



LIONHEART
A C A D E M Y
O F T H E T R I A D

Student & Parent Handbook 2024-2025

Lionheart Academy of the Triad
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LIONHEART

A C A D E M Y

O F T H E T R I A D

Academic and Event Calendar 2024.2025

<i>School Dates</i>	<i>School Dates</i>
<i>August (8 Instructional Days/56 Hours-4 Work Days)</i>	
August 21: First Day of School	August 17: Back to School Picnic
	August 19: Open House 4:00-6:30
<i>September (19 Instructional Days/130 Hours-1 Work Day)</i>	
September 2: Labor Day (No School)	September 5: Parent Council Meeting-Virtual 7:00pm
September 20: Early Release Day (11:45)	
September 23: Teacher Workday (No School)	
September 24: Curriculum Night	
<i>October (22 Instructional Days/151 Hours- 0 Work Days)</i>	
October 25- End of First Marking Period	October 3: Parent Council Meeting- Virtual 7:00pm
October 18: Early Release Day (11:45)	October 18: FunD Run (Early Release 11:45)
	October 26: Halloween Block Party
<i>November (16 Instructional Days/109 Hours- 2 Workdays)</i>	
November 1 & 4 Teacher Workdays (No School) Conferences	November 7: Parent Council Meeting- Virtual 7:00pm
November 11: Veteran's Day (No School)	November 15: Team Building (Early Release 11:45)
November 15: Early Release Day (11:45)	November 26: Friendsgiving
November 27-29: Thanksgiving Break (No School)	
<i>December (15 Instructional Days/130 Hours)</i>	
December 20: Early Release (11:45)/ Holiday Brunch	December 5: Parent Council Meeting
December 23-31: Winter Break (No School)	
<i>January (19 Instructional Days/130 Hours- 2 Workdays)</i>	
January 1: New Years Day (No School)	January 9: Parent Council Meeting
January 2-3: Teacher Workday (No School)	January 9: Parent Council Meeting
January 17: Early Release Day (11:45)/End of Marking Period 2	January 11: Social Event
January 20: MLK Day (No School)	
<i>February (18 Instructional Days/123 Instructional Hours- 0 Workdays)</i>	
February 17: President's Day (No School)	February 6: Parent Council Meeting

February 21: Early Release Day (11:45)	February 14: Valentine's Luncheon
February 24: Teacher Workday (No School)	
<i>March (19 instructional Days/ 130 Hours- 2 Workdays)</i>	
March 21: Early Release Day (11:45)/ End of Marking Period	March 6: Parent Council Meeting
March 28 & 31: Teacher Workday-Conferences (No School)	March 15 (?TBD): Community Volunteer Day
<i>April (14 Instructional Days/ 95 Hours- 0 Workdays)</i>	
April 11: Early Release Day (11:45)	April 3: Parent Council Meeting
April 14-21: Spring Break (No School)	April 5: Spring Fling Dance
<i>May (21 Instructional Days/ 144 Hours- 0 Workdays)</i>	
May 16: Early Release Day (11:45)	May 1: Parent Council Meeting
May 22: Memorial Day (No School)	May 17: Prom
May 30: Last Day of School	May 31: Graduation (10:30 am)
<i>June (0 Instructional Days- 2 Teacher Workdays)</i>	
June 2-4: Teacher Workdays (No School)	June 9-16th: Summer Camp Begins
June 16-20: Closed (Juneteenth)	June 23-27: Summer Camp
<i>July/August</i>	
July 7-31: Summer Camp	July 28-August 1: OCS Camp
June 30-July 4: Closed	August 3-7th: Closed

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is presented to each student and their parents in order to define some of the policies and procedures of Lionheart Academy of the Triad.

The primary responsibility of Lionheart Academy of the Triad is to provide our students with a specialized education tailored to the needs of students with autism in a safe and encouraging environment.

Mission and Vision

Remember, as an employee of Lionheart Academy you are representing the school and yourself.

Lionheart Academy of the Triad provides an educational environment to promote independence by fostering a growth mindset in the areas of academic, social-emotional, and behavioral development for diploma seeking, neurodiverse students with (formerly high-functioning) level 1 or level 2 autism.

Our Core Values:

P promoting **understanding**

R respectful **community**

I **independence** fostering

D developing **perseverance**

E embracing **flexibility**

Understanding

We understand autism, level 1 and level 2, and other neurocognitive differences. We have a strengths-based approach that is autism affirming, ensuring our students see themselves at their best to promote dignity and self-worth. This allows students to move that value forward to capitalize on their strengths, rather than focus on their deficits.

We seek to understand our students' concerns and motivations. We respect their learning differences. Through our socio-academic curriculum, we help our students develop a respectful understanding of different perspectives. The staff at Lionheart ensure our students have equitable access to educational supports that will allow them to thrive.

