

LIVE OAK CHARTER SCHOOL

Awakening Intelligence & Cultivating Character



PARENT HANDBOOK

2008/2009

The healthy social life is found only,
When in the mirror of each human soul
The whole community finds its reflection,
And when in the community,
The virtue of each one is living.

R. STEINER

Feeling Fully at Home in the World

Dear Live Oak Community,

Welcome to all new and returning families of Live Oak Charter School! As we enter our eighth School year, I hope you have had an enriching summer full of wondrous adventures and are primed to help make this year our strongest ever.

We have a very important year ahead of us, a year that comes under the theme of feeling fully at home in the world. We have successfully navigated the first seven years of our School's life. These years have been devoted to the start-up activities of establishing a clear identity, building a good program and staff, and moving towards stability. The second seven-year cycle will be dedicated to fully living into the vision and mission of the School, refining all the organizational operations, and stepping boldly into the future from a place of solidity and strength.

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As we embark on this next phase of our School's development, what are the major tasks that we can anticipate this year? From my vantage point, they include the following:

Pursuing Educational Excellence: Live Oak has made great strides in cultivating an education program staff that can fulfill the promise of Waldorf-inspired education in the public school setting. There have been some changes, and I believe we now have the right people in the right places. I am very encouraged by the constellation of class and specialty teachers, aides, student services providers and educational administrators that we have attracted to the school. The faculty has evolved into highly functioning group, and I am thrilled with the capacity that is apparent in the Ed Program as we start the year.

I have asked the Education Program to pursue at least two primary goals this year. The first is to integrate the Waldorf curriculum blocks with age adjusted state standards on a grade-by-grade basis. This will provide more clarity to the academic goals of each grade in a developmentally appropriate fashion. The second goal is to create a plan for restructuring the specialty teaching positions to promote retention and full inclusion of specialty teachers into the faculty.

Rechartering: 2008/09 marks the final year of our current five-year authorization. The year's rechartering efforts will be the second time we have rechartered. The process will include revisiting and refining our vision and mission as well as our educational program standards and assessments. We will also review and perhaps revise our governance structure in response to a faculty proposal for teacher participation on the Board of Directors.

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Strategic Planning: Dovetailed with the rechartering effort, comes the necessity of envisioning our future via a strategic planning process that establishes 3, 5 and 7-year benchmarks. We have strong leadership in our Development Program to help facilitate this process. As a school community we are formed enough now to think clearly about the future and move toward larger goals including a permanent site.

Community Connectivity: Our first seven years were inwardly focused on developing our school. Now that we have clearly established ourselves, it is time to turn outward and give more attention to making stronger ties with the greater Petaluma Community. These connections will be essential for bringing the cultural bounty of Petaluma to the campus and in our efforts to develop a permanent home.

I am deeply grateful for the hard work, love and support parents have poured into the School; it has been pivotal in bringing the School to a place feeling at home in the world. I look forward to sharing the same steadfast dedication with you in the important year ahead of us.

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Sincerely,

Will Stapp
Executive Director

August 15, 2008

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Our History

Live Oak Charter School was inspired and brought to fruition by a community of parents with an interest in creating an exceptional Waldorf-inspired elementary educational experience for the children of Petaluma. After a year of hard work, the school was authorized as a public charter school by the Petaluma City School District in 2001. While the District continues to provide oversight, Live Oak Charter School is an independent non-profit organization. In June of 2004, the charter was renewed for five years.

This year, as Live Oak enters its eighth year of operation, approximately 240 students are enrolled in grades Kindergarten through Class 7, and our parent community comprises over 190 families.

Our Mission

Our mission here at Live Oak is to *educate the whole child: head, hands & heart*. We call this a “Renaissance Education” in which our goals are to awaken intelligence and cultivate character. We strive to accomplish it by:

- **Creating** and maintaining a dynamic, Waldorf-inspired learning environment that is developmentally appropriate to the growing child’s needs and helps our students become self-motivated, lifelong learners.
- **Cultivating** a deep appreciation of diversity and providing the foundational knowledge, skills and attitudes our children will need to successfully meet the demands of a multicultural society and the challenges facing our earth’s biodiversity.
- **Developing** a compassionate campus culture that teaches self-awareness, mutual respect, and social competencies that help children navigate the passages of adolescence.

Students at Live Oak Charter School engage actively in an educational process that is facilitated by motivated, professional educators. Students receive an education rich in the sciences and arts in addition to the histories and cultures of the world. The school strives to help each child grow into a creative, self-directed person endowed with a positive self-image, a sense of social responsibility, a strong capacity for cross-cultural communication, a love of learning, and a respect for our earth, its peoples and all living things. Graduates will emerge ready to pursue further academic goals and meet life’s challenges in the 21st Century.



“Imagination is more important than knowledge.”

ALBERT EINSTEIN

School Year Calendar

CAMPUS MAP

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Organizational Chart

When You Have A Question or Need Help?

If you have a question or concern about . . .

