students do not have access to the kitchen without adult supervision.

Communications Procedure

Parents are informed about events, deadlines, and general information about the summer program through a weekly letter written by the summer program coordinator. It is located in the front entryway every Monday or Tuesday for parents to pick up. There are also signs, white boards, and bulletin boards that have information posted on them. Telephone communication is also done on an as needed basis. Parents may contact the office between the hours of 7:30 am and 4:00 pm for information or to schedule an appointment with a member of the faculty or staff.

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Electronics Policy

The phone is for MLA business use only. Students may not use the phone without permission from an MLA staff member. Phone calls will not be made to determine if a student may leave with another student. Students will not be released to an unauthorized person without prior written permission from a parent or guardian.

Students may have cell phones in their backpacks but MAY NOT use them without teacher permission. Please do not send electronics to MLA with your children. This includes all iPads/ iPods/ Kindles/ etc.

Snack Procedure and Policy

Campers will be given the opportunity to have snacks during the course of the day. These snacks must be supplied by the parents, and be **Peanut-Free**.

Lunch Procedure and Policy

Lunch is from 11:30 am until 12:00 pm everyday. A 30-minute recess period follows. Parents are responsible for providing a suitable lunch for their child(ren). Should you forget to provide lunch for your child(ren), MLA will provide, at your expense, lunch for your child(ren).

Microwaves are not available for student use. Please do not send food which requires cooking in the microwave. No frozen meals. MLA does not provide refrigeration for lunches, so please pack lunches in a suitable container with an ice pack as necessary. Please DO send utensils and condiments for your child's lunch. Due to the increasing amount of nut related allergies, **MLA is a PEANUT-FREE SCHOOL**. MLA asks that you refrain from sending peanut products to school with your child. Please make sure that you send a bottle of water with your child every day.

Kitchen and Faculty Lounge Policy

Students are not permitted in the kitchen or faculty lounge without adult supervision.

Playground Procedure and Policy

Playground Supervision

- Supervisors must be able to see all students at all times.
- Supervisors must circulate through the playground area.

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- Supervisors must periodically check students using equipment.
- A minimum of 2 adults must be present when any group of students is on break. Supervisors should be on opposite ends of the play area.
- Keep gates closed at all times.
- Students are never to be unattended while on school property.
- An incident report must be filled out when an injury occurs and the appropriate classroom teacher must be notified.
- All students are expected to follow the Playground Rules listed below.

Playground Rules (Students)

- Use equipment properly (i.e. no twisting swings)
- Always watch for younger students.
- No physical violence or threats.
- Share equipment and play space.
- Never leave the play area without adult permission.
- Look for an adult to help solve problems and follow their directions.
- Use the designated path between the playground and the school building.
- Use the designated path between sections of the playground.

Appropriate Playground Discipline

If inappropriate behavior occurs (e.g. physical aggression, taunting/harassing of another student, disrespect to an adult, and so on), the following steps should be followed:

- Students are asked to begin a time-out period.
- After this cooling off period, adults will approach the student for a discussion of inappropriate behavior, and a more appropriate behavior choice. Time out is then completed.
- Repeated incidents should be referred to the classroom teacher and/or directors.

Student Release Procedure and Policy

We ask that all parents drop off and pick up their children personally. If a caregiver or other person is to pick up or drop off please notify the office in writing. Students will not be released to an unauthorized person without written permission from a parent or guardian. A written list of authorized persons must be kept on file in the office. The authorized persons must be knowledgeable of your specific family code word and must have a valid picture ID.

Pick Up/Drop Off

Parents or guardians picking up and dropping off students are required to sign them in and out on the sheet located in the front entryway of the school. This is very important to the safety of your child! Also, if your child is enrolled as a part time attendant and you do not sign your child out, you may be charged extra for that week as we do not have an accurate count of hours of attendance.

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Car Seat and Booster Policy

West Virginia state law **now** mandates booster seats for children under the age of eight unless they are four feet nine inches or taller in height. If your child's class is going on a field trip, you need to drop the seat off with them.

Billing and Payment Policy

MLA depends on you to pay all owed money in a timely manner. Without your cooperation in this matter, the summer program cannot function. In addition, we cannot afford to spend the large amount of time or money it takes to deal with late payments and returned checks.

Tuition payments are due by 5:00 pm on the Monday beginning the week of service or may be paid in full at any point in time. Payment is due for every week, workshop, clinic, or camp that is indicated on the application. There will be a \$5.00 per business day late fee penalty for payments not received by 5:00 pm Tuesday in the week in which service is provided. In addition to the initial \$5.00 per business day late fee, if a balance is still outstanding at the end of 30 days, it will then be assessed cumulatively a 1% per month interest late penalty. Payments may be made in the office or put into the black dropoff box located by the double doors outside of the office .

The charge for each and every check returned NSF from the bank is \$50 plus charges applied to MLA by our bank. If your check is returned NSF from the bank, you must pay the original amount plus all charges in cash or a cashier's check. If a total of 2 (two) checks are returned NSF in any 1 (one) year, all future payments must be made in cash or with a cashier's check. Please use your notice from your bank to realize you have a returned check. Do not wait for us to contact you.

Please attach a completed Summer Payment Form to your payment. Summer Payment Forms will be available beside the Red Payment Box in the lobby of the Main Office. For your own protection, do not put cash into the red box without first obtaining a written receipt.

Please do not ask us to hold postdated checks until a future date. Put it into the box when you know it will clear the bank, and include any late fees (\$5.00 per day), if applicable.

Please understand that although we do not want to be inhuman in our approach to money, we can not afford the time or the cost involved in being less than business-like. Thank you for your attention in this matter. Your cooperation will make the Office Manager's life much easier, and help to ensure the survival of MLA.

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Deposits

All deposits are non-refundable. The deposit will be refunded if and only if you are NOT accepted, if MLA cancels a workshop, or if someone from the waitlist takes your child's place. Your deposits are as follows and will be applied to the last week of camp that your child is enrolled for.

Camp- \$175.00 for Non-MLA Campers & \$160 for MLA Campers

Workshops - \$50.00 per workshop

Tuition

Day Camp

- **Full Time**

Non-MLA student cost is \$175 per week.

MLA student cost is \$160 per week.

Workshops: Prices vary for workshops, please see application.