We also understand that discipline issues are often related to autism and deficits in theory of mind and communication. Lionheart Academy's strong focus on the social environment coupled with applied behavioral analysis (ABA) behavioral intervention programs allow us to be better equipped to handle minor offenses without punitive consequences.

Community

Everyone has a place of belonging. We support and challenge each other as we grow from our strengths to realize our potential. We surround each student with a community of caring that extends far beyond the doors of our school. You know your child best, we want parents to be part

of the Lionheart community. Our daily interactions extend kindness and compassion to each student in our learning community to help build trust..

We model the benefits of positive social interaction by our engagement with staff members, students, families and the larger community, resulting in greater opportunities for our students to explore and develop their passions.

Independence

We want every student to realize their potential and be as independent as possible. We understand there is a great deal of uncertainty regarding the future. Lionheart will be part of your team to help your student find the right path to successfully transition to adulthood. We understand that individuals with autism will require some supports, we teach our students to advocate for their needs.

Lionheart wants to see our students succeed. We want to see our students transition to less restrictive settings when they are ready. Lionheart may just be a jumping board to get your student ready for future goals. We also offer adult transition services, because we understand the path to independence may be longer for some students. Lionheart will be there beyond graduation.

Flexibility

We are flexible in our use of space, resources, time and talent. Although we value consistency and routine. We also know content, schedules, routines and plans are subject to change—daily, if need be—in order to best meet the needs of each and every student. Flexibility in our school allows us to be open to new ideas, adapt to changes, and meet the needs of students. Being flexible teaches important life skills to students.

At Lionheart, we believe in educating to uphold the academic integrity of the diploma tracks while emphasizing functional skills, growth mindset, and problem solving skills. We offer flexible differentiation, remediating and enriching as needed to meet the current needs of the student.

Perseverance

We persist in our support of students and families, and measure our results over months or years, not days or weeks. We see challenges and failures as an opportunity for growth; not a reflection on the level of intelligence. We challenge students to chart their own progress, step-by-step, and encourage them to value each accomplishment on their educational journey.

At Lionheart, we have a mindset that students haven't mastered it "yet." Time, practice, and perseverance will lead to improvement and self-development.

SECTION I - ACADEMICS

Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder have different learning needs that exceed the typical school environment. Independence can be achieved post high school using programming developed to address their specific needs. Learning is a behavior. As a result, research-based strategies such as Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and Cognitive Behavior/Social Thinking will drive individualized instruction and programming used throughout their education at Lionheart Academy of the Triad.

Lionheart Academy believes in small classroom sizes. Classroom sizes range from 10-15 students with one teacher and one assistant (average class ration: 12:1:1). Additional support staff, including a behavioral specialist and academic interventionist, are available to meet the needs of students.

As students at Lionheart are diploma tracked, our classes follow the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Standards of Learning. We modify delivery of instruction and testing formats, but closely adhere to the state Standards of Learning. We strive to emphasize functional content within each subject and more heavily weigh topics that are more relevant to our students' future successes.

We offer a standard diploma track and occupational course of study track. Students have different course work based on the program of enrollment. All students receive specialized education with supports designed for students with autism as well as electives that explicitly teach social skills. Accommodations and modifications are readily available for all students.

- Environmental: calm down spaces, sensory playground, sensory materials, natural lighting, LED lights, flexible seating, etc.
- Assistive Tech/Materials: Smart boards, Chromebooks, iPads, PDF writers, calculators, Echo dots, token boards, Learning Ally (Read aloud of books), speech to text, bouncy bands and noise canceling headphones available.
- Instructional: small group, guided notes, multimodal presentation, extended hours of math and reading instruction, learning activities paced for students with attention challenges, differentiation of materials and instruction based on student achievement level, etc.
- Work products: alternative format assignments (ex. multiple choice rather than open ended questions), alternative format testing, guided notes, shortened assignments,
- Scheduling: visual schedules, block scheduling (high school has four classes per day), and routine breaks for legitimate movement and social activity.
- Testing: separate setting, small group, headphones, specific prompt to stay on task, "keep going!," extended times, or breaks.

HOMEBOUND/VIRTUAL LEARNING

In order to meet the diverse and variable needs of our student population, homebound learning may be the best option for a student. Most homebound learning will be temporary in nature. Homebound learning can be for medical reasons (illness, change in status, or medication change) with a note from a physician. Homebound learning may also be offered if a student violates the code of conduct and is searching for a placement that better meets their needs. Homebound is typically completed via virtual learning, but sometimes is conducted via paperwork based on the needs of the student and the length of the homebound status. The student's well-being is considered when making this determination. A number of virtual platforms are available, we will select the platform we feel best fits your student's needs. Homebound learning is not bound to the state seat hour requirement, but the standards of learning need to be covered. The course will be comprehensive to ensure the student continues on a path to graduation. Students on homebound will have a staff member that will virtually check in with them weekly to ensure they have adequate support to complete their classes. We are unable to send staff to homes at this time. Students are required to complete course work for the day in order to be counted as "present." Students may work on the weekends to replace weekdays where appointments or other conflicts prevented them from working. Students must complete the requirements for their courses to receive credit. Parents will be required to sign a homebound agreement outlining policies and procedures for homebound learning.