Your child's admission, school records, or fees; housekeeping or other business services	GO TO ► Kim Anderson , Office Manager Upper Campus
Your responsibility for school supplies, classroom support, class plays, class parties, field trips, Farmers Market, etc.	GO TO ► Your Class Coordinator , who is a parent appointed by your class teacher
Your child's class lessons, homework, academic performance, or class participation in any subject	GO TO ► Your Class Teacher : Check for office hours or telephone time
What's happening in the classroom or on the playground re: discipline or social interaction	GO TO ► Your Class Teacher : Check for office hours or telephone time
Live Oak's educational philosophy and curriculum	GO TO ► Kalen Wood , Education Director Lower Campus
Your child's remedial education needs, assessment or referrals	GO TO ► Linda Banks , Student Services Coordinator, Lower Campus
Your child's special education needs	GO TO ► Laura Gavre , Resource Specialist Upper Campus
School values & vision, operational policies, planning, finances, facilities, major donor fundraising ,and Petaluma City Schools issues	GO TO ► Will Stapp , Executive Director Upper Campus
Public relations, communications, (newsletters, etc.), parent involvement, volunteer opportunities & fundraising	GO TO ► Victoria Temple , Development Director, Upper Campus
Friends of Live Oak's Parent Pledge Program & Annual auction and other fundraising	GO TO ► Nina Horick , Friends of Live Oak GO TO ► Theresa Mahoney , Friends of Live Oak
School governance policies, Board of Director's issues and Board committees	GO TO ► Fred Vaske , Chair, Board of Directors Angela Garvin , Parent Representative to the Board
After School Program Operations After School Program (Kindergarten)	GO TO ► Aurora Valentine , ASP Coordinator GO TO ► Mimi Herschkowitz , ASP Teacher

These individuals will help address your question or concern, or guide you to the person who can!

CONTACT INFORMATION

LIVE OAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- **Fred Vaske**, Chair
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- **Sara Wilson**, Vice Chair
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ADMINISTRATION

Upper Campus Phone – 762-9020

Lower Campus Phone – 762-8490

- **Will Stapp**, Executive Director
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- **Victoria Temple**, Development Director
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- **Kim Anderson**, Office Manager
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- **Julie Beckner**, School Secretary
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- **Muriel Bertucci**, Administrative Assistant
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- **Kalen Wood**, Education Director
woodorf@hotmail.com
- **Anna Cummings-Jacopetti**, Teacher Mentor
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- **Linda Banks**, Student Services Coord.
lindaabanks@comcast.net
- **Anna Hagmann**, Special Education Aide
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► **BASIC OPERATING INFORMATION**

Drop Off & Pick Up Schedule

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday	DROP OFF	PICK UP
Kindergarten	8:15 – 8:30 AM	12:30 – 12:40 PM
Grades 1-2	8:00 – 8:15 AM	2:35 – 2:45 PM
Grades 3-7	8:00 – 8:15 AM	3:05 – 3:15 PM
Thursdays		
Kindergarten	8:15 – 8:30 AM	12:30 – 12:40 PM
Grades 1-7	8:00 – 8:15 AM	12:40 – 12:50 PM

Our teachers’ and administrators’ day does not end after the children go home. Typically, the hours after school are filled with meetings and preparation for the next school day. All students must be picked up within ten minutes of the close of school to allow the staff to return to their other duties.

If you have an emergency and are not able to pick your child up on time, please call the School Office to let us know with whom you have made arrangements to pick up your child. If your child has not been picked up and the School is unable to reach you, we will call the emergency numbers on your child's emergency information sheet.

Your Child's School Day Schedule

Monday through Wednesday and Friday

7:45 AM	Faculty Circle
8:00 AM	Drop Off Begins
8:15 AM	Grades 1-7 Begin
8:15 AM	Kindergarten Drop Off Begins
8:30 AM	Kindergarten Begins
10:30 AM	Morning Break Grades 1-7
12:30 PM	Kindergarten Dismissal
12:30 PM	Lunch Grades 1-6
2:35 PM	Dismissal Grade 1 & 2
3:05 PM	Grades 3-7 Dismissal

On Thursday, Grades 1-7 are dismissed at 12:40 PM

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About Attendance

Regular and timely attendance contributes to the development of good habits that are essential for your children to receive the maximum benefit from the educational program; they also are required by state law. The school's primary source of income (the Average Daily Attendance General Purpose Grant) is directly tied to school attendance. The school loses on average of \$37 every day that your child is absent, regardless of the reason.

According to California law, there is no distinction between unexcused or excused absences or tardiness. All parents are legally obligated for their children to attend school. Please schedule doctor appointments and vacations when school is not in session to optimize your child's learning and allow the school to receive full funding for your child's attendance.

When Your Child is Tardy

Having children start the day with their classmates is an essential part of the educational program at Live Oak. When children arrive late, they not only miss out on the important warm up period of the day, they also distract the entire class. Consequently, ***if children arrive after their class teacher has closed the door, they are considered tardy and must be accompanied by their parent to the office for a tardy slip and then wait with their parent outside the room until the teacher opens the door. Do not knock or walk into the room after class has started! Do not leave your child alone to find his/her way to class when he/she is tardy!*** If children demonstrate a pattern of tardiness as defined by the school, the parents will be asked to meet with administration to address the problem.

When Your Child Is Sick

A sick child is best cared for at home. A child who is not feeling well cannot participate in the School day in a meaningful way. Please keep your child home if they:

- Have a fever or have had a fever in the past 24 hours
- Have pink eye
- Have head lice
- Have vomited within the past 24 hours
- Have diarrhea
- Have a deep cough or any infectious condition.

If your child is sick, please call the school office before 8:00 AM and leave a message that your child will not be attending school that day

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Truancy Notification

California education law states that “Any pupil subject to compulsory full-time education or to compulsory continuation education who is absent from school without valid excuse more than three days or tardy in excess of 30 minutes on each of more than three days in one school year is a truant and shall be reported to the attendance supervisor or to the superintendent of the school district “Educational Code Section 48260, stats. 1076.c.101, paragraph 2.” When this referral is made at Live Oak Charter School, the parents and the student will be required to meet with the Education Director.

