

2016-2017 School Handbook



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Providing Quality Christian Education for Pre-K through 8th Grade



Welcome to Adventist Christian education. Learning Tree Elementary School serves the greater Dalton area in Georgia and is part of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Adventists are Bible-believing Christians who base their faith, service, and hope in Jesus Christ. The name "Seventh-day" refers to the biblical Sabbath (Saturday) ordained by God at Creation, which reminds us of the relationship of love and faith we have in our Creator and Redeemer. "Adventist" means we are looking forward to the soon return of Jesus. Established in 1853, Adventist education is the second largest parochial system in the world, with an enrollment that easily surpasses one million, and operates over 1,000 K-12 schools here in North America.

Learning Tree has a long and rich tradition of academic excellence and of laying strong spiritual foundations. *Cognitive Genesis*, a study analyzing the success of Adventist Education, shows that students in U.S. Adventist schools perform a half-grade level higher than the national average. In addition, the longer students attend an Adventist school, the greater their academic success.

We are anticipating a fun and successful year of growing and learning together.

In His Service,

The Learning Tree Principal, Faculty, Staff, and School Board



Learning Tree Elementary School Mission Statement

At Learning Tree Elementary School we are:

Learning to love God and others
Teaching to think
Equipping to serve, and
Showing Jesus to all



The Adventist EDGE is the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists' initiative for the comprehensive improvement of Adventist education, from Early Childhood through grade 12 and sets the course for excellence in all areas.

Adventist Edge Mission Statement

Educators delivering GREAT education.

Adventist Edge Vision Statement

Every student a success.

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EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Seventh-day Adventists believe that true education and personal development cannot be separated from knowledge of God and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Therefore, the educational system that the church operates bases its philosophy on the Word of God. Because we believe that the work of true education and the work of redemption are one, the Learning Tree staff, school board, and constituency are committed to providing the best opportunities possible for the development of our students' physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual capabilities to the highest degree.

Spiritual Focus

Above all, it is the desire of the faculty, staff, and school board of Learning Tree Elementary School that each student develops a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We solicit your prayers on behalf of every person connected with this school family.

"Something better is the watchword of education, the law of all true living...Bring (the youth) in contact with truer beauty, with loftier principles, and with nobler lives. Lead them to behold the One 'altogether lovely'. When once the gaze is fixed upon Him, the life finds its center. The enthusiasm, the generous devotion, the passionate ardor of the youth find here their true object...To honor Christ, to become like Him, to work for Him is the life's highest ambition and its greatest joy." *Education*, p. 297.

Objectives

Compatible with the philosophy of Learning Tree Elementary School, emphasis is placed on the spiritual, academic, physical, and social development of each student. Students will be helped to reach the following objectives:

- Students and staff will work together to create an atmosphere of strong scholastic learning, promoting intellectual growth and curiosity, which instills a sense of self-worth and discipline.

- Students and staff will demonstrate a Christian lifestyle, consistent with the principles of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, reflecting Christ's life in service to others.
- Recognizing that life is a gift from God, students and staff will accept the responsibility of caring for their bodies through an understanding of healthful living.
- Students and staff will work together to create an environment fostering appropriate social behavior which encourages community participation with a respect for cultural diversity.
- Realizing the success of each student, and the entire school program, is dependent upon strong family involvement, parents will regularly participate in their child's education, as well as a variety of school programs and activities.

ACCREDITATION

Learning Tree is accredited by three nationally-recognized accrediting associations:

- Adventist Accrediting Association for Schools, Colleges, and Universities
- National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA), which is approved by the U.S. Department of Education
- Georgia Private School Accreditation Council (GAPSAC)

ADMISSIONS

Students who have a relationship with Jesus and/or want to get to know Him better are encouraged to apply. Students must be of good character and desire to cooperate with the policies of Learning Tree. Students must also be willing to adjust congenially to its religious, social, and academic atmosphere. Admission to Learning Tree is a privilege and may be withheld or withdrawn by the school board at its discretion.

Returning students are admitted to Learning Tree in good standing, unless they and their parents are notified otherwise. Returning students who have repeatedly demonstrated lack of

respect for Learning Tree’s policies or its staff may be admitted on a probationary status for 45 school days. All new students receive probationary status. The School Board makes final decisions regarding continued enrollment of probationary students.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Learning Tree admits students of any race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin to all privileges, programs, and activities generally granted to students at the school.

Admission Requirements

The classroom teacher and/or school principal will meet with the parent and prospective student for an interview. The following items are required for admission to Learning Tree:

- *Verification of birth* (copy of state-certified birth certificate)
According to Georgia laws, students must be the following ages by September 1 (by Dec. 31 if transfer in from out of state) in order to enroll: Pre-K--age four, Kindergarten--age five, and First grade--age six.
- *Completed registration packet* (obtain from school office or print from school web site). Packet contains the following: new and returning student instructions, student information, family data, student pickup authorization and emergency contacts, student educational background, consent for medical treatment, field trip permission, student authorization to carry prescription medication, medication administration form, technology and acceptable use policy, parent/teacher communication for conflict resolution, media release form, financial policy and contract, conditions and terms of agreement, consent to release information, and student recommendation forms.
- *Physical examinations*
 - Physical exam is required for all new students.
 - Regular Ear/Eye/Dental exams are required for all students.
- *Legal verification of immunizations, or notarized waiver*

- *Two letters of recommendation from a previous principal or teacher and a pastor or family friend for new students*
- *New Student Testing*
- *Financial verification and payment*
 - all school accounts have zero balance, including previous schools attended
 - payment of application and registration fees

Withdrawal of Student from School

Parents finding it necessary to withdraw their child from school need to have a conference with the principal and pay tuition and other charges in full before records can be sent to the new school.

Academic Placement

Appropriate grade placement is important for a student's success. Grade placement may need re-evaluation as the student needs change. The following factors are considered in grade placement:

- Chronological age (Georgia state standards will be met.)
- Emotional, physical, and social development
- Scholastic achievement
- Student's ability to reason and to express ideas logically
- Teacher evaluation of academic progress
- Prior school performance as evidenced by report cards, cumulative records, and required recommendations.