Transfer students may also access virtual learning to complete courses started at other institutions that are currently not offered at Lionheart or to fulfill graduation requirements when coursework offerings do not align. Students will be assigned a staff member to monitor their progress and assist with coursework as necessary. These courses are typically completed at Lionheart in lieu of another course. We will do our best to accommodate the needs of our students to ensure overall success and well-being in this program.

In addition, if a student fails or receives an incomplete in a course, online credit recovery options are available under monitoring of Lionheart staff. In addition, students who are chronically absent or tardy may be required to complete virtual learning during the summer to make-up for missing seat-hour requirements to ensure credit is received for graduation. Staff assistance is limited for summer programs.

Students on the standard diploma track may also have the opportunity to take virtual courses through the Career or College Promise program or through other online learning platforms in lieu of an elective or other course. Student learning that occurs on campus is monitored and supported by Lionheart staff.

All rules for academic integrity and other policies outlined in the handbook apply to virtual students. Staff monitoring virtual students will determine if the program is effective and communicate with administration. Administration will communicate with parents. Virtual learning may be discontinued if it is not effective or in the best interest of the student (reducing their wellbeing). Students who are unable to demonstrate success in virtual programs may not be able to return to Lionheart for instruction–this will be decided on a case-by-case basis. Lionheart will assist in transition to a more suitable setting that meets the needs of the students.

SECTION II - STUDENT ATTENDANCE

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

- Drop off begins at 7:40 a.m.
- Homeroom runs from 7:45-7:55 am. Students will be marked tardy at 8:00am if they have not arrived in their first period class when the bell sounds. We ask that parents come to the door to sign in their student if they arrive after 8:00 am. In the event that a student who transports themselves to school is late, the student will be allowed to sign themselves in as tardy.
- All students will be dropped off using the drop off line through the school parking lot.
- Pick-up will begin at 2:45 P.M, students must be picked up by 3:00pm or they will be sent to aftercare. Charges may occur for aftercare if students are not picked up by 3:05 pm.
- Pick up will be conducted the same way as drop off and school staff will be stationed at the pick-up line to assist students and parents.

LATE ARRIVALS/EARLY DEPARTURES

We strongly encourage parents/guardians to be prompt and avoid early departures.

- If you bring your student late, walk them in and sign them in at the front desk.
- If you need to check your student out early, we ask that you notify the teacher or school if at all possible. We will make our best effort to ensure they are ready to go when needed. Please ring the bell and someone will come to assist you. Parents are not allowed to go to their child's classroom to get the student without signing in as a visitor and receiving a badge.

Students will be marked Tardy at 8:00am if they have not arrived in their first period class when the bell sounds. We ask that parents come to the door to sign in their student if they arrive after 8:00 am. In the event that a student who transports themselves to school is late, the student will be allowed to sign themselves in as tardy.

Excessive tardiness can negatively impact student learning. Excessive tardiness starts with 10 unexcused tardies. After 10 unexcused tardies have accrued, the student will be given an unexcused absence for the day unless the time missed is made up by attending tardy lunch.

ABSENCES

Please let your child's homeroom teacher know if they will be absent via dojo or e-mail. This written communication will serve as school notification. If you fail to notify your teacher, please send a note upon student return. Absences without explanation will be marked as unexcused.

Excessive absences may negatively impact graduation or promotion. North Carolina maintains state compulsory attendance laws as outlined in North Carolina General Statute 115C-378. Lionheart Academy of the Triad will follow the policies and procedures as outlined in said statute in the event a student misses more than the statutorily allowed days without intervention.

Chronic absenteeism can negatively impact student progress. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% or more (18+) days of school. Students who display chronic unexcused absenteeism may not be eligible for re-enrollment in the next calendar school year.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Weather conditions may make it necessary to close the school or change the time schedule. When inclement weather occurs, Lionheart Academy will email all families as well as post our Delay/Closing/Early Dismissal on: **our Facebook page, WFMY News 2, Fox 8 News, and WXII News**. If you do not get these news channels, you can download their app and monitor closings from the News app on your phone.

Lionheart has one inclement weather day built into the calendar that would not require make-up. In the event that additional closure days are necessary, Lionheart may opt to utilize up to five (5) remote learning days per year. Remote learning would likely be asynchronous due to possible power outages related to the inclement weather. Students would need to complete remote work or would be considered absent.