If a student is again reported truant on one or more days or tardy on one or more days, she/he will again be reported truant to the district. Should a student subsequently be absent or tardy again, the matter will be referred to Sonoma County’s School Attendance Review Board.

Scheduled Absence / Independent Study

If your child must be away from school for over four days for any reason other than illness, arrange an independent study with the child's teacher. Doing so ensures that your child keeps up with the class and that the school receives funding support from the state. Parents are encouraged to plan vacations according to the School Year Calendar.

Lunches and Snacks

We ask that students eat a hearty breakfast and have wholesome foods for snacks and lunches. Please do not include candy or highly sweet juice or foods in your child's snack or lunch. Students are encouraged to use baskets or plain lunch boxes and containers for their food items rather than disposable bags and wraps. Cloth napkins and reusable containers encourage students and families to limit waste.

Field Trips

Throughout the year, classes may take a walking field trip. Consequently, at the start of each year, we ask parents to sign a walking field trip permission slip.

In addition, many classes have field trips that require transportation by bus or by parent drivers. For these trips, children must have signed parental consent forms for each excursion.

According to District standards, parent drivers must have filed the required form, provided proof of registration and auto insurance, along with a copy of their driver's license to drive students on a field trip.

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Materials Fee

Live Oak requests a \$60 annual materials fee for each student in order to help offset the cost of the high quality materials that are used in the classrooms throughout the year. The fee can be paid to your class coordinator during the first two weeks of school.

After School Program

Live Oak has a fee-for-service extended day After School Program for students in grades K – 7. The program has three components:

Rainbow Garden Kindergarten

Time: 12:30 to 3:00 PM
Location: Lower Campus, Ms. Rebecca's Kindergarten Classroom
Teacher: **Mimi Herschkowitz**, Lead Teacher

Sunflower After School Program

Time: 3:05 to 5:30 PM
Location: Upper Campus Gardening & Community Kitchen Room
Teacher: Aurora Valentine, Program Coordinator & Lead Teacher

Bridge Program

First and Second grade students attending the After School Program will be cared for between 2:35 and 3:05 PM on the Lower Campus and walked to the Upper Campus along with the Kindergarten children who join the Sunflower After School Program after 3:05 PM.

To participate in the program, parents must complete an After School Program Application for each child, and complete an enrollment process. A \$30 application fee is paid annually for each child attending. The After School Program fee is \$6.00 per hour, and is paid in 9 monthly payments from September through May. Drop-In care is available for Grades 1-7 only, at a rate of \$7.50 per hour. Drop In students must be enrolled in the program with an application and emergency contact information on file.



“A small group of thoughtful people could change the world.

Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

MARGARET MEAD

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► **STUDENT SERVICES**

Admission Orientation Policy

The Board of Directors approved a new admissions preference that went into effect with the 2007/08 enrollment process. To improve a child’s admission preference status, parents can choose to attend an **Admissions Orientation to Live Oak** that is designed to introduce them to Waldorf education and the values and vision of our school community.

Kindergarten Admission Policy

Admission priorities during enrollment periods as specified in the charter are:

- #1: Returning students.
- #2: Children of the school’s Founding Families as defined by the School Charter.
- #3: Siblings of currently enrolled or returning students.
- #4: Children of the school staff and Board of Directors.

- #5: Children residing in the Petaluma Elementary School District with at least one parent who has completed a three-hour Admissions Orientation to Live Oak Charter School.
- #6: Children with at least one parent who has completed a three-hour Admissions Orientation to Live Oak Charter School.
- #7: Children residing in the Petaluma Elementary School District.
- #8: Children residing in the following Districts: Cinnabar, Cotati-Rohnert Park, Dunham, Old Adobe, Two Rock, Waugh, Wilmar, Wilson, Liberty.
- #9: Children residing in Sonoma and Marin counties.
- #10: Children residing in the State of California.
- #11: All other applicants.

Live Oak Charter has a one-year and a two-year kindergarten program. One-year kindergarteners, or K1, are the students who turn five years old on December 2 through May 31. Two-year kindergartners, or K2, are those children who turn five years old on June 1 through December 1.

In any given year, the actual number of seats available is determined by the administration in consultation with the kindergarten teacher(s). All names selected in the lottery draw are assigned a number and entered into a priority list in the order of selection. A log is kept of all applicants in the drawing and assigning of their numbers. If a twin is selected, his/her twin automatically receives the next assigned number. Parents are notified when their child is placed on the waiting list.

Your Child's Class Teacher

It is the School's goal for students to develop long-term relationships with their class teacher. Consequently, whenever possible, students progress with their teachers from Grades 1-5 and then switch to the middle school faculty for grades 6-8. While the school envisions students having a primary class teacher throughout junior high, we are developing a team teaching approach for the upper grades in which upper grades teachers periodically switch blocks among grades.

Special Needs

Live Oak Charter School's Special Education Services are managed by the Petaluma Elementary School District with input from Live Oak's Executive Director as well as the School's educational administrators. Children who are potentially eligible for these services, or who have a current Individualized Education Program (IEP), receive evaluation or ongoing support in a manner that is in compliance with the Individuals

with Disabilities Educational Act, and that meets the specifications of his/her Individualized Educational Program.

