



LiFT Academy Student & Parent Handbook 2026 -2027

THE LiFT PROMISE

To maintain an uplifting and thriving community

FAMILIES WILL EXPERIENCE



Genuine Care & Responsiveness

Families will feel respected, supported, and confident that their questions, concerns, and needs are heard and addressed promptly.



Clear, Consistent Communication

Families will receive timely, transparent, and clear information about their child's progress, school events & expectations, and important updates.



A True Sense of Belonging

Families will feel welcomed, included, and valued as active members of the school community.



Partnership in Student Success

Families will feel empowered, encouraged, and equipped to actively support their child's growth while fostering a sense of community among other LiFT families.

FAMILIES WILL DEMONSTRATE



Respect & Constructive Engagement

Families will interact with all staff in a respectful, courteous, and solution-oriented manner, recognizing the professionalism and dedication of the school team.



Open & Timely Communication

Families will communicate questions, concerns, and relevant information promptly and directly, and review school email communications to stay informed.



Support for the School Community

Families will contribute to a positive, inclusive environment by supporting school policies, participating when appropriate, and fostering a sense of community.



Active Partnership in Student Success

Families will reinforce school expectations at home, collaborate with staff, and take an active role in supporting their child's growth and progress.

Handbook Purpose

The handbook was designed to provide each family with the rules, guidelines, and procedures for the students and the school community. We want each family and student to be informed and prepared before attending.

Please read this handbook in its entirety with your student before the first day of school. LiFT families and students are expected to be familiar with the handbook to follow the rules and regulations as previously stated in the enrollment application.

LiFT reserves the right to interpret, add, delete, or modify all rules, guidelines, and procedures contained in this handbook as deemed necessary at any time with parent notification. Parents/Guardians should direct any questions concerning the information contained in this document to their student's teacher and/or for clarity.

Please Note:

- The handbook does not serve to contractually bind LiFT in any way.
- The handbook is subject to change without notice by the LiFT Board of Directors.

Meet:

- Chief Executive Officer: Matt Spence
- Chief Development Officer: Julie Perrelli
- Chief Operating Officer: Eric Kozlowski
- Chief of Staff: Kelley Brickfield
- Director of IT & Facilities: Chris Couture
- LiFT University Transition Program Director: Ashley Hill
- Assistant Director of Learning & Teaching: Kristen Toscano
- Assistant Director of Student Success: Shari Coplin
- Administrative Specialist: Ericka Kuzmanovic

School Address:

1005 S. Highland Avenue South, Clearwater, Florida 33756

School Hours:

Elementary Students (grades K-5): 8:00am to 2:30pm

- Drop off between 7:40 – 8:00; Pickup between 2:30 – 2:50

Middle and High School Students (grades 6-12): 8:30am to 3:00pm

- Drop off between 8:10 – 8:30; Pickup between 3:00 – 3:20

Extended Care Hours (School Days Only):

Before Care: 7:00 – 8:00 Elementary School
7:00 – 8:30 Middle and High school

After Care: 2:30 – 6:00 Elementary School
3:00 – 6:00 Middle School

Elementary students dropped off before 7:40 and Middle/High School students dropped off before 8:10 will be admitted to before care and families will be charged accordingly.

Office Hours:

Monday through Friday 7:00am to 3:30pm

Contact Information:

Phone: 727-258-7659

Email: Info@liffll.org

School Website: www.liffll.org

Parents/Guardians Web: www.FACTSmgmt.com

Uniform Ordering: Uniform Orders should be placed on www.liffll.org/uniforms.

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LiFT's Mission

To inspire and empower people with neurodiversity to learn, thrive and succeed.

Our Vision

A world where independence is possible for the neurodiverse.

Our Values

Our Values at LiFT begin with a fervent belief that each learner comes to value and view their individual uniqueness and diversity as a gift that will be celebrated. Equally important is for each learner to respect the differences found in one another.

Our Motto

Change a Life, Change the World.

The LiFT CODE:

COMMUNITY

"There is no 'them' and 'us'. There is only us."

Greg Boyle

This element of the Knights CODE is about how we see ourselves as a group – who is welcome here and what kind of place we want to build. Open, inclusive, bridge-building.

OPPORTUNITY

"Look at the possibilities and not the problems. Be part of the solution, not part of the problem."

Eunice Kennedy Shriver

This element of the Knights CODE is about how we see our role in the world – what we can accomplish and what we are willing to try. Brave, hopeful, open to possibility.

DIGNITY

"Knowing that we can be loved exactly as we are gives us all the best opportunity for growing into the healthiest of people."

Mr. (Fred) Rogers

This element of the Knights CODE is about how we treat ourselves and each other – how we interact and how we carry ourselves. Kind, thoughtful, accepting of differences.

EXCELLENCE

"Believe in yourself, learn, and never stop wanting to build a better world."

Mary McLeod Bethune

This element of the Knights CODE is about what we expect of ourselves and encourage in others – our effort, the quality of our product. Pride, diligence, pushing to be our best.

Admissions Policies and Procedures

Admission Statement

LiFT Academy is a non-profit private school serving grades K-12.

Non-Discriminatory Policy

LiFT admits students of any race, color, and national ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate based on race, color, or national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarships, and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. However, we reserve the right to dismiss or refuse admission to anyone unwilling to comply with the school's regulations or meet academic or behavioral standards.

Accommodations

Accommodations allow for a change in how a student learns or demonstrates knowledge, without altering the expectations or curriculum standards. They are designed to provide equal access to instruction and assessments-supporting students in reaching the same goals as their peers. Accommodations may include:

- Work with fewer items per page or line and/or materials in larger print size.
- Verbal presentation of items and answer choices.
- Verbal presentation of instructions/prompts.
- Give responses in a form (oral or written) that is easier to understand.
- Take more time to complete a task or test.
- Take frequent breaks, such as after completing a task.

Modifications

Modifications Represent a change made to what a student is expected to learn and demonstrate. Modifications alter content, performance expectations, or assessment criteria to better match the student's individual learning needs. Modifications may include:

- Complete fewer or different homework problems than peers.
- Write shorter papers.
- Answer fewer or different test questions.
- Learn different material (such as continuing to work on multiplication while classmates move on to fractions).
- Get graded or assessed using a different standard than the one for classmate.