SECTION III - STUDENT CONDUCT

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

The children will learn vocabulary consistent with the Social Thinking Program (Michelle Garcia Winner) through their Social Skills special/elective and their classroom interactions with teachers. This vocabulary and the accompanying strategies will be used throughout the school day to help students with internalization of social skills, acceptable behavior and self-regulation. Verbal prompting will be used to remind students of social thinking concepts and expected behavior in the classroom as well as the general school environment. Students are expected to adhere to the following or could be considered for removal from the school:

- Students will follow directions given by all school staff including Head of School, teachers, assistant teachers, substitute teachers and other authorized school personnel.
- Students will be respectful of others and understand expected (acceptable) behavior as it is outlined in the Social Thinking Program (Michelle Garcia Winner).
- Students will not present a danger to school personnel or fellow students or themselves.
- Students will not violate any Federal, State or local law including possession and/or discharge of fireworks, discharge of fire alarm, possession of a weapon on school grounds, use of a weapon on self or others, obscene or indecent acts, libelous or slanderous acts toward school staff or other students.
- Students will not willfully or maliciously mark, damage, deface or destroy personal property of another student or staff member or school property.

- Students will not be involved in any form of harassment or bullying. Harassment or bullying including cyber bullying shall be promptly reported to the Head of School. Teachers may be notified to maintain classroom discipline.
- Students will not possess, use, distribute, sell, possess with intent to sell or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, anabolic steroid, other controlled substance, any alcoholic beverage, malt beverage, wine, liquor, drug paraphernalia, unauthorized prescription drug, cigarettes, ecigarettes, vapes, lighters, and all other tobacco products and paraphernalia are not allowed on campus. Any of these items will be confiscated. or any other chemicals with the intention of altering the students' mood or behavior.

DESTRUCTION OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

We understand that children are children, accidents happen, and some amount of damage will occur to the building throughout the year. When minor accidents happen we will work with our students on what is expected behavior and what could have been done differently in that situation. However, the rising cost of repairs and accidents that cause damage to the school has now started to impact our school budget affecting student resources. Due to this, parents might be billed for damages that occur to the building or to the equipment that is used throughout the day, particularly in incidents where the behavior has been addressed, but occurred again or if the damage to the property was intentional. Please ensure your children understand the following actions are not allowed and may incur a cost. We hope this policy will improve overall safety of the school and minimize damages that occur.

Please ensure students understand the following actions may result in a fine:

- Flushing non-disposable items down the toilet (ex. pencils, art supplies, school supplies, feminine products, articles of clothing) as these actions require a plumber to come out for repair and cost us \$325-\$900 per incident. Students should alert a staff of the accident prior to flushing and we will be happy to assist.
- We know many of our students are picky eaters and we offer microwaves for students to independently use for lunch preparation. If your student is bringing microwavable food to school, please make sure they are autonomous in using the microwave and following the preparation directions. Staff will not be able to assist with the warming of food. Not using the microwave properly (ex. Placing metal in the microwave, cooking noodles without water) causing fire, damage, or destruction of the microwave may result in a fine to replace the microwave.
- Property damage requiring a contractor to come out for repairs (ex. kicking or punching holes in walls or damaging a surveillance camera).
- Instructional Equipment/Materials Damage (ex. chairs, books, desks, toilet paper holders, paper towel holders, smart board, iPads, laptops, timers) that require replacement.
- Pulling a fire alarm that results in a fine for false alarm.

WEAPONS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

Please refer to North Carolina Statute 14-269.2 and any other Federal or State law dealing with weapons on school property. All students shall comply with State and Federal laws governing student conduct and behavior. Weapons of any type are not allowed on educational property including the school building, campus, grounds, or recreational area. Types of weapons include guns, BB guns, rifles, pistols, air rifles, explosives, blackjacks, knives, sling shots, brass knuckles, etc. The Head of School will report any violators to the appropriate law enforcement agency. If a student brings a weapon on school property, they can be suspended for the rest of the year. Possession of a firearm on school campus is a felony. Any "look alike" weapon is a violation of North Carolina Law.

Everyday items can also pose a potential threat when used as weapons. Students who use everyday items that have the potential to inflict serious damage as weapons to intentionally harm themselves or others

may also face disciplinary action (including potential immediate discharge) and be reported to local authorities.

ELOPEMENT

Elopement is defined as leaving the school building unattended. This includes leaving the back or side doors of the school to enter the playground. Elopement possesses a large safety risk to students. Should a student leave the building and then proceed to leave the Lionheart campus, the police will be notified via 911, even if staff is in pursuit of the student. Students will receive one warning, the second offense of elopement is grounds for immediate dismissal.