Student Assessment and Parent Conferences

The faculty and administration are committed to maintaining clear and timely communication with parents regarding their child's accomplishments and challenges.

Grades 1-5

In the early grades, assessments are qualitative in nature and do not include letter grades. The School sends home midterm progress reports (in rubric format) in November and a final narrative summary in June. Intake conferences for parents of new students happen in September while parent/teacher conferences for all students occur in November. Parents may request additional conferences as needed.

Upper grades (6-8)

The reporting and conference periods for the upper grades are the same as the grades 1-5. However, students receive letter grades reflecting work done in the curriculum areas of: math, language arts, and curriculum themes (Main Lesson topic).

STAR Testing

Our school is required to administer the state-mandated STAR test beginning in second grade.

Dress Code

Students should come to school wearing comfortable, practical clothing that will keep them warm in the winter months, with extra attention to layers of warm clothes

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on foggy mornings. The following guidelines should assist parents in helping their children make appropriate clothing selections. Children who come to school dressed otherwise may be sent home for a change of outfit.

- Clothing free of advertisements and logos (cartoon figures, movies, rock groups, sports teams, etc.)
- Clothing free of printed messages or slogans.
- Active footwear that allows full and safe participation on the playground; no flip flops or shoes with flashing lights.
- Camouflage clothing, sports uniforms and uniform-type outfits are not permitted.
- Ripped, torn clothing or excessively baggy oversized clothing is not permitted.
- See-through clothing, exposed underwear, short shorts, mini-skirts, crop tops, spaghetti strap tank tops, skin tight or low cut clothing is not permitted.
- Subtle make-up is permitted for junior high students.
- Plain, slogan free backpacks and lunch boxes.
- Hats off in the classroom.

Since kids love to tromp in the mud and splash in puddles, winter requires a change of clothes at school, especially in the lower grades. During the wet season, children need boots and slickers at school for gardening and recess as well.

Media Exposure

It is a delicate task to balance the demands and possibilities of modern life with our understanding of the developing child. A central tenet of Live Oak Charter School's educational approach is that a child's imagination is a primary modality for learning and growth. Opportunities for lively, artistic and academic expression are of the greatest importance. It is our desire that parents and teachers strive to offer children experiences of the natural world, rich stories and pictures, healthy physical movement and role models that serve to build enthusiasm and reverence for their lives on this earth.

A central concept in Waldorf Education is that much of popular culture, as expressed in the media, can overwhelm a child's creative thoughts and often has detrimental effects on behavior and values. Consequently, we strongly advocate limiting children's exposure to electronic media such as television, video games and computers. Rather than electronic media, please make plenty of time for your child's physical activities, music practice, recreational reading, family life, sleep, and play. Parents are encouraged to attend classes on the affects of media on the developing brain. We also have books available on the subject in the parent library.

To allow children to experience the integral relationship between writing and reading, and to support the development of handwriting skills, computer literacy and keyboarding are felt to be more appropriate for grades six and above.

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A Compassionate Campus

Live Oak Charter School is striving to be a community of compassion. . .

- Where human beings speak and act out of respect for each other and our environment; and
- Where adults strive to deepen their understanding of child consciousness and adult consciousness; and
- Where adults guide children to be in accordance with agreed upon values regarding human dignity.

Compassionate Campus Values and Ideals

- Effective listening and speaking skills, which:
 - Foster a participation process with adults and children
 - Allow for solution seeking rather than blaming
 - Recognize the difference between collusion and allying, in private

- conversations
 - Build equanimity, thus increasing patience and trust in group wisdom
 - Learn to speak only what is necessary, using such skills as "he/she speaks my mind..." for effective group process.
- Explore the relationship between self-respect and respect of the community:
 - Ask myself "What do I need in order to sense that I am being heard and respected?"
 - Ask myself "Am I seeking approval" or "looking for support" for my point of view, and how is this affecting group process?
- Create a "Bill of Rights and Expectations" for Teachers, Administration, Parents and Students. What are the agreed upon boundaries between these groups and how do we cross them?
- Identify "The Structure Spectrum" (from rigidity to soul abandonment) of a discipline policy. Ask all groups to work with the following question: "What are non-negotiable and negotiable rules of campus conduct"?

A Philosophical Basis for Discipline

"The Inner Life of the Adult is the True Security for Our Children"

On the path of becoming a Waldorf Teacher, one learns to develop an inner respect for the unique capacities of the individual child, and a recognition of universal human abilities, which are developmentally based. One of these abilities is the deeply human capacity of self-sacrifice, which is essential to the creation of a compassionate community.

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In working with the development of equanimity in social activity, the Waldorf Teacher learns and works with two self-disciplinary sets of exercises of self awareness which are found in foundational philosophical books by Rudolf Steiner, founder of Waldorf Education. The teacher may freely choose to work with this in a manner appropriate to his or her own orientation toward development of the inner life. In the work, the student strives to bring equanimity of being through doing these seemingly simple, yet very difficult self-control practices. There are two main practices which are often taught in courses which explore the philosophical basis of Waldorf Education.

The following is a brief explanation of these two sets of exercises. The first is entitled "The Six Basic Exercises". These exercises serve to bring self awareness to one's individual will. The outcome of such inner work is the development of an awareness of how one's social activities are reflections of inner presence of mind. These exercises are:

THE SIX BASIC EXERCISES

1. Mastery of Thought Formation
2. Mastery over Impulses of the Will
3. Equanimity in regard to Happiness and Sorrow
4. Positivity in Forming Judgments
5. Lack of Pre-conceptions...Open-Mindedness
6. Harmony... The harmonious blending of the above five exercises.