Returning Student Enrollment Requirements

All LiFT students must be re-enrolled annually. All forms must be completed, and all fees paid before a student can enroll, re-enroll, and is accepted.

Re-enrollment will take place as follows:

- Parents/guardians will be notified via the LiFT weekly newsletter when the enrollment form will be open.
- All families must complete the application each year on FACTS and pay the enrollment fee. The enrollment fee holds your spot for the following school year.
- Key personnel may admit or choose to deny the applicant and will notify as appropriate.
- For students with a FES-UA or other state scholarship (Step Up for Students), the Award ID must be provided to the school prior to the first day of school. Failure to do so will result in parent responsibility for monthly payment plans at the full tuition amount.

Grounds For Reversal of Acceptance

Acceptance to LiFT may be reversed if there is evidence that the information provided to the school has been falsified. If an attempt has been made to gain acceptance by falsifying information, the student will not be permitted to attend school even if prior acceptance has been granted.

Confidentiality

LiFT is committed to protecting personally identifiable and proprietary information in compliance with all applicable laws. We collect only necessary information to support educational and operational needs.

Student information may include, but is not limited to, name, birth details, contact information, and medical documentation. This data is stored securely in FACTS SIS, where families are responsible for adhering to the Technology Acceptable Use Policy.

Families may opt in or out of sharing personal information in directories, websites, and social media during registration.

LiFT also manages internal company information (e.g., schedules, directories, records) for operational use only. Distribution of such information is limited to internal purposes as needed.

Release Of Student Records

LiFT requires a signed and dated Records Release Form before disclosing any student information, unless an exception under law applies. The release must specify the records, purpose, and recipient.

Standard Release Process:

- Records must be picked up in person by authorized parties.
- Schools may submit requests via email with a parent-signed release if the student is under 18.

- Requests from the Florida department of Health or Social Security Administration are accepted.

Exceptions (No Release Required):

Records may be disclosed without prior consent to:

- Federal or state education authorities for audits or program compliance
- Financial aid purposes
- Accrediting organizations
- Emergency personnel to protect health and safety
- Compliance with court orders/subpoenas (with notification unless prohibited)
- Parents/guardians of students (ages 18–21) regarding substance violations
- The student or their parent/guardian if over 18

Tuition And Fees

The enrollment fees must be paid prior to the first day of school. The school operating budget is maintained by tuition. Families are required to sign up through FACTS and select their payment date and method of payment. Past due payments will incur an automatic \$25.00 late fee if not paid by the monthly due date. A processing fee of \$40.00 will be charged by FACTS for all returned checks.

- The enrollment fee includes access to FACTS SIS, MAP assessments, technology fees, and other miscellaneous fees.
- Tuition includes textbooks, e-textbooks, consumables, assignment agenda book, and any other classroom curriculum.

2026-2027 Tuition & Enrollment Rates:

- K-8th Grade: \$14,500
- 9th – 12th Grade: \$17,000
- The FACTS tuition management system processes payments for tuition **and** before-school care; this account needs to be set up by families prior to August 1.
- Step Up for Students scholarship award amounts will be subtracted from total tuition before the parent/guardian payment plan is created. We are a private school, and thus parents/guardians are responsible for all tuition not covered by a scholarship.
- In the rare instance that your scholarship covers the full tuition, families are still required to have an account set up with FACTS to ensure proper accounting of scholarship funds received.

Parent/Guardian Tuition Payments:

Annual tuition is the responsibility of the parent/guardian of each student. While we provide the courtesy of subtracting the expected Step Up for Students scholarship amount from the total tuition before monthly payment plans are finalized, parents must understand that any promised Step Up for Students funds not received will become the responsibility of the parent/guardian to pay.

To create payment plans, the balance of annual tuition not covered by scholarships is divided into ten equal payments, due from families monthly from August – May of each school year. Payment plans are set up in FACTS, and we recommend each family set up their payments on auto-pay to avoid late fees.

As a private school dedicated to the unique needs of neurodiverse students, LiFT depends on every tuition dollar to operate our school. In turn, we rely on our families to make their monthly payments on time to ensure we can continue to deliver the quality education your children deserve.

FACTS sends email payment reminder notices, past due notices, and payment confirmations to ensure parents are routinely notified of pending amounts due. LiFT also follows up on past due payments with our own monthly email and phone calls.

If you experience financial hardships during the school year, please reach out to our Chief of Staff to confidentially explain your situation. LiFT is committed to partnering with our families to make high quality education for neurodiverse students accessible, but we can't assist if you don't proactively reach out.

- **Families whose accounts reach 60 days past due will be notified that your student will be unable to attend school until your account is brought current. Should accounts reach 90 days past due, we will open the seat up to new families.**
- **Formal exceptions may be made in writing by LiFT leadership only, and would supersede timelines listed above.**

Step Up for Students Scholarships

LiFT accepts Step Up for Students (SUFS) Scholarships such as FES-UA and FES-EO, along with Florida Tax Credit scholarships. These scholarships fall under the Parent Choice program of the Florida Department of Education and are the sole responsibility of parents/guardians to manage.

FES-UA, FES-EO, and FTC scholarship recipient's **families assume financial responsibility for any unpaid portion of tuition, including Step Up for Students funding not received.**

To ensure continuation of scholarship funding, both from LiFT and the state of Florida, daily attendance is expected. Excessive absences and/or a GPA in any class lower than 2.5 may result in the scholarship's removal

Deadlines:

Step Up for Students' scholarships require parent/guardian enrollment approvals on EMA (the SUFS system) in the month of July each school year, and quarterly approvals of fund disbursements.

In order to ensure the timely receipt of funds to cover the operation of the school, **vigilance on the part of parents/guardians in approving these requests is paramount.**

The parent **approval timeline** is as follows:

- **Prior to the start of school, after providing your child's Award ID:** enrollment approval
- **Q1 invoice approval:** within 30 days of email notification, in August
- **Q2 invoice approval:** within 30 days of email notification, in October
- **Q3 invoice approval:** within 30 days of email notification, in February
- **Q4 invoice approval:** within 30 days of email notification, in April

- Parents/Guardians should immediately approve all requests listed above. Approvals outside the timelines listed above can result in non-receipt of scholarship funds.
- Parents/guardians are ultimately responsible for each year's full tuition, so timely attention to the required approvals is in everyone's best interest.