DRESS CODE

All students are required to wear:

- Lionheart shirt (available as part of the student resource fee, at the Back to School sale or on Lands End—see link under Parent section of website to order). Shirts from the Fun Run and other Lionheart Events are also allowed as uniform shirts.
- Khaki pants, shorts, or skirt. The length of the shorts or skirt should exceed the length of the longest finger of the hand when the student is standing with their arms placed straight down at their sides or have a minimum of a 7 inch inseam. Pants should be khaki colored, but are not required to be belted or of a certain fabric. Khaki colored sweatpants, leggings, or basketball shorts are acceptable.
- All students are required to wear shoes at all times. Closed toe shoes will be required in physical education class.
- It is our intention to designate Fridays as “dress down” days. Students will also be allowed to wear an outfit of their choosing on school picture day. Students may wear jeans, athletic pants, and school appropriate shirts. Dress that is deemed by the Head of School or staff as distracting or inappropriate for the school environment will not be allowed. The Head of School and staff have complete discretion in what is deemed to be acceptable attire. If the Head of School or school staff makes a determination that any attire is unacceptable, disruptive, or inappropriate, to the extent possible the student will be asked to modify their attire so as to minimize any distraction created by the inappropriate attire. If it is not possible to modify the attire as described, then the Head of School or staff reserves the right to remove the student from the educational environment until such time as a parent or guardian can come to the school to modify the inappropriate attire. In the event that violations become routine, dress down days will be suspended.
- OCS students may be given specific dress requirements. OCS students must wear closed-toed shoes to all work sites. If an OCS student fails to meet the dress requirements, the student may not be able to go off campus that day.
- Show your Lionheart pride on theme days! Theme days are traditionally a fundraiser for the PTO by paying a participation fee (usually \$10 for the week).

PERSONAL PROPERTY/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Any disruptive or potentially dangerous items are not allowed on school grounds or at school events. All materials brought to school should be for educational purposes only. Items such as cameras, expensive jewelry or large sums of money are not the responsibility of the school. Students are not allowed to use cell phones, tablets, laptops, or personal entertainment devices brought from home during the school day. Additionally, toys, cards and games or other items that school staff deem disruptive, are not allowed. If a device or item is confiscated due to violation of this policy, then a parent is required to pick up the item at the school. Some students may bring devices for aftercare, celebrations, or clubs; Lionheart is not responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen devices.

CELL PHONE POLICY

Students are allowed to bring their cellphones to school. Students will be required to check their cellphones at the front desk upon arrival, which will be stored in a lockbox for the duration of the school day. We ask that students power their phones off prior to submitting to the box to reduce noise. We ask that students who bring electronics have them in protective cases to reduce the risk of accidents.

Please contact your child's teacher via Class Dojo or call the school if you need to communicate with them. Students may be able to access their phone during the school day with permission from their teacher or the Head of School on a case by case basis. Students are not allowed to wear smartwatches that have texting or audio recording capabilities. Students may have access to their phones during aftercare, when out at OCS, and on field trips. Lionheart is not responsible for damaged, lost, or stolen devices.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

Lionheart Academy attempts to use deescalation and Social Thinking Methodology to prevent formal discipline. In the event a student is being unsafe or disruptive, they may be moved from their classroom into another workspace. Students who are unsafe may not be able to go off campus to OCS on the day of the behavior.

Students with behavior problems will have a behavior intervention plan added to the students' school day. If a behavior intervention plan is already in existence, it will be revised. If problem behavior extends beyond what usually exists with children with ASD or is not improving, the following discipline procedures will be executed.

- Student/Teacher Conference
- Notification of the Head of School and RBT for monitoring
- Phone conference with parent to notify of problem and ongoing communication
- The BCBA will observe and provide recommendations. These may be accompanied by a written behavior contract.
- RBT will communicate progress with parents and provide a copy of the behavior contract.
- Parent/Teacher/RBT/Head of School conference may be warranted based on the severity of the problem and a formal FBA and Behavioral Intervention Plan may be put in place.
- RBT, Teacher, and appropriate staff will receive a copy of the plan and meet regarding implementation. Data collection will occur.
- BCBA will consult and the plan will be updated.
- RBT will continue to communicate with parents. Regular meetings will be held to review the behavior intervention plan with the student's parent(s).

In the event that a child's behavior escalates to the point where the school must entertain a suspension or expulsion, Lionheart Academy will follow the following policy.

- In-school suspension will be utilized for most first offenses of major incidents or minor incidents. In-school suspension may be for all of the school day or only part of the school day (ex. free time) based on the offense.
- The Head of School can suspend a student (out of school) with cause for up to 10 school days.
- The Head of School and parents will work together to determine an appropriate plan for return—behavioral intervention, alternative arrangement (ex. temporary homebound status), or transition to another program that may be able to more appropriately serve your student's needs in order to ensure the safety of all students.
- In the event an expulsion is warranted, the student will first be suspended. The Head of School will inform the family of the intent to expel, the family may elect to withdraw the student at that time. If the family opts not to withdraw, the Head of School will then convene a hearing with the family and subcommittee of the Board of Directors who will vote on expulsion.