The second of the two main practices, is entitled “The Eightfold Path” and is based on a modern Western approach to ancient Eastern wisdom. These exercises serve to develop the heart forces so that the heart and the mind are brought into harmony through an active alignment with ones values. They are, simply put:

THE EIGHTFOLD PATH

1. Strive to develop conscious communication skills
2. Strive to act only in alignment with one’s highest held values
3. Strive to stand for a sense that human endeavor is honorable
4. Strive to envision actions that serve to create a compassionate community both globally and locally
5. Strive to remember and honor the active human being who serves love through alignment of highest values and outward activity
6. Strive to honor the wholeness of individual human-unfolding-capacity from the threshold of birth through that of death
7. Strive to hone ones self-awareness so that one’s resolve for action is informed by conscience
8. Contemplate and take inventory with oneself regarding ones striving, nurture one’s budding capacity to do so.

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It is only through actions in alignment with ones values that one’s heart truly feels at peace. Therefore, a community of people striving to create a compassionate and peaceful working together would need to identify basic values which define the community, and basic self-discipline which serves to enhance an alignment of value-based choices for outer actions.

Student Discipline Policy

At Live Oak Charter School, we prefer to invest in and reinforce our students’ positive behavior. The essence of this research-based approach is to state basic school rules in a simple formula [**Safety + Respect + Responsibility = A Great Place to Learn**] and to consistently teach and affirm behavioral expectations in a positive manner. It is our intent to support our whole community, administration, teachers, parents and students, in creating a common approach for interaction around desired behavior.

Progressive Response to Inappropriate Behavior

While it is our intent to reinforce the positive, occasional situations occur that may require consequences. These situations are usually minor and sometimes unintentional; only rarely are they repeated or persistent. For this reason, we have established progressive discipline procedure with matching responses to the level of inappropriate behavior. In all cases, students will have a chance to tell their story before a consequence is administered.

Additionally, although we strive for consistency in response to inappropriate behavior, individual circumstances may require exceptions or adjustments. In all cases, we want our response to be appropriate to the specific incident and the grade level of the student. Students who qualify for special education services may require an alternative response in accordance with their Individual Educational Plan.

■ **Common Areas**

The chart inserted on page 17 & 18 outlines the school's behavioral expectations in the common areas of the school.

Intervention regarding inappropriate behavior in the common areas, including playground, comes under the immediate purview of the Executive Director or Education Director. Some inappropriate behavior may create major disruptions, be highly disrespectful, or significantly impair health and/or safety. Examples include:

- Inappropriate items (electronic games, cell phones, CD players, iPods etc.)
- Foul language
- Unnecessarily rough play including games involving tackling
- Defacing or damaging school property
- Disrespect to any person
- Disregarding instructions from school staff or playground monitors.

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Grid page 1

Page 17

Grid page 2

Page 18

Occasional Infractions: Progressive disciplinary action such as:

- Warning on the first occasion
- Restriction from the area and/or activity
- Benching or loss of recess time
- Confiscation of the item to be retrieved by the child's parents
- Campus clean up
- Repair or replacement of a damaged item
- Inform parents

Repeated Infractions

- Inform parents
- Possible suspension or after school detention

Persistent Infractions

- Suspension
- Required parent conference
- Behavior plan

■ In the Classroom

A central aim of Live Oak Charter School is to provide children with the opportunity to experience the benefits of the curriculum in a positive classroom setting that fosters individual potential, self esteem and well being. We expect students to help create this positive environment by paying attention, following instructions promptly, being cooperative, punctual, keeping to appropriate noise level, and showing respect for peers, adults, and/or property.

Individual teachers may have some variation in classroom management style. Classroom behavioral expectations will be created in the beginning of the year with student input facilitated by the class teacher using the basic grid format.

Occasional Infractions: If the positive discipline approach is not working, teachers may use first-level interventions such as a classroom chore, timeouts, and/or loss of recess.

Repeated Infractions: At this stage, teachers use second-level interventions, including exclusion from certain activities, detention during morning or lunch recess and/or the assignment of classroom chores. Parents are notified and may be required to attend a conference. Teachers may also suspend students for repeated disruptive behavior that significantly diminishes the positive learning environment. This suspension period is viewed as a student “time out” in which the family can help the student work on self-control. Said period can be no longer than one partial and one full day for any given suspension.

Persistent Infractions: This stage requires involvement of the Executive Director and/or the Education Director. The student may be suspended for up to five days and face potential loss of playground and special privileges, including field trips. With

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parents, the student and possible consulting professionals participating, a behavior plan will be developed that sets forth expectations for student behavior and clearly states how parents and the school are to be involved in working toward improvement. Lack of marked improvement may lead to a recommendation for expulsion.

Extreme, Dangerous or Illegal Behavior

On very rare occasions, students engage in inappropriate behaviors that seriously endanger the physical or emotional well being of other students or violate the law. These include behaviors enumerated in Education Code #48900. Examples include:

- Fighting or threatening to physically harm another
- Throwing rocks or poking with sticks
- Possession or being under the influence of a controlled substance
- Possession of a real or toy weapon, except for items used in plays or projects with the permission and supervision of a teacher
- Playing with matches

- Extreme profanity
- Defiance of authority
- Theft

Such behaviors are grounds for immediate suspension and possible expulsion. In such cases, parents are immediately notified and when required by law, the police are called. The authority to expel rests with the Board of Directors upon the recommendation of the Executive Director.