LiFT Board Scholarships

LiFT also offers a LiFT Board Scholarship. Applications for these financial-need based scholarships are submitted in the Grant & Aid section of the FACTS tuition management system, as long as funds remain. The FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment team conducts the financial need analysis for those scholarships, and the specifics are not disclosed to LiFT staff.

We expect all families to participate in the funding of their child's education and therefore the LiFT Board Scholarships will not cover 100% of tuition.

Additionally, because funds are limited, they are awarded on a needs basis until funds are depleted.

As part of the application process on FACTS, the following information must be submitted.

- Copies of your most recent Federal Tax forms including all supporting tax schedules.
- Copies of your most recent W-2 forms for both you and your spouse, if applicable.
- Copies of supporting documentation for Social Security Income, Welfare, Child Support, Food Stamps,
- Workers' Compensation and TANF.

All applicants will be contacted by the LiFT team prior to the start of school to relay the status of your scholarship application.

Withdrawals, Refunds, and Tuition Balances

LiFT asks parents/guardians to make every effort to complete each semester before making changes regarding enrollment. If a family chooses to unenroll their student all accounts must be paid to receive release of records, report cards, and/or transcripts. This includes pro-rated tuition, service hours, extended care payments, and outstanding textbooks, or other fees.

Student Academic Policies

LiFT Academy provides a nurturing setting where students of all levels are supported through small class sizes, personalized accommodations, and evidence-based teaching practices to foster academic, emotional, social, and behavioral growth.

- **LiFT Support Plan (LSP):**
While LiFT is not bound by IDEA or Section 504, each student receives a LiFT Support Plan within 30–45 days of enrollment. The LSP is a non-legal internal document used to guide accommodations and modifications that support each student's learning.
- **Academic Honesty:**
Students are expected to maintain integrity in all academic work.
- **Grade Placement:**
Grade placement is determined individually based on shadow day observations, assessments (MAP and in-class), and collaboration between families and key

personnel to meet each student's needs. Students will not be moved between grade levels without consultation with the student's family.

- **Assessments:**

Assessments help guide instruction, evaluate progress, and identify needed support. Data is used to inform accommodations, curriculum adjustments, and LSP development. All students are expected to actively and appropriately participate in these assessments.

- **Report Cards:**

Students receive report cards quarterly. Progress can be monitored anytime via the FACTS SIS Parent Portal.

Grading Scale:

A: 90-100

B: 80-89

C: 70-79

D: 60-69

F: 59 or below

Homework:

LiFT desires excellence for our students both on campus and off. Homework allows the student to learn how to become an initiative-taking individual. LiFT provides at home assignments to be completed according to the instructions given by each teacher. These assignments should be completed by the student to develop academically, promote responsibility, and help reinforce learning.

Tests And Quizzes:

LiFT will incorporate testing based upon curriculum maps. Preparing for tests helps students to hone their organizational skills, improve their memory skills, and learn through practice and repetition. Taking tests helps students improve their ability to work under pressure and analyze and synthesize material.

Make Up Work / / Request for Assignments

Parents/Guardians must call your student's first period teacher to report absences or tardiness. To request homework, please contact the student's teacher(s).

- **Excused Absences:**

Students are responsible for making up missed work and tests. They have the same number of days as they were absent to complete all assignments.

- **Anticipated Absences:**

Notify the office and teachers in advance. If work is provided before the absence, it is due upon return. Any additional assignments must be completed within one week. Missed tests will be given within the first week back.

Standardized Testing:

LiFT Academy will administer the MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) in grades K-12, three times a year. The first MAP assessment will be given within the first 4 weeks of school, the second in the month of December, and the third during April or May. Students' test results will be shared with parents/guardians.

Physical Education:

LiFT students are required to participate in a physical education class unless they have a reasonable exception in writing from the parent/guardian signed by a physician.

Florida State Standards

LiFT has chosen to establish the use of the Florida State Standards. LiFT students will be assessed using the Florida State Standards as well the MAP assessments throughout the year.

Graduation Requirements:

- **Standard High School Diploma**
Awarded to students who have completed the 24-credit program with a passing grade and can demonstrate independent mastery of the grade level rigor of the Florida State Standards, as required by the state of Florida.
- **Standard High School Diploma With Amended Course Numbers**
Awarded to students who have completed the 24-credit program with a passing grade through the use of adapted content, methodology, and below grade level rigor of the Florida State Standards.

Promotion, Retention, And Re-Enrollment Criteria:

LiFT determines grade placement for students on an individual basis to decide which academic plan best suits their needs. If a student receives unsatisfactory marks in the core subjects (English, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics), and the MAP assessment reveals concerns a discussion may occur concerning the student's promotion or retention. The final decision lies with the key personnel and families.

Student Code of Conduct Policies

Building a Positive Culture at LiFT Academy

At LiFT Academy, we are committed to creating a welcoming and affirming environment where every student can thrive. Our focus is on fostering academic, social, emotional, and personal growth through meaningful relationships, supportive interventions, and a culture of mutual respect. We view our school community as a partnership among students, families, educators, and support professionals. Together, we promote consistency, encouragement, and understanding. We believe that cultivating a positive school culture begins with honoring each individual's strengths, respecting differences, and ensuring that all students feel valued and included.

Community Expectations

At LiFT, our goal is to nurture academic and personal growth in a safe, supportive environment. To maintain this atmosphere, all members of our community are expected to treat one another with kindness, respect, and dignity, and to engage positively in the learning process.

Students who experience ongoing challenges that affect the classroom environment will be supported through collaborative problem-solving, interventions, and accommodations. While some students may require individualized strategies or additional services, our commitment is to work together with families and support teams to help every learner succeed.

Our Approach to Support

LiFT emphasizes proactive, team-based practices designed to prevent challenges, build positive skills, and promote independence. We prioritize:

- Defining and teaching schoolwide expectations in ways that are clear, accessible, and inclusive.
- Addressing challenges through our **Knights CODE** framework, which emphasizes respect, responsibility, and community.
- Using data and feedback to guide decisions, measure progress, and adapt supports.