Waiting List Policy

When a classroom is full, prospective students are placed on a waiting list, with applications prioritized by the date received. Priority will be given in the following order:

1. Families who have a currently enrolled student who wish to enroll another sibling. Family must have been at Learning Tree for four months or more and have their account in good standing. Space may be forfeited if application deadlines are missed.
2. Member and regular attendee of an Adventist Church.
3. Other families.

FINANCES

Learning Tree Elementary School is a nonprofit institution, which relies on regular tuition payments and financial support from the Dalton Seventh-day Adventist Church to cover the majority of its daily operational expenses. Acceptance to Learning Tree is granted and continued to those families demonstrating financial responsibility. The following policies govern all applying students.

Application Fee

A non-refundable \$100 application fee must accompany the application form for all students. If application is turned in by March 4, 2016 the fee is only \$50. If it is turned in by April 4, the fee is \$75. After April 4, the application fee is the full \$100.

Registration Fee

The non-refundable registration fee for each student is \$400 and is due on or before registration, which is the first Sunday in August. The registration fee covers textbook rental, instructional materials, library and technology fees, field trip subsidy, yearbook, student insurance, achievement tests, and other educational costs. Pay the registration fee by March 4, 2016 and app fee is waived.

Entrance Fee

In addition to the application fee, before a student enters school, the entrance fee must be paid. The entrance fee is the registration fee plus the first month's tuition and is due at registration July 24.

Tuition

Learning Tree administration desires to keep the tuition as low as is consistent with good business practices. The rates are based on service costs and commodity prices prevailing at the time of this publication and are subject to change in the event of a marked increase in the cost of operating the school. The school is partially maintained through substantial subsidies from the Georgia-Cumberland Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and the members of the Dalton Seventh-day Adventist church. To equalize the burden of support among the patrons of the school,

the tuition rates are discounted for those who are members of the Dalton Seventh-day Adventist Church; parents who are members receive constituent rates. Church members are encouraged to hold church positions and are asked to tithe faithfully and contribute to the combined budget. This helps replenish the church subsidy, which assists in keeping tuition rates as low as possible.

Tuition Schedule

After the first month’s tuition, registration, and application fees are paid, tuition for the remaining nine months is due on the first of each month, September through May, and is considered late after the tenth. Returned checks will be assessed a \$30 service charge, which will be applied to the next month’s bill.

Rates and Discounts

Multiple student discounts are available to families with more than one student attending Learning Tree. To receive this discount, all family accounts must be paid by the tenth of the month. A 5% discount is available to families paying the full year’s tuition at registration. (This discount applies only to tuition, and not to the registration and application fee.)

Constituent Tuition (Dalton Seventh-day Adventist Church Members)

	<u>1st Child</u>	<u>2nd Child</u>	<u>3rd Child</u>	<u>4th Child</u>
per month	\$ 365.00	\$ 345.00	\$ 325.00	\$ 305.00
per year	\$3,650.00	\$3,450.00	\$3,250.00	\$3,050.00
in advance (5% Discount)	\$3,470.00	\$3,280.00	\$3,090.00	\$2,900.00

Non-Constituent Tuition (Non-Dalton Seventh-day Adventist Church Members)

	<u>1st Child</u>	<u>2nd Child</u>	<u>3rd Child</u>	<u>4th Child</u>
per month	\$ 440.00	\$ 420.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 380.00
per year	\$4,400.00	\$4,200.00	\$4,000.00	\$3,800.00
in advance (5% Discount)	\$4,180.00	\$3,990.00	\$3,800.00	\$3,610.00

Additional Expenses

The costs below are approximate and may be subject to change:

- *Hot Lunch:* \$4 per student meal and \$3 per Pre-K/K meal
- *School Pictures:* \$20+, if desired
- *Uniforms:* varies. Pre-owned available at a discount
- *Field Trips:* up to \$75 dispersed throughout the year
- *Outdoor Education for 5th-7th:* \$50 due on May 1
- *8th Grade Class Trip:* up to \$75 due on May 1
- *Athletics:* up to \$50

Withdraw or Dismissal

If a student withdraws or is dismissed from Learning Tree, a full month's tuition will be assessed for the month in question. There will be no partial month tuition refund without a 30-day written notice of withdrawal, unless a student is requested to withdraw by the administration.

Eighth Grade Class Trip and Graduation

Financial accounts need to be current for a student to participate in the eighth grade class trip. In harmony with the policy established by the General Conference Department of Education of Seventh-day Adventists, transcripts or diplomas will be issued only after the student's account is paid in full.

Delinquent Accounts

Accounts are expected to be paid in full and on time. In the event that a family faces a financial hardship, the hardship needs to be explained and a new payment plan addressed in writing to the Learning Tree Finance Committee, as soon as the hardship occurs. Any account with an unpaid balance will be considered delinquent after 30 days and communication from the Treasurer will be sent notifying of the delinquency. Delinquent accounts will be assessed a late fee of \$30 a month. Any account that is more than 60 days past due will result in the Treasurer or the Principal asking the parent(s) to have their student(s) remain home until the bill is brought current or until payment arrangements have been made with the finance committee. Any account more than 90 days past due may be subject to collections.

In addition, the school will not carry unpaid accounts. In other words, before starting a new school year, all accounts must be paid unless an arrangement that details a plan to reduce the past due account is approved by the Learning Tree Finance Committee.

Financial Aid Funds

Financial aid (FA) is available on a first-come, first-serve basis for families who qualify with students in 1st-8th. FA is not available for Pre-K/K. Learning Tree has FA funds available only when generous donors give to the school or to the Dalton Seventh-day Adventist Church. Donors who want to assist Dalton Adventist church members donate to Student Assistance Fund. Donors who want to assist non-church members donate to the Sponsorship Fund.