- Students who have any out of school suspensions may be ineligible to participate in clubs. They may also not be allowed to participate off-campus OCS until they have a semester that is suspension free.
- Students who have more than one documented incident may be ineligible from participating in the next club session, event, field trip, or holiday celebrations.

BULLYING

Lionheart Academy recognizes the seriousness of bullying. We want all students to feel safe and like they belong. In many cases, students are grouped by social ability, rather than academic ability to promote positive peer relationships. Due to the nature of autism spectrum disorders and the accompanied social impairments, bullying becomes more complex as the intent is often not active bullying.

Misunderstandings are abundant and misinterpretations are common. Please know that staff are closely monitoring students and intervening routinely to assist with social interactions, understanding the intent of one's message, and improving the filtering of thoughts to promote friendship. Should we feel as though a student is targeting a peer, a behavior intervention plan will be put in place and extra measures will be taken to ensure that the student being bullied is protected. Please notify your child's teacher or the Head of School if your child reports bullying. Due to privacy, we cannot disclose details of interventions in place with other students to parents.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to act with academic integrity. They will not cheat, plagiarize, or lie on academic work. If a student is suspected of cheating, the parent will be notified. Students who are found to have their study guide/notes within sight, are observed looking at others desks/papers, students who are found to possess an answer key or the completed work of another student, or students who give identical answers to written responses may meet the criteria of suspicion. These students will be asked to retake/redo the test or assignment. They may be required to come to school early, miss lunch, or stay late to retake the test. On the second and all subsequent offenses, the student will be required to retake the test (or take a zero), but will only be able to earn half credit for the retake.

Plagiarism is not allowed. Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting the work of someone else as your own. This includes published works, works of other students, work of a parent or sibling, or materials found on the internet. If less than 25% of a work is determined to be plagiarized, the student will be asked to redo the assignment with appropriate citations for full credit. If greater than 25% of the work is plagiarized, the student will be required to redo the assignment with staff supervision to ensure originality. On the second and all subsequent offenses, the student will be required to redo the assignment (or take a zero), but will only be able to earn half credit for the retake.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become an intricate part of our society and our educational tools. Teachers may allow or even encourage students to use AI during class and to complete assignments. However, there are instances where the use of AI would prevent a teacher from measuring a student's achievement and students will be instructed to complete this assignment on their own, without the use AI. In these instances, the use of AI would be considered academic dishonesty. The use of AI identifying tools or other available means will be used to determine the likelihood of AI. The student will be given an opportunity to redo the assignment. They may be required to come in early, work during lunch, or stay late to complete the assignment under the supervision of a teacher. On the second and all subsequent offenses, the student will be required to redo the assignment (or take a zero), but will only be able to earn half credit for the retake.

SECTION IV - PARENT INVOLVEMENT

PTO/PARENT COUNCIL

The PTO promotes a working partnership among parents, the board, school staff and the community. Parents are an integral part of Lionheart Academy and are necessary for school success. The following committees need volunteers:

- Events and Socials - This committee will help with special events in the classroom throughout the year.
- Teacher Appreciation: These volunteers help coordinate teacher appreciation efforts.
- Fundraising - This committee will develop and run fundraising campaigns to provide working capital and supplemental operating funds.

VOLUNTEERING

Lionheart is a small school that exists because of parent volunteers. We ask that every family volunteer because we cannot do what we do without your help and support!

Volunteers that work directly with the students during the school day will need to pass a background check and come to volunteer training. These dates will be set and shared with families. Volunteer positions that require a background check:

- Field Trip Chaperone
- Assistance with school day parties/events

There are many ways to volunteer that do not involve directly working with students during the school day:

- Securing a sponsor for the annual Golf Tournament
- Playing in the annual Golf Tournament
- Donating raffle items for the annual Golf Tournament
- Participating in fundraising activities
- Planning an after school/weekend family event
- Set-up for a weekend event.
- Work day assistance (ex. cleaning, yard work, moving items, etc)
- Donation of goods (ex. snacks, paper products, etc.)
- Donation of services (ex. lawn care, legal services, electrical services, painting, maintenance, etc.)
- Facilitating a club

CHECK IN FOR PARENTS/VOLUNTEERS

All visitors/volunteers must enter the school through the front door and report to the front desk to sign in and get a visitor's badge that must be worn while on the premises.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Lionheart Academy will feature a curriculum night and offer parent-teacher conferences twice a year (in October and March). Conferences may be via Zoom/Teams or in person. Please feel free to communicate routinely with your child's teacher, particularly if you have concerns. These meetings are an opportunity for teachers to share the work your student is completing and discuss long-term goals and progress. In some instances, parents may be required to attend conferences or a meeting.