Collaborative Response Framework

We recognize that every student communicates needs in different ways, and behaviors are often expressions of underlying challenges or stressors. To respond effectively, we use a tiered system of support:

Level 1: Everyday challenges (e.g., calling out, leaving seat, work refusal, unkind comments)

- Classroom teachers and assistants provide gentle redirection, utilize best practices and classroom management strategies, modeling, positive reinforcement and encouragement.
- If challenges persist, the teacher will partner with the family and school team to discuss additional support(s).

Level 2: Ongoing or disruptive challenges (e.g., teasing, dishonesty, academic dishonesty, disrespect, misuse of property and technology)

- Teachers continue to provide direct support and document incidents in FACTS to track patterns.
- If challenges continue to significantly disrupt learning or raise safety concerns, collaborative problem-solving will be initiated with key staff and family members.

Level 3: Serious safety concerns (e.g., physical aggression, harassment, property destruction, reoccurring academic dishonesty, possession of harmful items, or unsafe behaviors)

- Administrators or the Student Success Specialist will partner directly with the student and family to ensure immediate safety and develop a plan of support.
- In rare cases where safety cannot be maintained despite interventions, additional disciplinary actions (including suspension or transition planning) may be considered, always in alignment with LiFT's policies and care for the student's dignity.
- LiFT staff utilize physical restraint in imminent crisis situations. If a student is a danger to themselves or others within the immediate vicinity, restraint certification trained LiFT staff may utilize non-violent physical intervention to maintain the physical safety of the student, peers, and other staff. If the student requires frequent physical restraint (multiple times per week), LiFT's administration team will collaborate with parents to discuss the student's needs.

Bullying Policy

LiFT has a zero-tolerance stance on bullying. Bullying is defined as repeated, unwanted, and harmful behavior involving an imbalance of power. Examples include threats, spreading rumors, exclusion, and physical or verbal aggression. All reports of bullying are taken seriously and addressed promptly. Responses focus both on supporting the student who has been harmed and helping the student who engaged in bullying behavior to understand impact, learn new strategies, and repair relationships. Suspension or expulsion may occur if bullying behavior persists or escalates.

Behavior Levels	Behaviors Displayed	Prevention Level	Leveled Interventions
Level 1	Calling out, work refusal, leaving seat, unkind comments, off task, sleeping, distracting peers during instruction (in the form of: verbally calling to peers, using hand gestures and tossing items to peers in the classroom...etc.)	<u>Classroom Management</u>: class wide positive reinforcement system (ex: points, tokens, stars, group competition, class v class period competition, weekly student acknowledgement...etc.) Vocal, gestural, and visual redirection, Adult and peer modeling of expectations	Positive Practice: (assisting the student in practicing the desired behavior multiple times and providing positive feedback after the final practice ex: prompt student to practice raising our hand quietly 3xs, provide positive verbal feedback along the way and after the third successful display of raising a quiet hand) Modeling Reminders Frequent reinforcement for desired behaviors
Level 2	Repetitive lying/dishonesty, academic dishonesty (cheating), verbal and object-based aggression, teasing, misuse of technology and school property, repeatedly leaving an area without permission, repeated/consistent level 1 behaviors (more than 7 level	Maintain classroom management, level 1 positive reinforcement system and parental contact Documentation in FACTS to track a pattern of behavior Parent/teacher meeting & communication Involve support staff in classroom observations and conversations regarding behaviors	Meet with parents if the behavior occurs more than twice Student Support and Success team will conduct classroom observations once a pattern of behavior has been established Create point/data sheet to track positive behaviors and reinforce

	one behaviors in a week)	Collaborative approach with parents, staff, related services and any additional therapies where applicable	desired behavior using “I” statements and describing desired behaviors Include related service providers and/or additional therapy partners in conversations, creation of point sheet and additional tier 2 interventions Think and/or Reflection sheet to reflect on displayed behavior(s) and identify positive coping strategies
Level 3	Physical Aggression that causes harm or that includes the intent to harm, Bullying/Harassment, possession of unsafe or harmful material or items, repeated academic dishonesty, repeated/consistent level 2 behaviors (more than 7 level 2 behaviors in a week)	Maintain level 1 & 2 prevention strategies within the environment Maintain student safety (student displaying behavior as well as peers- evacuate additional peers if necessary) Document incident(s) in FACTS	Call for immediate assistance to your location Response blocking when necessary Level 3 behaviors that consistently disrupt the learning environment (cause teaching/instruction to stop), put staff and students at risk of danger or are repeated (ex: aggression causing harm or with the intent to harm, occurring more than once per week and/or more than 3x’s per month), will be discussed/evaluated on a case-by-case basis by administration

Attendance And Tardiness

Attendance is taken every day in each one of our classrooms by 8:30 am. The families of the students who did not send any communications of expected absence will be marked as *Unexcused Absence*.

Parents/Guardians must email or call your student's first period teacher the morning of an absence or tardy and it will be recorded as excused.

Late Arrival or Early Release

Students are expected to be present and ready to learn during the entire class period. Any student who is tardy or leaving early must check in and out at the front office.

Dress Requirements

The school's philosophy is that both dress and appearance should be clean, neat, and modest. Students should not dress in such a way that would detract from the educational process or mission of LiFT. Parental review and support prior to leaving for school are important aspects of meeting dress code standards. Students who are not properly dressed will not be allowed to attend class without permission from key personnel. Further, students out of compliance with the dress code may be asked to change, or if necessary, to call home for a clothing change to be brought to school or dismissed early.