Process and Criteria for Financial Assistance

- Deadline to apply for financial aid is the last Friday in May.
- Parents must keep their portion of the account current.
- The student(s) must maintain a C or better in citizenship and grade point average (2.0).
- Assistance is voted on a year-by-year basis and re-assessed based on available funds at the beginning of second semester.
- Parents must provide previous year's tax returns and W2/1099.
- The financial aid recipient(s) and their parents/guardians must be supportive of Learning Tree.
- Failure to comply with any of these criteria will result in the suspension of financial aid until criteria is met.



CURRICULUM

Learning Tree provides a well-rounded curriculum that meets guidelines set forth by the state of Georgia and by the Seventh-day Adventist's Georgia-Cumberland Conference and the Education Department of the North American Division.

Kinderschool Curriculum

Kinderschool is Learning Tree's program for Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten children. Our goal is to make this first initial contact with school a joyous experience and to guide each child into a loving relationship with God so they may reflect His love to others. Students begin school at varying levels of developmental growth. To meet the needs of each student, Learning Tree utilizes a blend of the Stepping Stones and Kinderquest curriculum, which incorporates activity centers, learning games, and songs that help them to develop physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually. This curriculum includes Bible lessons, and an individualized reading preparedness program, in addition to an individualized numbers program. Woven throughout the core is art, physical education, science and social studies. Kinderschool not only provides readiness training needed for the next level of development, it truly inspires each student with the joy of learning.

Grades 1-8 Curriculum

Bible Classes

Bible curriculum has been developed by the Adventist Church and is Bible-focused and Christ-centered. Younger students learn character-building lessons from the stories of the Bible, while the middle and upper grades are more focused on issues and topics. Service and outreach opportunities are an integral part of learning, as well as scripture memorization and shared leadership in worship experiences. It is our hope that each student will accept Jesus as their personal Friend and Savior. Parents are invited to study this Bible-based curriculum with their students.

Mathematics

Exploring numerical patterns through problem solving links us to an infinite God by demonstrating His order and constancy. The

attributes of measurement reveal God's accuracy, dependability, and precision. Shapes and their parts help us appreciate the beauty and order in everything God has designed. Each math class uses nationally recognized and denominationally recommended curriculum. In the younger grades, a formulation of the basics are developed in math computation (+, -, x, ÷), with mastery of concepts a top priority. Algebraic form is introduced early and is frequently revisited, providing an excellent base for transition into higher math. Pre-algebra is taught in 8th grade, with Algebra I also being an option for those who are more advanced.

Language Arts: Reading

We honor God when we choose to reflect and respond to what we read in ways that help us grow in faith, learning, and service.

Assessment includes conferencing, discussion, graphic organizers, responses, reactions, journals, summaries, literature roles, book reports and reviews. Teacher-directed instruction is implemented with the Pathways reading series and is supplemented with phonetic materials, literature sets and BEAR (Be Excited About Reading). BEAR is an individualized student-selected literature program, which consists of reading from the following genres: mission stories, biographies, historical fiction or non-fiction, the Bible, informational books, Ellen White writings, or an approved book of choice. Students spend time weekly in each venue.

Language Arts: Writing

We honor God when we choose to write in ways that affirm the teachings in His Word. Writing is based on the 6+1 model of writing traits and process. Students keep writing portfolios and publish and present their choice pieces. They are also given opportunity to practice online writing prompts through the ERB program. Assessment includes: conferencing, observations, checklists, rubrics, writer's portfolio, write-pair-share, and journals.

Language Arts: Language

The inclusion of Language standards in their own domain should not be taken as an indication that skills related to conventions, effective language use, and vocabulary are unimportant to reading, writing, speaking, and listening; indeed, they are inseparable from such contexts. Students spend time learning

grammatical concepts by completing various exercises, like those found in DOL (Daily Oral Language) and IXL Language. Vocabulary development and spelling is taught by utilizing spellingcity.com.

Language Arts: Speaking and Listening

The ability to listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations allows us to communicate information, ideas, and feelings to better understand God, others, and ourselves. Speaking and listening is assessed through a variety of methods like discussion, observations, checklists, show and tell, questions, speeches, rubrics, multimedia presentations, literature circles, and readings.

Science and Health

Science is a process of inquiry and discovery. Inquiry and discovery includes an understanding of life science, earth science, physical science, and health science, connecting history, technology, and the nature of science. Students are introduced to a broad survey of all science topics, with special emphasis on the Creator Scientist and the Great Healer. A relative Christian inquiry-based model, called By Design, is used and hands-on labs play an integral part of the weekly science and health curriculum.

Social Studies

Social Studies is the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence. The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world. Five strands comprise the social studies program: history, civics and government, geography, economics and individuals, society and culture. Essential learnings for grades 5-8 cover U. S. History, World History, World Studies, and current events.

Physical Education

The Physical Education curriculum seeks to help students learn to reflect God's image by developing proficiency in developmental and character areas of Motor Skills, Fitness (health and skills), Concepts (safety, movement, game strategies, body systems, environmental responsibility, rules of health, awareness of recreational opportunities), Positive Attributes (honesty, patience, self-worth, humility, responsibility), and Interpersonal Skills

(cooperation, leadership, sportsmanship, respect). All students are required to participate in P.E. unless a written excuse from a doctor is presented. Students in 5th-8th may wear T-shirts and shorts and closed-toed shoes that meet school dress code.

Computers

Computer instruction aims to increase computer skill level. In the lower grades, students learn basic keyboarding, how to navigate the web, and are introduced to power point and basic word processing. A formal keyboarding class is taught in the upper grades, and before they graduate, students are expected to become literate in Microsoft Word and key at the rate of 35 wpm.

Music

As participants in the music program, students are introduced to a variety of musical experiences. All grades are involved in a music class twice a week that integrates basic music theory with performance opportunities in a choir setting. 3rd & 4th grades have a recorder class and 7th & 8th grades have a bell choir class. As a course requirement, students must attend all music performances.