School Substance Abuse Policy

The use of tobacco, drugs or alcohol is prohibited on the school grounds or while participating in school-sponsored activities, whether they are on or off the school campus. The use of any of these substances is considered a serious problem and will result in immediate suspension and possible expulsion. A student found in the presence of substances being used by another student may also be subject to disciplinary action.



“ All men are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality.”

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

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► PARENT INVOLVEMENT & COMMUNITY LIFE

Parent Education Opportunities and Class Meetings

Live Oak believes that parents can best support their child’s education if they cultivate an understanding of child development, the curriculum and Waldorf teaching methods and Compassionate Campus practices. Towards this end, the school offers parent education opportunities via publications, lectures and workshops. Parents will benefit enormously by attending these events throughout the year which are announced in the weekly *Leaflet* and *The Acorn* newsletter.

Parents will also gain insight into grade-specific curriculum, child development issues and class concerns via class meetings scheduled by their class teacher. Please make attendance at these meetings a high priority.

Festivals and School Events

Back-to-School Night: The year begins with this adult gathering that introduces old and new parents alike to our faculty, staff, committees, and the new School year.

Harvest Festival: This festival honors the harvest and the beginning of the new school year. It is held at a local park and is open to the general public. There are games, crafts, food and music to enjoy.

Winter Spiral: This beautiful event, for students in Kindergarten to Third Grade, quietly embraces song and candlelight. The children participate in walking with their candles through a spiral that symbolizes the winter solstice.

Winter Assembly: Live Oak sponsors an All-School Winter Assembly on the Thursday before Winter Break at which child in the grades recite, sing, play music and share some aspect of their classroom work.

Annual Auction: Sponsored by Friends of Live Oak in the month of March, the auction is our largest fundraising event. It is an evening of music, food, gifts and magic. We have both a silent and live auction of many fantastic treasures. This is not to be missed. Get your babysitters early.

Open House: This year the All-School Open House is being re-designed as an evening event in the Spring at which parents, grand parents and prospective families can visit classrooms, see children's work and learn more about our program.

May Faire: A lovely tribute, the MayFaire festival embraces the upwelling vitality of spring. Be prepared to enjoy picnics, Maypole dancing, family portraits and good company and strawberry shortcake for all.

End of Year BBQ: This is last event of the year at which incoming families are welcomed into the community and we celebrate the close of the School year.

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Parent Participation Responsibilities and Guidelines

Parents of Live Oak students are strongly encouraged to be active participants in their children's education. Parent involvement helps ensure a student's success in school and creates an informed parent community capable of supporting a Waldorf-inspired charter school. To that end, it is respectfully requested that parents:

- Attend Back-to-School Night, Town Hall meetings, parent-teacher conferences, class meetings, parent education workshops, festivals, assemblies and fundraising events
- Read the Parent Handbook
- Read a copy of the Live Oak School Charter (available in the school office)
- Join a committee or volunteer to support a committee when called to participate
- Support your class teacher and class coordinator. You will be informed of the ways in which you can help
- Ensure that your child adheres to the dress code
- Adhere to the school's attendance policies and procedures
- Commit to a home environment that is nurturing and conducive to learning
- Limit or eliminate your child's contact with media influences such as television, movies, video games, computer games, game boys, etc.

- Gain understanding of the curriculum and support the educational program at home
- Understand and enforce Positive Discipline both at the school and in the home
- Schedule family vacations during school breaks (see the school calendar).

In addition to the above guidelines, your child's teacher may have specific recommendations that she/he will present at parent meetings or in class letters.

Committees that Need Your Volunteer Help

Much of the important policy, operational and community-building work of the School is accomplished by standing and ad hoc committees comprised of board members, staff and parents. Current Board committees include: Development, Finance and Governance Committees. The Facilities Committee and the GreenScape Committee are Administrative Committees. The Festivals Committee coordinates the Harvest Festival, Winter Spiral and MayFaire, under the guidance of the Development Office. The Development Committee guides the communications work of the school and partners with the Friends of Live Oak in fundraising. Friends committees work includes the Annual Auction, the Parent Pledge Program and other fundraising activities. The tasks and meeting times of these committees are announced in the School's Weekly *Leaflet*. Please make it a priority to read the publications and dedicate some time to a committee.

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Expectations Regarding Parent Behavior

The following policy has been enacted as a part of the School's continuing effort to provide our community with a safe, nurturing and vibrant learning environment. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

- Always schedule meetings with your class teacher in advance.
- Parent participation in classroom activities, including enrichment activities, observations and assistance with academic lessons should be prearranged with the classroom teacher.
- Please refrain from directly confronting any children other than your own regarding behavioral or social issues at school. Should such problems arise, the classroom teacher and/or school administrators should be approached to intervene or mediate the situation.
- Parents who bring, infants, toddlers and/or preschool students on campus should have their children under their direct supervision at all times. Direct supervision means within eyesight and within a distance in which voice control can still be exercised over the child.