Dress Code for Grades K-12 Includes the Following:

- **Shirts:** Royal blue, navy blue, black, white, or grey, collared or non-collared. All students are required to have at least one royal blue shirt with the current LiFT logo. This can be ordered through the school website. Hoodies are allowed if they are free from offensive graphics or text and **hood must be kept off head**.
- **Pants or Shorts:** Khaki, navy, gray, or black. Girls may wear khaki, navy, gray, or black colored skirts or dresses **with shorts underneath**, skorts, or capri pants.
 - **Not permitted:** jeans, leggings, terrycloth pants/sweatpants, anything see-through, baggy or sagging pants.
- **Shorts and Skirts:** Hemline should be slightly above the knee or longer.
- **Shoes:** Closed-toe shoes only. No combat or steel-toed boots, slides or slippers. For all students, heels must be one inch or shorter.
- **Accessories:** Girls may wear pierced earrings. No other visible body piercings are allowed.
- **PE:** Students taking PE are encouraged to wear a LiFT PE shirt, which can be ordered through the school website. Students may either wear their PE shirt underneath their uniform or change prior to class. Students may wear their khaki shorts to PE or change into black or navy-blue athletic shorts. Shoes must be sneakers and socks must be worn with the sneakers. No jackets will be worn during PE unless the weather dictates.
- **Backpacks:** Backpacks with or without wheels are acceptable.

Technology Acceptable Use Policies

Purpose

LiFT provides students, faculty and staff access to its computer network and internet for educational use.

Responsibilities

Users must access LiFT's electronic resources responsibly, ethically, and in line with handbook rules.

Unacceptable Activities

Violations include, but are not limited to:

- Using malicious or invasive software
- Unauthorized access to LiFT systems or networks
- Copyright infringement (software, files, etc.)
- Sharing or stealing passwords
- Plagiarism
- Accessing or altering others' files
- Using personal devices without permission
- Viewing or sharing offensive, explicit, or degrading content
- Misusing cameras or devices inappropriately or in private spaces
- Sharing harmful, discriminatory, or harassing messages or images

Personal Safety

Listed below are precautions considered paramount by LiFT to ensure the safety of students, employees, and other individuals.

- **Personal Contact Information:** Students will not post or email personal contact information about themselves or others unless it is with a specific staff member/teacher approved assignment.
- **Inappropriate Messages:** Students will promptly disclose to an administrator, teacher, or team member any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes anyone feel uncomfortable.

Expectation Of Privacy

Individuals should not have an expectation of privacy in the use of LiFT's email, equipment, or Internet access points.

Limited Liability

LiFT makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the LiFT Network will be error-free or without defects. LiFT will not be responsible for any damage suffered, including but not limited to loss of data or interruptions of service. LiFT is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. LiFT will not be responsible for financial obligations arising from the use of the system. You are responsible for your activities.

Telephones:

There are school telephones in every classroom that may be used by the adults in the room.

Cell Phones and Other Personal Digital Devices:

Students may bring a cell phone on campus as long as the requirements below are consistently met:

- **Cell phones and all other personal digital devices will be collected by the homeroom teacher (1st period for Middle and High School students) and remain there until dismissal.**

- Personal electronic devices may be kept by the student only if specified in their LSP
- Homeroom teachers will place all phones and other devices in the assigned classroom technology holder.
- Tardy students will arrive via the front office and turn in their devices for safekeeping in the office before going to class.
- Students who are seen with cell phoners or other personal digital devices after homeroom will receive a behavior report and a simultaneous written warning.
 - If a student refuses to turn in their phone after receiving this warning, a parent meeting will be conducted and that student will no longer be permitted to bring their device(s) on campus.
- If a student takes another student's phone or device without permission (stealing), the following steps will be taken:
 - The student will receive a behavior report
 - Parents will be contacted immediately
 - The student will be suspended pending an investigation. The student may not return to school until the investigation is concluded and parent meeting has been held.
- Cell phones may not be used in extended care, unless given permission by the teacher or key personnel. Cell phone misuse will result in confiscation and the parent/guardian will be called to pick up the phone in person.

In the event of an emergency, parents/guardians should call the school office at 727-258-7659.

Electronics Policy:

- All electronics are to be used for educational purposes only.
- Students may not listen to music on any device with headphones unless it is on their LSP or they have been given permission by a team member.
- Students may not surf the web on any electronic device unless directed by a team member.

Internet Usage:

Please read the Internet Usage & Technology Acceptable Use Policy found at the end of this document. The form must be signed, dated, and returned to school prior to the beginning of school.

Health and Safety

LiFT works diligently to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all students. Parental cooperation with school health and safety policies is necessary to avoid accidents and properly care for students. Safety rules for students are posted throughout the school. These rules are discussed with students for the health and safety of all concerned. Students must report any unsafe conditions or talk of potentially hazardous conditions to the teachers or key personnel.

Student Relationships

LiFT Academy is co-educational, operating on the premise that it is wholesome for any gender to develop many friendships during school. We discourage dating classmates at school because it can be a distraction and may cause dissension among the student body.

Outward shows of affection such as holding hands, having arms around one another, and body contact will be prohibited during school and all school activities. To discourage temptation, it is not permissible for young people to pair up and linger or meet in halls, rooms, or out-of-the-way places. Any dating students will be expected to keep that relationship at home with parental supervision.

Dating is reserved for home time, not school time. This allows everyone to become friends and learn to socialize and communicate appropriately. Avoid inappropriate displays of affection on campus or at any school-sponsored activities. All students need to respect personal space.

Transportation: Approved Pick Up List

A parent/guardian must list the family members and/or friends they would like to be able to pick up their child(ren) from school within their Enrollment Packet. A parent/guardian can also add individuals to their list throughout the school year by sending a signed letter or email to the school email address (info@liffll.org). An unknown individual may be asked to park and/or show proper identification prior to the student being released. Those who are not on the approved list will not be allowed to pick up your child. This is for the safety of all LiFT students.

Ride Share Services

LiFT abides by the policies upheld by rideshare companies and/or mobility on demand services.

Carpooling

No staff member at LiFT may drive any student and/or family member to or from school. Carpooling arrangements can be made amongst LiFT Families provided that a carpool permission form has been filled out by the family and returned to administration before beginning to carpool.

Student Drivers

Any student who holds a current, valid Florida driver's license and has a safe driving record may park in the designated campus parking area. The campus speed limit of 5 mph, traffic flow patterns, and student parking designations must all be observed.

Vehicles may not be visited or driven during school hours without prior permission. All vehicles are subject to search at any time without prior notice.