Art

Art helps us understand that talents and gifts are from God. In art students learn to appreciate the value of art in society and culture, understand the basic elements of art such as line, shape, texture, and color, and understand basic design principles of rhythm, movement, and balance.

Textbooks

Textbooks constitute an important resource for the curriculum in all schools, including the Seventh-day Adventist schools. However, teachers are encouraged to seek out supplemental resources to enrich the curriculum in the subject being taught.

In key subject areas such as Bible and science, the Seventh-day Adventist church invests hours of research and large sums of money to produce its own textbooks. In other areas the church's curriculum committee utilizes excellent subject-area textbooks available commercially.

Students will be taught to read critically and thoughtfully under the careful guidance of the classroom teacher. If a textbook contains inaccuracies or differences of opinions on important philosophical or religious issues, the teacher will make every attempt to point out the error or differences and provide discussion opportunity to clear up any misunderstandings.

A Partnership Approach to Academic Progress

Learning Tree staff desire to have every student working at his/her full academic potential. In order for this to happen, the school must have the cooperation and combined efforts of students and parents. The parents will need to help their student by providing directions and encouragement in good study habits.

Parents are urged to take an active role in their children's day-to-day work. While homework is not a requirement in all grades, it can be an important part of a student's instructional program and may contribute to the student's success by reinforcing, enriching, and maintaining skills taught in the classroom.

The following suggestions may be used to guide parents and family members as they help their child meet his/her potential.

- Encourage your child to set and to reach realistic goals.
- Encourage your child to take responsibility for his/her behavior and study skills.
- Provide a regular quiet time and place for study. If there is no homework, the time could be used for recreational reading or other educational activities.

Honor Roll

Awards are given each quarter for 3rd-8th. Students with a 3.5-3.79 gpa are placed on the Honor Roll. Students with a 3.8-4.0 gpa receive the High Honor Roll award. Achievements are celebrated.

Report Cards and Conferences

Report cards are issued to the custodial parent/s at the end of the second week following each of the four quarters. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled after the second grading period. The

parents or teachers may request a conference any time during the school year. Quarterly report cards will be hand-delivered or mailed. Mid-term reports will be sent home to primary grades in notebooks and in the manila envelopes for the upper grades mid-way through each quarter. Mid-terms provide adequate time for students to strengthen any weak areas prior to the quarters' end.

Tracking Weekly Academic Progress

At the end of each week, primary teachers send home a notebook with each student, and upper-grade teachers send home a manila envelope. These may contain student work, a progress report, the Leaflet (the weekly school newsletter), and other needed communication. Envelopes are to be signed by the parent and returned by Tuesday of the following week. In addition, the primary teachers send the notebook home daily with notes, school work, activities, announcements, and a behavior report.

Online Progress Reports

Teachers use Renweb to update and post grades online for parental access. RenWeb allows a parent or student to track grades, attendance, and communicate via email with the teacher.

Set up of RenWeb for Parents and Students:

1. Log onto www.Renweb.com/Logins/ParentsWeb-Login.aspx
2. Go to parent website
3. Enter district code GCC-SDA
4. Enter the email address you provided the school
5. Leave password blank
6. Click on new parent log-in. After getting the password, re-enter RenWeb using the password. Remember the password is case sensitive.
7. Press Parent or Student to view student's attendance and grades.

Missing Assignments

For 5th-8th grades, a missing work list is printed regularly. When a student has three or more missing assignments and/or an F in any area, they are required to attend study halls until the work is turned in and the grade is raised. Each day an assignment is late, a 10% loss of grade will incur, up to three days.

Missing work must still be turned in after the three days, but 30% will be taken off the final score, except for tests or quizzes—only 10% is taken off. For each day missed due to sickness, 2nd-8th grade students are allowed one day to make up missed assignments. After that time period, the regular missing assignment policy applies.

Academic Probation

When a student receives a D or F on his/her mid-term grade report, in any core class, they are placed on Academic Probation until the grade is raised to a C- or higher. Students on academic probation are required to follow an Academic Agreement. This process encourages the student to assume responsibility for their education and to make the best use of the opportunities a Christian education offers them by staff that care enough to hold them accountable. The Academic Agreement form outlines the specific expectations of students, parents and teachers and explains the consequences of failing to meet the objectives.

Re-evaluation occurs after the first week probation. If the grade has not improved in one week, the teacher will revisit and revise the student's plan for improvement and will update the Academic Agreement and send it home for the parent to sign and return.

If the grade has not improved by the third week, the parent/s and student will meet with the teacher to create a plan to improve the grades and return to regular academic standing. Form is signed.

It is important to note that being on academic probation affects major class office standing and participation in special activities. Remember, grades and missing assignments are updated weekly and may be accessed via RenWeb. In addition, weekly progress reports are sent home every Friday.

STUDENT LIFE

Citizenship and Character Development

Learning Tree is where we learn to be like Jesus. It's where we learn to love God and others. God is love; therefore, the principle of love lays the foundation for the school's Citizenship and character development program. Love is the principle; respect is the principle of love in motion. Learning Tree Elementary students learn to love God and others by choosing to show respect to God, and to others, and to themselves and to property. We want students to realize that behaviors are the result of choices, choices are determined by our characters, and our characters are determined by what and who we love and respect, and here at Learning Tree we all love Jesus.

Learning Tree students, parents, and teachers all take active roles in character development. Upon enrollment, each student signs a contract pledging to follow the school-wide citizenship and character development plan. For students whose behavior and attitudes do not show respect, Learning Tree uses an in-house discipline committee to determine what consequences will bring the most positive and redemptive results. More serious infractions may call for the wisdom of the full discipline committee, which includes the school board chair person and the pastor, in addition to the principal and at least one staff member.