- Adults are expected to model appropriate behavior for the students at all times. Any adults engaging in inappropriate communication (such as yelling, profanity, threats, etc) and/or physical altercations on school grounds will be escorted from the campus and may have their access to the school grounds permanently limited.
- Parents and teachers have the right to request that an administrator be present at any meeting concerning a school-related topic.
- The Live Oak Board of Directors has invested the Executive Director with the authority and responsibility for the day-to-day safety and well being of the campus. Consequently, parents on campus shall defer to the Executive Director's judgment during any questionable or pressing situations.

Open Communication and Issue Resolution

Live Oak Charter School is committed to open and direct communication regarding all aspects of the school. We expect all our parents to embrace this approach as well. We do recognize that in any organization misunderstandings or disagreements occur. Consequently, we have adopted the following protocol for communication and issue resolution. You must undertake the first remedy before proceeding to the next.

STEP 1: Communicate concerns directly to the concerned party

For instance, if there is a concern or disagreement with a teacher about your child's education, you must first contact the teacher and attempt to work things out. The same procedure is required with parent-to-parent concerns as well. If the issue is not resolved to mutual satisfaction, move to Step 2.

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STEP 2: Take your concern to the Executive Director

During this stage, the Executive Director will use his best judgment to bring the parties in question together for mutual satisfaction. If this approach does not work, the Executive Director will require a written complaint to present to the Board of Directors, who will serve as mediator. If the dispute is with the Executive Director, the complaining party still must adhere to the requirement of meeting with him and attempting to come to resolution in good faith.

STEP 3: Mediation by Board Members

In this stage, Board of Directors appointed mediator(s) will attempt to bring all parties concerned to a mutually agreed upon resolution. If this stage is unsuccessful, the issue will move to the following step.

STEP 4: Decision by the Live Oak Board of Directors

The Board of Directors serves as the final court of appeal in matters relating to Live Oak Charter School. In the unlikely event that a dispute makes it to this stage, the Board will make a final judgment after a hearing. In some instances, the nature of

the issue may require that the hearing be held in closed session with a decision reported at the end of the meeting.

Communicating by Email

The use of the e-mail by adults and children at Live Oak Charter School is governed by the following values and policy.

VALUES

1. **Empathy:** imagining the impact of our words on others is a moral responsibility in communication.
2. **Truth:** communicating known facts as distinct from opinions or rumors is a moral responsibility in communication.
3. **Authentic use of emotion:** fear, anger, and other emotions are part of communication and can be incorporated responsibly without taking them out on another.
4. **Restraint:** All communication is for better or worse. Choosing what you say to whom is based on consideration of its impact and necessity.
5. **Respect:** In order to maintain respect, communications should consider the value of another's dignity and privacy.

POLICY

As with all communication, e-mail communication always has an impact, for better or worse. Unlike face-to-face communication, between individuals or in groups, the impact of e-mail communication can be hard to imagine. Because of this potential unforeseen impact and because of its immediacy and range, e-mail communication must be guided by an awareness of its potential harm.

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In using the e-mail to communicate with anyone related to Live Oak Charter School individuals are expected to use their imagination to foresee the impact of their communication on all those concerned. When it can be imagined that a communication could be experienced by someone as hurtful, individuals are expected to temper their words and only say those things that they would be comfortable saying in a public meeting with all those affected present. It is especially important to communicate in a manner that shows respect for the dignity and privacy of another.

Individuals are strongly encouraged to forgo e-mail communications during times of conflict and to contain communication to one-on-one phone contact, meetings with involved parties, and public meetings. The e-mail should not be used for personal attacks.

Use of the e-mail to draw attention to upsetting events taking place in the Live Oak community risks the spread of rumor and opinion and can be better managed in personal connections between individuals involved in the situation.

Prior to using e-mail to communicate with teachers and staff, one should consider whether the answers to their questions could be obtained from other parents, available materials, etc. prior to contacting their child's teacher.

School Newsletters & Website

Live Oak publishes a weekly **Leaflet** that is distributed every Wednesday to the classroom. It provides timely information and important news about activities upcoming that week. Text for the weekly **Leaflet** is due in to the Development Office (development@liveoakcharter.org) on the Upper Campus, by 9:00 AM on Mondays

Every other month, the School publishes a more substantial newsletter – **The Acorn** – that contains art and photography, articles and reports from the board, faculty and parent community. Watch for more information about how to contribute to **The Acorn** in the weekly **Leaflet** or contact the Development Office.

The School's website – www.liveoakcharter.org – has been redesigned and now you can find calendars, leaflets, newsletters and other timely information posted there.



“Education is not a filling up of the pail, but a lighting of the fire.”

WILIAM BUTLER YEATS

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Friends of Live Oak Charter School

As a charter school, Live Oak faces the financial reality of raising more than ten percent of its annual operating budget through gifts and events. A second nonprofit, Friends of Live Oak Charter School, was established when the School was founded, to raise funds for the School.

Annual Auction

Friends of Live Oak has done an outstanding job raising money by coordinating an Annual Auction and numerous other fundraising events. All parents are asked to contribute to and support the Auction.

Parent Pledge Program

Friends of Live Oak also manages a Parent Pledge Program through which parents, grandparents and friends make regular tax-deductible donations to the operating fund of the School. The suggested parent pledge amount for the 2008/09 School Year is \$150 per child over 12 months. All donations are acknowledged in writing.

► SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

School Organization

Live Oak Charter School is constituted as a non-profit benefit corporation pursuant to California law. Subject to the limitations of the charter and of the Live Oak Charter School bylaws, the governance of the school is under the authority of the Board of Directors and its duly appointed representatives.