SECTION V - STUDENT HEALTH & WELLNESS

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Immunization records are required to be on file at Lionheart Academy of the Triad before the start of school. If we have not received your child's completed immunization record within 30 days of enrollment, your child will not be allowed to attend school until the records are provided.

GARRETT'S LAW

Senate Bill 444, Garrett's Law, mandates that schools provide parents and guardians with information about meningococcal meningitis, influenza and their vaccines. Information about Human Papillomavirus (HPV) and the vaccine will also be provided. This vaccine is available for females and may prevent certain pathologies. Copies of all this information will be available in the school office. Additional information can be found at www.cdc.gov and www.immunizationinfo.org.

HEAD LICE PROCEDURES

No student will be allowed to stay in school if they have head lice. A parent or guardian will be notified if head lice are found on their child. The parent will be given written treatment instructions. If only nits are detected then the student may remain in school and written treatment instructions will be sent home. Three excused absences will be granted per incident. If the student has repeated infestations, the Head of School may notify social services.

MEDICATIONS

Written authorization signed by a parent/guardian and physician is required before prescription and over-the-counter medicine can be administered to a student. Students over the age of 18 may carry non-prescription medication and self-administer without parental consent. Forms will be available from your child's teacher.

All medicine must be in original packaging and labeled with the child's name and instructions on how and when to administer the medication. If medication is to be given at lunchtime that is also given to the student at another time during the day at home, please ask the pharmacist to package lunch dosage separately with separate instructions. Medicine changes need to be updated in school records so that in an emergency, correct medicine and doses can be given to medical professionals.

Parents are required to hand medication that is a controlled substance directly to a staff member at drop-off or pick-up. Medication may not be placed in a student's backpack or lunchbox to be delivered to school by the student.

SICK CHILDREN

Please keep your child home if he/she is not feeling well or has a temperature. Children should not be at school until they have gone 24 hours without vomiting or fever. If your child becomes sick at school, you will be contacted immediately to pick him/her up. If you can't be reached, your emergency contact person will be called. Lionheart Academy will follow CDC and Health Department guidelines regarding quarantine procedures given a state of emergency related to illness (such as a pandemic). As guidance changes frequently, so may our policies.

SMOKING AND TOBACCO PRODUCTS

All tobacco products are prohibited on school property including vehicles on campus. Students, parents, staff and visitors may not use any kind of tobacco products including smokeless tobacco, electric cigarettes or other vapor devices. Students who bring tobacco products to school will be suspended.

SECTION VI - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CRISIS PLAN

Our school conducts monthly fire drills and annual earthquake, tornado, and lock down drills so your child is prepared in the unlikely case of an emergency. The first fire drill occurs within the first week of school

The safety of your child is of the utmost importance to us. In the event the building is evacuated, staff will call parents. If it is safe to do so, students will be able to be picked up from the grass across the street in front of the wooded space. If we must evacuate the premises, students will be transported to Impact Journey School at 4705 N. Church Street. Staff will inform you of transportation to this site.

SAFETY

Staff under-go background checks and extensive training to ensure the safety of your child. In addition, staff are CPR certified.

BATHROOM POLICY

Lionheart offers three student restrooms: a multi-stall boys room, a multi-stall girl's room, and a single stall all gender bathroom. Students may use the bathroom of their biologically assigned sex or the all gender bathroom.

PUBLIC DISPLAYS OF AFFECTION

Lionheart Academy strives to implement rules similar to the workplace; therefore public displays of affection are strictly prohibited. Students are allowed to high five, fist bump, or briefly side hug if both parties consent. We recognize that due to sensory profiles, some students may not want to be touched at all—that is their choice. Other students may crave physical contact, we will work with them to shift to workplace appropriate contact.

SCHOOL LUNCH

School lunches will be available at Lionheart Academy cafeteria operated by Canteen, Ave 6. Parents will be able to set up an account with Canteen and add funds to the student's lunch account. Canteen provides several fresh options, such as sandwiches, as well as "grill" items such as chicken sandwiches and hamburgers that can be heated in a microwave.

Pre-order is not required. Parents can request order forms in order to order lunch for their child. Lionheart will store cards in a lock box. In the event a card is lost or stolen, Lionheart Academy is not responsible for lost funds but will assist in "freezing" funds on a card and obtaining a replacement.

Students are allowed to pack their lunches. Lunches will be stored in their lockers. Students may bring food that requires heating; however, limited microwave space is available. Please do not send items that require greater than 3 minute heat time. Students may have access to cold water, spoons, and forks.