As character development opportunities arise, the teachers initially work with each student. When a teacher's attempts to help a student behave appropriately are not working, the student is sent to the principal's classroom to complete a refocus form. After the form is completed, the student has a brief conference with the principal and may then return to class. In the event a student makes a more inappropriate choice, like being unkind, lying, showing disrespect, etc., they may meet with the principal and/or discipline committee and receive a detention, which is served during lunch and lunch recess. Choices of an increasingly negative nature can result in immediate suspension and/or dismissal from Learning Tree, like any kind of bullying, harassment or negative physical contact, deliberate disobedience, unworkable attitude, bullying, etc. In these cases, the full discipline committee may

convene to determine consequences that will result in maximum character growth, which could include detention or suspension. In the event of suspension, the student may be asked to present a behavior plan to the discipline committee before returning to school.

Citizenship Grades

Students receive Citizenship grades based on their practice of appropriate behaviors and healthy attitudes. While these grades do not affect students' academic grade point average, they do have consequences for leadership positions, extra-curricular activities, and continued attendance at Learning Tree. Citizenship grades are tallied at the end of each quarter and awards are given to those students who have maintained an A in Citizenship. At the onset of each new quarter, every student begins with an A.

Students must maintain a citizenship grade of no lower than a "B-" to be eligible for extracurricular activities. The administration reserves the right to grant an exception when the activity may enhance or supplement the student's educational experience. In the event that a student is not eligible for a field trip, supervision may be provided at school, or student may be asked to stay home.

Citizenship Infractions and Consequences

The following behaviors are a few examples of citizenship infractions that may result in fines, refocuses, detentions, suspension or expulsion: unsatisfactory academic progress or conduct, having a spirit that is manifestly out of harmony with the standards and principles of the school, exuding an influence that is detrimental to others, sexual harassment, being involved in any action that undermines school ideals, bringing weapons or dangerous instruments to school, being disruptive in school, repeatedly violating the dress code, habitually leaving personal property lying around, leaving campus during school hours without permission, lewd conduct, theft, using obscene or profane language, tampering with school fire alarms or fire extinguishers, having inappropriate literature, pictures, playing cards or any kind of fighting, including horseplay (list is by no means exhaustive).

When students receive three refocuses, they are sent to detention.

Anytime a student receives a detention, parents will be contacted. Each detention drops the Citizenship grade by half a grade (i.e. one detention = A-, two detentions = B+, and so forth). One to four detentions in each quarter may result in a suspension, anywhere from 1-3 days. A 1-3 day suspension drops a Citizenship grade by one and a half letter grades. A 4 or more day suspension drops a Citizenship grade by two and a half letter grades. Suspension may be in or out of school

Respect Policy

The Learning Tree School Staff and Board have determined that a physically and emotionally safe environment in school is necessary for students to learn and to achieve high academic success. We expect everyone to treat each other with respect; therefore, Learning Tree has a zero tolerance policy for any form of disrespect students must not participate in, or allow any act of direct or indirect (bystander) disrespect.

The Pledge of Respect is as follows:

With God's help . . .

1. We will respect others.
2. We will help students who are not being respected.
3. We will look for ways to include all students.
4. When we see a need or somebody not being respected, we will tell a teacher right away.

Disrespect may include any written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (i.e. jokes, teasing, rumor spreading, intimidation, *sexual harassment, gestures, electronically transmitted acts, etc.) that is reasonably perceived as being directed toward a characteristic such as a person's race, religion, national origin, age, gender, possessions, physical features, disabilities, or beliefs or any other feature or characteristic of another individual that degrades, injures, threatens, or disgraces a student, staff member, and/or visitor. Such behaviors are considered disrespectful whether they take place on or off school property, at a school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle. Note: repeated disrespectful behavior is considered bullying, and consequences disciplinary action for repeated incidents will increase in severity.

*Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, physical, or cyber conduct or contact that by design or innuendo is sexual in nature.

Reporting Procedures

Students who experience disrespect need to report the incident to school authorities as soon as possible. If the disrespect is between students, the student should report the incident to the supervising teacher and to the principal. If the disrespect comes from an adult, the student should report directly to the principal and or another responsible adult. As far as possible every effort will be made to protect student identity, anonymity, and confidentiality.

Student Dress Standards

Student dress can impact classroom atmosphere and behavior. Learning Tree students are expected to willingly and consistently comply with the dress code as outlined in this handbook. Whether a regular school day, or a dress down day or for PE, students must always dress in a neat, clean, and modest manner. All clothing must fit appropriately for the age and size of the student. Frayed, faded, or torn items are not allowed. If a student is out of the dress code standards, parents will be contacted to bring the child appropriate clothes.

All uniforms should be purchased from any of these vendors:

Educational Outfitters—store or online

2271 Gunbarrel Road, Ste. 100B

Chattanooga, TN 37421 ph. 423-894-1222

www.educationaloutfitters.com

Lands' End—online or catalog 1-800-469-2222

www.landsend.com/school

French Toast—online or catalog 1-800-373-6248

www.FrenchToast.com

Daily Uniform

- **Shirts:** Navy blue, burgundy, yellow, or white polo shirts (short or long-sleeved).
- **Undershirts:** A plain white turtleneck or T-shirts. Must be tucked in. Sleeves shorter than uniform shirt.
- **Pants and Shorts:** Dark khaki or navy blue cotton twill. No cargo pockets. Inside pockets only. Modest length.
- **Jumpers, Skirts and Skorts:** Dark khaki, navy blue, or designated plaid jumpers, skirts and skorts are allowed. Modest length. Shorts, tights or leggings recommended under skirts and jumpers. When worn under jumpers and skirts, shorts must be shorter than the hemline.
- **Outerwear:** A school logo field trip fleece or sweatshirt (including Lightning sweatshirts) or uniform cardigan is the only outerwear students may wear inside the school.
- **Shoes:** Closed-toe shoes or flat-soled shoes with non-marking soles. Athletic shoes required for P.E. classes.
- **Tights/Leggings:** Navy blue or white-footed tights. Also allowed are plain, solid-color ankle-length leggings in white, navy blue or black.
- **Socks:** Socks must be either white or dark plain colors.
- **Hair:** Well-groomed. No extreme styles.
- **Jewelry:** Not permitted. Medical alert bracelets allowed.
- **Cosmetics:** Makeup/nail polish must be natural-looking.