Immunizations

A parent/guardian is expected to submit as well as keep their children's immunizations and health records up to date with LiFT. Immunization records must be submitted upon initial enrollment and maintained as required by the state thereafter until all required immunizations are complete. These requirements for submission are in accordance with the Florida Statutes. Failure to ensure these records are current will result in temporary dismissal until your child's records are updated. Immunizations should be updated using the current

Florida State HRS 680 –blue card or an exemption for religious circumstances certificate. These records must be sent to the school before the student can be admitted.

The Pinellas County Department of Health requires the following immunizations for all Non-Public Schools in grades K-12:

- 4 or 5 Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis
- 3, 4 or 5 Polio (final dose after fourth birthday)
- 2 Measles, Mumps and Rubella
- 3 Hepatitis B
- 2 Varicella (chicken pox)

Additional Requirements:

Children entering, attending, or transferring into sixth grade in Florida schools are required to have a Scoliosis screening. Families will need to have the provided Scoliosis Screening Form completed and signed by a physician.

Children entering, attending, or transferring to the seventh grade in Florida schools are required to complete the following: one dose of tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis vaccine (Tdap)

More information can be found at <http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/immunization/immunization-faq.html#question6>.

Physical Examinations

A parent/guardian is expected to submit and keep their children's physical health examinations up to date with LiFT.

Physical health examinations must be provided to LiFT in the following circumstances:

1. Entrance into kindergarten
2. Initial enrollment
3. Change in existing students' health status

Communicable Diseases

LiFT maintains a healthy school environment by instituting controls designed to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. This policy covers diseases like head lice, chickenpox, etc.

Any team members who suspect that a student or employee has a communicable disease will notify a member of the key personnel and the student or employee may be sent home. It is a school policy to notify families when students have been exposed.

Any student or employee with a communicable disease, for which immunization is required by law or is available, shall be temporarily excluded from school while ill. If the nature of the disease and circumstances warrant, LiFT may require an independent physician's examination to be completed to verify the diagnosis of communicable disease. LiFT requires that a release be signed to return to school/work. LiFT reserves the right to make all final decisions necessary to enforce its communicable disease policy and to take all necessary actions to control the spread of communicable diseases within the school.

Sickness, Health, And Accidents

Sick children should not attend school. If your child is exhibiting any of the following symptoms, they should be kept home from school.

- Fever
- Rash
- Flu-like symptoms (runny nose, sore throat, coughing, etc.)
- Excessive nasal discharge
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting

Additionally, if your child develops symptoms at school such as those listed above, the student will be brought to the nurse's office and the parent/guardian will be notified to pick up the child as soon as possible.

While every precaution is taken for proper supervision for the prevention of accidents at school, accidents do happen. We will be diligent in attempting to contact a parent/guardian when accidents occur, and we will document it. If you are not available, we will attempt to contact your designated emergency contacts for information/instructions.

A parent/guardian must complete and sign the Emergency Card annually and in its entirety so we can obtain the best medical interventions for your child in the event of an emergency. The Emergency Card gives LiFT permission to seek treatment at the designated emergency facility and/or physician to administer treatment and to transport by ambulance if the situation is so warranted. If your child incurs medical expenses due to an accident at school, please file with your own insurance. LiFT does not provide student insurance.

Head Lice Return Policy

LiFT may do head lice checks randomly throughout the school year. LiFT has a No-Nit Policy that calls for the exclusion of a student from school until the removal of all lice, eggs, and nits has been accomplished. A parent must accompany the child to the office when they return to school after being treated. Students must be free of nits to return to class.

Medications

LiFT is incredibly fortunate to have an onsite nurse during school hours, provided through a community partnership with Evara Health. The nurse will administer any medications required to be taken during school hours and will handle any medical needs as they arise during the day.

The Florida Educational Code requires a parent/guardian to submit an annual Medication Authorization Form (included in your registration packet) granting permission to administer medication on campus. All prescribed medications must be brought to the office by the parent and signed in. The medication will be kept locked in the Health Office. Medications that require refrigeration will also be kept in the Health Office. Evara Health staff will complete all administration of medications and when applicable, count the pills provided with the parent/guardian present.

Students may not keep ANY medications anywhere on campus except in the Health Office with the appropriate paperwork completed. The only exception to this will be inhalers for immediate relief from asthma attacks or certain diabetic supplies, or epi-pens, after discussion with the Evara Health Care Provider on campus and a note from the student's physician. Medications will be disposed of if left at LiFT after the end of the current school year.

The following criteria must be met for personnel to dispense medication:

- **ALL medication must be in the ORIGINAL, LABELED CONTAINER** The label must contain the following:
 - The student's name
 - The name of the medication
 - The dosage and frequency
 - The prescribing physician's name
 - The date the prescription was filled (antibiotics and prescribed cough syrup cannot be over 14 days old).
- Information and records relating to positive test results, drug and alcohol dependencies, and legitimate medical explanations will be kept confidential to the extent required by law and maintained in secure files.

Allergies

LiFT is not a peanut free or tree-nut free environment. It is our policy to establish measures to ensure a safe environment for students with different allergies, based on individual needs. However, LiFT is not considered an allergy free environment.

Bag Checks

Should the need arise, all students are subject to random bag searches by any school personnel at any time, without prior notification. This includes backpacks, bags, purses, binders, and lunchboxes.

Emergency Procedures

See Something, Say Something

If you see something, say something is an initiative LiFT has adopted by Homeland Security aimed at encouraging students and staff to be the eyes and ears for a safer school. A safe school requires the joint effort of all members. If we are all watching for and reporting suspicious activity, we reduce the areas where crime can occur. LiFT has an open-door policy and welcomes students and staff to boldly share their concerns.

Emergency Response Team

LiFT's emergency response team selects team members who respond to any emergency incident, such as natural disaster or an interruption of operations. Emergency response team members ideally are trained and prepared to fulfill the roles required by the specific situation. Depending on the emergency, one person may be able to perform multiple assignments.

Emergency Drills

Fire, tornado, and other emergency drills will be conducted throughout the school year in accordance with city, county, and state regulations. Directions are posted in each

classroom. Instruction for each drill will be given at the beginning of the school year and will be reinforced each time a drill is performed.

It is against the law to give a false alarm. Any student giving a false fire alarm or bomb warning will be answerable to civil authority in addition to school discipline.