The Board of Directors

The Live Oak Board of Directors is responsible for the governance and fiscal affairs of the school. Board agenda, minutes and school policies are available for review in the school office. The primary responsibilities of the Board of Directors are to:

- Approve all major educational and operational policies
- Approve all major contracts
- Monitor the financial condition of the school and ensure that the school has adequate resources
- Determine faculty compensation
- Oversee the development of the school budget
- Approve the school budget
- Hire the Executive Director and support and supervise the Executive Director's performance
- Develop and improve facilities
- Approve major curriculum changes
- Serve as a final court of appeal for disputes
- Monitor the performance of Live Oak Charter School and take necessary action to ensure that the school remains true to its mission and charter

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Administration

Executive Director

The Executive Director is responsible for the overall operations of the school. The Director's primary responsibilities, as further specified in the bylaws, employment contract and job description, are to:

- Implement the vision and mission of the school
- Manage daily operations
- Financial management and preparation of annual budget for Board approval
- Fulfill local, state, and federal requirements for charter schools
- Pursue a permanent site
- Develop community relations
- Provide staff leadership
- Conduct dispute resolution
- Oversee the operation of a safe and orderly school campus
- Major donor work

Education Director

The Education Director is responsible for ensuring the quality of Live Oak Charter School's educational program. The Education Director's responsibilities include:

- Educational program development
- Faculty leadership
- Ensuring teacher mentoring and evaluation
- Parent education
- Student discipline

Student Services Coordinator

The Student Services Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the quality of Live Oak Charter School's special education program. The Student Services Coordinator's duties include:

- Guiding special education services
- Student assessment
- Extra lesson and remedial support
- Education regarding special needs
- Liaison with District Special Education staff.

Development Director

The Development Director is responsible for supporting the healthy growth of the Live Oak Charter School community through the development of the human and financial resources needed to operate the school. Tasks include:

- Collaboration with Friends of Live Oak
- Grants and Major Donor fundraising
- Parent Involvement
- Volunteer Coordination
- Communications (newsletter, handbook, website, etc.)
- Student Recruitment, Advertising, PR

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Office Manager

The Office Manager, with the help of the School Secretary, is responsible for ensuring the coordination and administration of school services. The Office Manager responsibilities include:

- Admissions and records
- Attendance
- Accounting and purchasing
- Human resources
- School calendar
- School office management
- Emergency and safety planning

Faculty

The role of the faculty is to provide class leadership, inspire educational excellence and encourage the inherent capacities of each student. Faculty members take an active role in overall school curriculum development, staff enrichment and parent

education activities. In addition, faculty members work with the Education Director on the Hiring Committee to recruit and screen teaching applicants.

Class Coordinators Group

Class Coordinators are parent volunteers in each classroom who support the educational and community life of Live Oak Charter through the coordination of classroom and school-wide cultural operations and activities. As a body, class coordinators serve as a hub of communication between the parents, teachers and administration.

The group is comprised of a class coordinator from each classroom, the Office Manager, the parent representative to the Board of Directors, volunteer coordinator and as needed, the Executive Director, the Education Director and the Development Director. The group is co-chaired by a volunteer and the Office Manager. The group meets every two weeks.

Parents

At Live Oak, parents help as much as possible to ensure that their children's education is as rich as possible. Parents serve as members of the Board of Directors and work on all school committees. They operate the Friends of Live Oak foundation. They assist their teacher both in the classroom and with class activities, and bring their unique skills and talents to the school whenever and wherever possible.

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Appendix A

June 29, 2005

Board of Directors Meeting Protocol Policy

Introduction

The Board of Directors meets once a month to fulfill its responsibility of governing Live Oak Charter School. Special meetings are added to the regularly scheduled meetings when necessary to ensure that business is completed in a timely fashion.

The purpose of a meeting of the Board of Directors is to address all business listed on the agenda for a particular meeting. Agendas are posted on the bulletin board and on the school's web site at least 72 hours prior to a regularly scheduled meeting.

Protocol

Public Comment

The Board of Directors is interested in and informed by comments made by members of the community. "Public Comment" is a time for community members to speak to the Board on any item not on the agenda for the evening. This is a time for the Board

to receive the information and opinions offered. The Board will take this information and, at a later time, may decide on whether further action will be taken. This is not the time to problem-solve or conduct a dialogue. Therefore, the Board does not engage in dialogue on topics raised in "Public Comment."

The Board asks that comments made in "Public Comment" be addressed to the whole Board, be respectful in nature, and no longer than three minutes in length per person. Comments regarding issues of any kind with a particular person and his/her actions will be directed into the grievance procedure outlined in the parent handbook.

Discussion and Action Items

The procedure for addressing any discussion or action item is as follows:

1. Presentation of Information
2. Board Discussion
3. Community Input
4. Board Comment
5. Board Vote (action items only)

The Live Oak community has the right to ask questions and/or make comments regarding any item of business on the agenda. As with the initial "Public Comment," the Board asks that "Community Input" regarding an item on the agenda be addressed to the whole Board, be respectful in nature, and no longer than three minutes in length per person. During the subsequent "Board Comment," Board Members may address the content of comments made by the public but are not bound to do so.

In order to complete the Board's business agenda on behalf of Live Oak Charter School, the Board will have only one "Community Input" time for each item. Anyone wishing to make additional comments is invited to submit those comments or opinions in writing via the Board of Directors' box in the school office or share them at a subsequent meeting.

Note that personal attacks of any kind, directed toward anyone, are unacceptable.