Field Trip Uniform

Students should wear either a navy blue polo shirt, a school logo T-shirt or school sweatshirt (or school navy blue fleece), or a navy blue uniform cardigan with dark khaki uniform-style pants or shorts on all field trips, unless otherwise directed by the teacher.



ATTENDANCE POLICIES

All students enrolled at Learning Tree are expected to be punctual and regular in attendance. Students who enter the classroom late disrupt the educational process and miss worship, important announcements, and specific directions for schoolwork. Students who are absent put an added burden not only on themselves but the teacher. Learning Tree is bound by state laws to maintain accurate attendance records. Students who are not in regular attendance may jeopardize attendance at Learning Tree.

On-Time Policy

Students who are not in the classroom when the 8:00 a.m. bell rings are marked tardy for that day. When students arrive at school after 8:00 a.m., they are to enter through the front door and check in at the office, where they are given a Class Entry Pass to present to the teacher upon entering the classroom. Unexcused tardiness results in a \$20 charge for every five times of tardiness. These charges must be paid before the child can return to class on the next school day.

Excused Tardiness and Absences

Tardiness may be excused only because of unavoidable circumstances—ones that are out of the parent’s control, such as: sickness, death in the family, road closing, inclement weather, and power outage.

Written excuses from a parent/guardian are required for all absences and will be kept on file until the end of the school year. The note must contain the student’s name, date, reason for the absence, and the parent’s/guardian’s signature and be submitted to the office within 48 hours of the absence. The administration will determine if the absence is to be excused.

Excused absences are defined according to state guidelines:

- Personal illness that would endanger the student’s health or the health of others.
- Serious illness or death in the student’s immediate family.

- Special and recognized religious holidays observed by the student's faith.
- Mandated absence by order of governmental agencies.
- Conditions rendering school attendance impossible or hazardous to health or safety.

Class work missed must be satisfactorily made up per classroom policy. A student who misses more than 10% of the school days in a period (including excused absences) may forfeit his/her grade for that grading period.

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences are addressed accordingly:

Once a student acquires three unexcused absences, a letter is sent to the parents notifying them that their student is approaching the limit of five state-allowed unexcused absences.

Once a student acquires four unexcused absences, a parent/student conference is held with the Principal. This meeting is held within a week of the fourth unexcused absence.

After a student acquires five unexcused absences, a parent/student meeting with the Principal and School Board Chair is required before the student is allowed to return to school. At this meeting one or more of the following will be implemented:

1. Parent is asked to withdraw student from school.
2. The situation is referred to a Truancy Treatment Team, with possible DFACS or Court referrals.
3. The family must pay a \$100.00 re-application fee per student in order to return to school.

Prearranged Absences

Prearranged absences (at least two days prior to absence) may at times be necessary for personal family business. If proper arrangements are made, students will not be penalized. When absences are prearranged, all plans for making up schoolwork must be made with the classroom teacher prior to absences. Early notification allows the teacher adequate time to prepare the needed homework materials for the child while he/she is absent.

School Schedule

Monday-Friday (Friday dismissal at 2:00)

7:30 a.m. morning supervision begins;

8:00 a.m. classes begin;

3:00 p.m. school dismisses;

3:30 p.m. afternoon supervision ends

Before School

Because there is no supervision before 7:30 a.m. at the school, students are not to arrive before that time. Students enter in the front of the building where the supervising staff member is located. Students may walk laps, play games, or sit in the gym and wait for the bell to ring to be dismissed to the classrooms.

After School

Parents are allowed 30 minutes after school in which to pick up their children. Supervision ends at 3:30 p.m. (2:30 on Fridays). Families of children who are still at school after 3:30 will be charged \$10 per child for each 10 minute increment (or portion thereof) after 3:30. These charges must be paid before the child will be allowed back in class on the next school day.

Early Dismissals

When parents/guardians find it necessary to pick up their student(s) before the end of the school day, the parent/s must sign out the student(s) at the front office. The secretary will then contact the classroom teacher who will dismiss the student(s).



STUDENT HEALTH POLICIES

Prescribed Medications

In general, the administration of prescribed medication to students while in the school is to be avoided. Medications should be given at home when possible. In the event that a parent, legal guardian, physician, or health officer confirms the necessity the administering of medication to a student during school hours, the school must provide control and supervision of the administration of the medication as detailed below:

1. Principal or designated staff is responsible to securely store and administer medication.
2. All medications must be brought by the parent or legal guardian to the designated staff person in the original pharmaceutical containers, clearly labeled with student name, medication name, appropriate dosage and the time for each dose.
3. If a student requires medication for a period of time exceeding 20 school days, the parents or legal guardians need to fill out the Medication Administration Form provided by GCC K12 Board of Education.
4. The designated staff member is responsible for maintaining a log for each student receiving medication, which includes student name, the name of the medication, date and time and dosage amount and any reaction(s).

Non-prescribed Medication

Nonprescription medications such as aspirin, cough syrup, over-the-counter allergy medications, etc. may NOT be administered to students by school staff. Middle school students, however, may self-administer nonprescription medicines provided they bring one or two days' dosage rather than a whole bottle. This medication must be given to the designated school staff by the parent or legal guardian until the child needs it. The parent or legal guardian must also complete the Medication Administration form. Note: This policy does not supersede local country or state governmental policies.

Medical Emergency/Consent for Medical Treatment

Each student must have a current Consent for Medical Treatment form (available from office or school web site) on file in the school office. In the event of a medical emergency, the school will call 911 and will attempt to contact the student's parents/guardians as specified on the form. If contact cannot be made, the school will exercise consent-to-treat permission to seek care for the student.