Emergency Notification Procedures

The safety of our students is a top priority; if any emergency were to arise, we utilize the Emergency Alert system in FACTS. The Emergency Alert System allows us to notify all the families within minutes of an emergency or incident occurring.

Messages sent may be used to alert parents/guardians and other emergency contacts of a situation and to give emergency response procedures instructions. Messages may also be sent using FACTS, such as early closing due to weather conditions, early release days, or other important reminders.

The successful delivery of messages is dependent upon accurate contact information, so please make certain that the most current contact information is in FACTS. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to update all contact information in FACTS, and on all school materials.

Emergency Procedures: School Closures

An early closure may result from severe weather conditions, extended loss of power, heat, water, fire, or other emergency conditions.

If it becomes necessary to close school early, a Parent Alert will be sent out via FACTS to notify parents/guardians.

Emergency Early Dismissal Responsibilities:

- Make sure your student's FACTS account lists all the emergency contacts and individuals approved to pick up your child(ren).
- When severe weather conditions or other emergency situations occur that could result in an early dismissal, follow typical traffic flow patterns as if it were a regular dismissal. Do not park and block the flow of traffic.
- Call the school immediately if you are unable to pick up your child and make other necessary arrangements.
- When LiFT has closed due to weather conditions, all other activities including before and after school programming, sports, and student activities will be cancelled.

PLEASE NOTE: LiFT does not necessarily follow the Pinellas County School system for emergency school closures. Pinellas County Schools' assessment of conditions will be considered; however, a large school district has concerns and logistical problems that do not necessarily apply to LiFT's single campus.

Parent Involvement

Parent/Guardian Web: FACTS

FACTS is a powerful web-based school management software program. *This program is our main method of communication with students and their families, our grading and

attendance system, our tuition management program, and much more. Therefore, it is critical that parents/guardians maintain current contact, transportation, medical information, payment information, etc. in FACTS.

Parent And Visitor Guidelines

We welcome our families to visit. Parents/guardians must assist us by complying with our written guidelines and/or verbal instructions given throughout the school year or at events. Any act of non-compliance will be treated as an unnecessary risk or threat and will be managed accordingly.

Public Conduct on School Property

Schools are a place of work and learning. Certain limits must be set for parents/guardians and others who visit our schools and classrooms. All people on school property or attending a school function must behave respectfully and orderly. Key personnel is responsible for all the people in the building and on the grounds.

Visitor Guidelines:

- Anyone who is not a regular staff member or student at the school is considered a visitor.
- All visitors to the school must report to the office upon arrival. They will be required to sign the visitor's log and be issued a visitor's badge, which must be visibly worn while in the school or on school grounds. The visitor must return the badge to the office and sign out prior to leaving the building.
- Teachers cannot take class time to discuss individual matters with visitors.
- Any unauthorized person on school property will be reported to key personnel and will be considered a trespasser. Unauthorized people will be asked to leave. The police may be called if the situation warrants.
- All visitors are expected to abide by the rules for public conduct on school property.

Conduct Prohibited on School Property

No person shall:

- Intentionally injure any other person or threaten to do so.
- Intentionally damage or destroy any property, including graffiti or arson.
- Disrupt anything occurring on campus.
- Distribute or wear materials on school grounds or at school functions that are obscene, advocate illegal action, appear libelous, obstruct the rights of others, or are disruptive.
- Intimidate, harass, or discriminate against any person on the basis of race, ancestry, color, creed, ethnicity, national origin, legally protected medical condition, genetic information, religion, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, citizenship status, protected activity (such as opposition to or reporting of prohibitive discrimination or harassment), or any other status or classification protected by applicable federal, state, and/or local laws.
- Enter any portion of the school premises without authorization or remain in any building or facility after it is over/closed.
- Obstruct the free movement of any person in any place.
- Violate the traffic laws, parking regulations, or other restrictions on vehicles.

- Possess, consume, sell, distribute, or exchange alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, be under the influence on school property, or at a school function.
- Possess or use weapons in or on school property or at a school function, except in the case of law enforcement officers.
- Loiter on or about school functions.
- Gamble on school property or at school functions.
- Refuse to comply with any reasonable order of identifiable school officials performing their duties.
- Willfully incite others to commit any of the prohibited acts.
- Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance, or board policy while on school property or at a school function.

Persons In Violation of the Code of Conduct

The authorization of a visitor to remain on school grounds or at any school function shall be governed by key personnel. Depending on the severity of the violation or the number of violations, a verbal and or written warning may be given, or the individual may be denied access to school property indefinitely and they will be directed to leave the premises. Any refusal shall be subject to ejection by law enforcement.

LiFT reserves the right to pursue a civil or criminal legal action against any person violating the code.

Communication

- **Daily Planner/Agenda:** All students in grades k-12 are required to keep an agenda. This agenda is an integral part of the communication process between parents/guardians, students, and team members. Parents/Guardians can write a note in the planner if needed. Teachers can use the agenda to make comments regarding behavior and performance. LiFT provides each student with one agenda at no cost
- Teachers will email monthly newsletters including grade level or subject standards, information about special projects, rubrics, important upcoming dates, and reminders. Please check your email frequently to stay informed on important LiFT information.
- Parents/guardians Web (www.Factsmgt.com) - All parents/guardians must sign up to become a user to receive school and class information, lesson plans, grades, behavior incidents, attendance, progress reports, and report cards.
- Families will also receive a weekly LiFT newsletter, highlighting key information about the school as a whole.

Financial Management

LiFT utilizes FACTS as the point of collection for all tuition costs, enrollment, and school fees. Families will automatically have any LiFT-related payments and credits from scholarships entered in www.Factsmgt.com (payment Plans/Financial Aid Portal). Families will need to register their FACTS payment plan/financial aid portal to select their payment choice of auto payment with a checking account or credit card.

Lift Support Plan: Family Involvement

LiFT does not underestimate the importance of parent/guardian involvement in the LSP process. The parent/guardian can provide a wealth of information useful in LSP development. Parents/guardians are encouraged during the LSP meeting to share

information about the abilities, needs, and desires of their student, what has and has not worked in the past, present and discuss relevant evaluations and documentation, and ask questions. Parents/guardians will function as the coordinator of services and accommodations/modifications not offered through LiFT such as therapies and/or the acquisition of devices. They will also function as reinforcement during the implementation of the services and accommodations/modifications provided at LiFT. Parents/guardians will be informed of the LSP process upon touring. They will be contacted to provide input and to determine a date convenient for everyone, within reason.

Service Hours

LiFT requires each **family** to complete fifteen service hours each year. Service hours can easily be fulfilled throughout the year by chaperoning, serving on committees, helping with campus beautification projects, attending PTO meetings, helping PTO fulfill their mission, and many other tasks. Parents/guardians may bring their ideas for fulfilling their service hour requirements to key personnel for approval. Service hours help keep the cost of attending LiFT as low as possible. For this reason, we require that if a family does not fulfill their required fifteen service hours, they must pay \$25.00 per hour not completed. (Service hours are per family and not per student).

General Information

Please note that parking and exiting your car in front of the front office doors is not permitted at any time.

If you need to park on campus, please use either the north or south parking lots and enter the building through the main entrance. Parking in front of the office creates a significant hindrance during carline and, more importantly, poses a safety concern for our students, staff, and families.

Thank you for your cooperation and for helping us keep our campus safe and running smoothly.

Arrival And Departure Procedure

Please review the schedule below for arrival and departure on school days. LiFT respectfully requests that parents/guardians adhere to the scheduled times and procedures outlined. Parents/guardians should follow all on-site personnel directions during the arrival and dismissal process.

Car Line / Student Drop-Off & Pick Up

Students should be dropped off and picked up in accordance with the schedule below, at the courtyard gate on the north side of the building. LiFT staff will be in the parking lot during these times assisting parents with the process.

Morning Car Line/Drop-Off:

- 7:40 – 8:00 Elementary School
- 8:10 – 8:30 Middle and High School

Afternoon Car Line/Pick-Up:

- 2:30 – 3:00 Elementary School
- 3:00 – 3:30 Middle and High School

Reminder: drop offs prior to the times listed above for your student's grade level will incur before-care fees

Traffic Safety

All drivers must adhere to the five mile per hour speed limit while driving on campus and stop at all crosswalks. The safety of our students is a top priority. Do not leave your vehicle running and unattended at any time. Refrain from using your cell phone while driving on campus. Park only in designated spaces.

Approved Pick Up List

It is LiFT's policy to not allow our students to leave with anyone other than those indicated on the student's FACTS file. If a family would like to add someone to the approved pick-up list, they need to update this list on their student's FACTS account in the FACTS Family Portal.

Students Remaining on Campus

Once students arrive on campus, they are not allowed to leave campus until dismissal time unless authorized by key personnel. Students may be checked out of school by a written note or email supplied by parent or guardian for appointments. This communication is to be given to the office and is subject to verification and approval. A parent/guardian must sign each student in and out in the office.

Extended Care

Extended Care begins at 7:00 am until the start of school and ends at 6:00pm after school.

Aftercare will be provided by the YMCA and students are expected to be picked up no later than 6:00pm. Students picked up late will be charged an additional late fee paid to the YMCA. If a student is picked up late more than two times the family may not be able to use aftercare for the remainder of the school year.

- **Before-school care** is provided by the LiFT team at the cost of \$100 per month. It's important to remember that any child dropped off at school before car line for their grade level starts will be placed into before-care and parents/guardians will be charged.

Lunch Procedures

LiFT does not have a cafeteria or a production kitchen and thus does not provide school lunch or snacks. When packing food for your student, please remember to include necessary utensils and napkins – LiFT does not provide these items.

Students will have a scheduled lunch period and will eat in a supervised lunch area. Soda is not permitted unless permission is given by key personnel for special events. Students are expected to eat lunch each day and sit with peers during that time. Students are expected to clean their lunch area before leaving the area.

Beverages In the Classroom

Acceptable beverages include water, juice, and sports drinks such as Gatorade, however, water is preferred. Beverages must be kept in a plastic or metal bottle or container with a lid.

No glass bottles are permitted on campus. **Energy drinks are also not permitted.**

Celebration/Party Limitation

No student may pass out or verbally discuss invitations to a party at school unless the entire class is invited. If you plan to bring/send in a food item for a celebration in class, it must be purchased from a store, unopened, and permission must be given by your child's teacher in advance. Please be cognizant of students with allergies.

Media

Throughout the year, LiFT may reproduce or participate in videotaping, motion pictures, audio recording or still photography productions that involve the use of student names, likenesses, or voices. Such productions may be used for advertising, trade, promotion, exhibition, or any other lawful purpose in any manner or medium throughout the world an unlimited number of times in perpetuity.

News media, including representatives of school publications (e.g., yearbooks, newsletters, social media pages), television, radio, newspapers, magazines, and websites also often are permitted on school property and may take notes, still photos, sound recordings, and/or moving pictures that may include your child. These items may appear or be used in news or feature stories by print, television, radio, or social media.

Parents/guardians are required to indicate their preferences during their initial registration by signing the LiFT Media Consent and Release form, which is good for five years. The selected preferences will be entered into FACTS SIS and disseminated for reference when media sources are present, or photos, videos, or audio recordings are being taken.

Student Recording Devices During the School Day

Students are prohibited from making audio or video recordings during the school day on school grounds; when being transported to and from school activities or programs in a vehicle owned, leased, or contracted and being used for a school purpose by a school employee or his/her designee; or at a school-sponsored activity or athletic event, unless the recording is made in a manner permitted by the school for members of the public. In such an instance, the students remain subject to LiFT's acceptable use and discipline policies.

- In no event shall photographs or video recordings be taken on or off campus, in restrooms, locker rooms, or other areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Permitted Classroom Recordings by Students or Teachers

- Students and Teachers may make audio or video recordings of classroom lectures or discussions:
 - For the benefit of a student who is absent after providing notice to the classroom and receiving the parent's/guardian's permission.
 - If the recording is necessary to accommodate the student's disability and is required by the student's LiFT Support Plan.

LiFT may revoke permission to record if the recording distracts from or disrupts the learning environment.

Lost and Found

Lost and found is in the fishbowl. Items will be kept for one month before being donated.