Student Accident Insurance

The school carries an accident insurance policy for each student, which covers medical payments for school accidents. The school's insurance is secondary to the family or employer insurance. The school policy is in effect in the following situations:

- If student is injured on school grounds while school is in session
- If student is participating in a school-sponsored activity
- If student is traveling directly from home to school or from school to home on days student is in attendance at school

If a student's injury is covered by one of the conditions listed above, the parent/guardian of the student must complete the following:

- File a report with the school within 24 hours of accident.
- File claim and collect payment from employer insurance.
- Obtain a School Insurance form from the school office, if needed. Complete the form, include medical expenses, and send the form to your insurance company.

Wellness Policy

Learning Tree places utmost importance on health and wellness, spiritually, as well as physically. Please keep your child home if he or she has been running a fever. Before a child may return to school after a sickness, the child must be fever-free for at least 24 hours without the help of fever reducing medication after the fever subsides. The secretary will call parents if their child becomes sick during the school day. Thank you for coming to pick them up as quickly as possible.

Students with Allergies

The goal of the school is to provide a safe environment for all students. However, the school cannot guarantee that students with allergies will not be exposed to potential allergens within its environment. Utmost care will be given to manage a child's allergy condition when parents have notified the school of the concern.

Parents need to do the following:

1. Work with the principal and teacher to develop a plan to minimize potential exposure.
2. Provide medical doctor's plan to follow in case of allergic reaction.
3. Train student to avoid potential exposure to allergens and what to do should an allergic reaction occur.
4. If medication, such as Epinephrine pen is required or an inhaler, a form must be completed and the medication must be left in the school office.
5. A second medication may be kept in the classroom or with the student through prior arrangement with school office.

Lunches

Lunch is an essential part of each student's day. Each child is encouraged to eat a big breakfast and bring a well-balanced, nutritious lunch. Healthy foods are encouraged. Unclean meat (pork, shrimp, etc.), caffeinated drinks, and glass containers are not permitted. Microwaves are available. Please send foods that require short cooking times. Hot lunches may be available for student purchase. A schedule will be provided to you weekly.

Child Abuse/Neglect

Learning Tree is bound by State and Federal Law to report any suspected or reported cases of child abuse and/or neglect. In the event that teachers or administrators receive a report of or have reason to believe that a child is being abused or neglected, they must notify Child Protective Services.

The school's employees are not to investigate to determine whether there has been an incident of abuse or neglect. Learning Tree supports all efforts to end child abuse.

PARENT/TEACHER CONCERN PROCEDURES

The Georgia-Cumberland Conference K-12 Board of Education has voted the following procedure for adoption and use in all schools. The procedure is mindful of due process and founded on the Biblical principles of Matthew 18. Any questions regarding the fundamental philosophy and/or procedures prescribed should be directed to the Office of Education.

1. Discuss the situation with your child's teacher. All meetings with teacher(s) and/or principal must be by appointment.
2. If amiable agreement cannot be reached, a conference will be set up for the parent, teacher, and principal. The principal is to keep minutes of the meeting, including all relevant issues and/or agreements discussed. The minutes are to be reviewed by all parties prior to the completion of the meeting. Should the concern involve the school principal, the school board chairman would serve as the facilitator and keep minutes. Note: should the principal be involved, the Georgia Cumberland Conference Office of Education is to be notified.
3. If further assistance is needed, contact the Learning Tree School Board chairperson in writing.
4. If concern remains unresolved, you may contact the Associate Superintendent of Education of the Georgia-Cumberland Conference.
5. If all steps are unsuccessful and the concern remains unresolved, a final appeal of the issue can be made to the Learning Tree School Board. The teacher, associate superintendent of education, and parent are requested to be present with the school board. If the parent is a school board member, he or she will need to remove him or herself from the decision-making process. A final resolution to the concern will be acted upon by the Learning Tree School Board. All parties will be officially notified in writing of the school board's decision.
6. Under no circumstances should an individual Learning Tree School Board member be contacted to solve a conflict or problem.

GENERAL POLICIES AND INFORMATION

The administration and the Learning Tree school board reserve the right to formulate and implement policies, rules, and regulations throughout the course of the year in order to assure the safe and appropriate operation of the school. Those policies will be equal in application to the ones published in this handbook.

Internet Usage Policy

All students and their parents/guardians are required to sign the Internet Usage Policy statement. This agreement is part of the registration requirements found in the registration packet.

Field Trips

Field trips are approved school functions, and all students are expected to participate. Please keep your child at home if they are not going to participate. Your child's absence will be unexcused. Any student absent from a field trip may, at the discretion of the teacher, be required to complete an assignment related to the subject matter of the field trip. Field Trip uniform is required unless specified otherwise.

A Field Trip Permission form for all trips is signed by parents/guardians during registration. Each trip will be announced in the Leaflet and many times a parent alert text or email will also be sent to remind parents of the cost, date and time, and how many drivers will be needed.

Volunteers/Drivers

Learning Tree welcomes and encourages volunteers to participate in activities in the school. Volunteers are needed to drive students for field trips, help in the classrooms, help with athletics, help with hot lunch, help in the library, and many other activities.

To further ensure the safety of our students, any adult who wants to work with our students is required to fill out a volunteer application and complete the "Shield the Vulnerable" course. A Volunteer packet with instructions may be picked up at the office. After the forms are completed, turn in the paperwork to the office and visit with the principal for a brief orientation. Thank you!

Lost and Found

Items such as sweaters, jackets, and lunch boxes that are left lying around the school are placed in a container marked "Lost and Found" and are stored in the school office. At the end of the semester all unclaimed items are donated to charity. Parents are encouraged to label items with their student's name.

Phones

If avoidable, please do not call teachers and students during school hours. Students may use the school phone in cases of emergency after securing permission from a staff member. Cell phones are allowed at school, but must not be seen or heard unless permission from a staff member has been granted. Student use of any phone (including personal cell phones) without permission is not permitted and personal phones will be confiscated and returned to the student's parent.

School phones are for school business purposes only. The secretary will take messages and notify the teachers and/or students. Please do not call, text, or email a student or teacher directly during school hours and expect a return message. Routine arrangements such as lunches, permission to go to a friend's house, etc. should be arranged prior to school.

Unauthorized Electronic Devices

Unauthorized electronic devices may not be used during school hours. If rule is broken, the electronic device will be confiscated. Parents may collect these from the teacher when it is convenient.

Special Friendships

As young people grow and mature, there comes a time when special friendships between girls and boys may develop. At the elementary level, such friendships should not include public display of affection.

Gum Policy

Gum chewing is not allowed on our campus or in the school.

Visitors

Parents are welcome to visit the school. Visitors must sign in at the front office before entering the classroom. No student should bring relatives or friends without prior approval of the classroom teacher and administration. Permission should also be obtained from the teacher before bringing pets to school.

To keep classroom disruptions to a minimum, all items that need to be delivered to students during school hours should be left at the office. Students will be allowed to pick the items up at their break times.

Library Lending Policy

Students will be checking out books from the Learning Tree library for use in classes or for book reports. In the event of a lost, damaged, or seriously late book, a standard fee of \$20 will be assessed to the student. Payment will be made in the front office. The fee will be used toward the replacement of the book by the school. No books may be checked out of the library until overdue materials or books are returned.

Asbestos Statement

Learning Tree is vitally concerned with the health and well being of its students. In response to this concern Learning Tree contracted with AHERA authorized contractors and inspectors in the summer of 2000 to remove all asbestos-containing materials from all areas involved in student activities at the school.

Athletics

At certain times of the year sports activities will be made available to the students after school. The teams play other Adventist and Christian schools across the north Georgia/East Tennessee region. Each student's grades will be evaluated at the end of each week. If any grade falls to a D or below, the student will be ineligible to participate in the team activities until the student brings their grade to a C or above.

Personal Property

The school is not responsible for any personal property that is lost, stolen or damaged at school (label with student's name).

Inclement Weather

Learning Tree will make every attempt to remain open if weather conditions are uncertain. Learning Tree will not automatically close when Dalton City Schools close. If you are unsure whether Learning Tree will be in session, parents will be sent a text and/or voice mail from RenWeb alert. Parents may also check on the school's Facebook site. Information will also be available through television station WTVC, Channel 9 (www.newschannel9.com). If Learning Tree opens for school and the roads in your area are hazardous, your child's tardiness and/or absences will be excused; however, we encourage parents to make a reasonable effort to bring their child to school.

Home and School Association

The Home and School Association is designed to strengthen the bond between home and school. One of our goals is to provide ways for parents to actively participate in the school programs. Research has shown that parent involvement improves a child's self-esteem and academic achievement.

The Home and School Association holds fundraisers and events throughout the year. We ask that parents try to be involved with at least one of these activities. These activities are a great way to meet other members of our school family and build relationships. Plus, students are always delighted to have their parents involved.

Regularly scheduled Home and School meetings are held throughout the school year. We ask that at least one parent from each family attend these meetings so their family can stay informed on upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, and news.

Communication between School and Home

In addition to the primary grades sending home daily notebooks, every Friday 5th-8th sends manila envelopes for parents to sign and return by the following Tuesday. Contents include The Leaflet, student work, and progress reports. Texts, voice messages and emails are sent through RenWeb Alert to remind of upcoming events. If parents need to talk to teachers, the best time to talk is after school. The secretary takes messages during school hours.

Learning Tree School Calendar 2016-2017

1st Period

July 27	Registration & Watermelon Feed
August 10	First Day of School
August 19	Fun Friday
August 26	5 th -8 th Leadership Training at SAU
September 5	Labor Day—No School
Sept. 26 – 30	Iowa Achievement and Cog/AT Testing
October 7	Walk-a-Thon / 1 st Period Ends (42 days)

2nd Period

October 17-19	Fall Break/No School/Teachers' Convention
November 3-4	5 th -8 th Choir/Bell Festival
November 7-11	Fall Week of Prayer
November 18	H&S Thanksgiving Dinner—Noon Dismissal
November 21-25	Thanksgiving Vacation
December 2	Donuts with Dad—7:30-8:30am
December 4	Staff & School Board dinner
December 15	Christmas Concert
December 16	2 nd Period Ends—(42 days) Noon Dismissal
Dec. 19 – Jan. 2	Christmas Vacation

3rd Period

January 2	Teacher In-Service—No School
January 3	School Resumes
January 10-11	Parent-Teacher Conferences after school
January 16	MLK Jr. Day – No School
February 5	3 rd WinterFest & International Food Fair 1-4 <i>Pre-enroll between now & March 3 & save \$</i>
February 10	Kinderschool Round-up—9am-11:00
February 17	Athletic Pancake Breakfast / Fun Friday
February 20	Presidents' Day—No School
February 24	CA Day for 7 th & 8 th / Field Trip for 5 th -6 th
March 3	Muffins with Mom—7:30-8:30am 3 rd period ends (44 days) <i>Last day to pre-enroll for \$50</i>

Learning Tree School Calendar 2016-2017

March 6-10	Spring Break – No School
4th Period	
March 13-17	WrAP Testing Grades 3, 5, 7
March 31	8 th Pancake Breakfast
April 7	Last day to pre-enroll for \$75 app fee
April 7-8	GCA Days for 8 th /Outdoor Ed for 5 th -7 th
April 10-13	Student Week of Prayer
April 14	Good Friday—No School
April 23	Golf Tournament
April 27	Learning Tree’s Got Talent 6:00-8:00
May 1-5	8 th Class Trip & 5 th -7 th Outdoor Ed Week
May 16	Kindergarten Graduation at 6:30
May 17	School Field Day / Yearbooks
May 18	8 th Grade Graduation at 6:30
May 19	Last Day of School—4th Period (49 days) Noon Dismissal



www.learningtreeschool.org

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www.facebook.com/learningtreeelementaryschool

Growing children for Jesus in Dalton, Georgia, since 1948