Should a student forget their lunch, they will be given alternative lunch items (combination of Chef Boyardee/Easy Mac, Peanut Butter Crackers/Goldfish Crackers, and a Fruit Cup/Apple Sauce) or allowed to purchase a lunch from Canteen costing up to \$5.00 using the Lionheart account. Parents will be billed for this amount.

SNACKS AND SCHOOL PARTIES

If you bring snacks or treats to the classroom, please be mindful of any food allergies or special diets of all students. Only store bought items are allowed. Individually packaged items are preferred.

COURT ORDERS

Parents/guardians with legal documents about custody, visitation, name changes, etc should submit a copy to The Head of School. Please communicate with the school if there is anyone your student knows

who is NOT allowed to pick up your student, particularly if this has changed recently to ensure Lionheart can help you keep your child safe.

CHANGE IN STUDENT PERSONAL INFORMATION

If there are any changes to your contact information (i.e. job change, address change) please notify the school office. It is very important that we have correct contact information in the event of sickness, emergencies or inclement weather situations.

LOST AND FOUND

It is recommended that all items be labeled for quick identification. Uniforms promote confusion of ownership, particularly during fall and spring days when sweatshirts are shed. Please mark your student's clothing with initials, a tag, etc. Please check items bought at the Back to School sale for initials of previous owners and correctly label prior to starting school.

It is your student's responsibility to attend to their items. Lionheart is not responsible for lost, theft, or damage of any personal items brought to school. Items not identified will be placed in "Lost and Found." Unclaimed lost and found items will be donated to charity or placed in the Back to School sale bins two weeks after the end of the school year.

DISCRIMINATION

No person shall be excluded from admission or participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity available at Lionheart Academy of the Triad on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, creed, political belief, age, national origin, linguistic and language difference, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, height, weight, marital or familial status, or disability. We do require a diagnosis of autism for attendance as we are a specialized program.

SECTION VII: ADMISSION AND FEES

ADMISSIONS

Contracts for the next school year will be sent home in the Spring of the year prior. Students whose tuition and fee accounts are up-to-date, do not display chronic absenteeism, and meet behavioral guidelines will be offered a contract. Please contact our Business Administrator, Nick Jackson at admin@lionheartacademy.com if you need to discuss payment options. We are happy to work with families to help get accounts up-to-date. We would hate to lose any students for nonpayment!

Deposits for the next school year must be paid by the last day of school to guarantee your child's spot for next year. We are now operating with a waiting list for admissions. Parents will receive written communication if the deposit is not paid that their child's status will be moved to "waitlisted" on a specified date. Parents will need to contact the Head of School or Business Administrator if they wish to enroll their child to ensure availability.

Beginning in the spring of 2023, eighth grade students will need to apply to be enrolled in high school. Application materials will be made available in the Spring. The vast majority of students will be accepted into Lionheart's High School program. At this time, we only offer a standard and an OCS diploma—we do not offer a formal certificate track. If we believe a student's level of impairment or behavior would prevent them from participating in the appropriate diploma program, we may not accept this student into our high school program as we cannot appropriately meet their needs at this time.

IEPS & REEVALUATIONS

Students in private schools do not require an IEP. Lionheart offers a wide variety of accommodations for students. We can develop Individual Instructional Plans (IIPs) as needed to address specific goals that are outside of the scope of our traditional programming.

Students who receive grants (Opportunity/ESA +) are required to have updated eligibility (every three years). There is an option to have eligibility signed off by a psychiatrist; however, to qualify for higher ESA + amount, the eligibility classification of autism must be determined by the school system. Lionheart Academy recommends enrolling your student in their zoned school as a visiting student at least 120 days prior to eligibility expirations (as eligibility testing is a 90 day process) and contact the zoned school to request eligibility assessment in writing at that time.

LIBRARY

Lionheart is proud to offer a lending library. Students are asked to return their books weekly. Books are asked to be returned two weeks prior to the end of the school year. Parents may receive an e-mail notification of books that are past-due. If the book is not returned, the parent will be asked to pay the replacement fee. All fees must be paid in order to receive a final report card/transcript.

C.R.E.W.

We are excited to offer C.R.E.W. for our graduates ages 18-25. C.R.E.W. is also available to other neuroatypical young adults. We offer activities that build **Character, Relationships, Education, and Work** skills to improve independence and promote socialization for young adults. Seniors should look for “visiting” events to check out what C.R.E.W. has to offer!

Student Code of Conduct Pledge

As a student of Lionheart, I understand that I am to display expected behavior that aligns with how I will need to behave in a workplace environment. I recognize that it is important to practice these skills so ensure my future success.

I will abide by the Lionheart Core Values at school:

1. *Promoting understanding*: I will be respectful of other people's differences. I will respect physical boundaries. I will be mindful of the noise sensitivities of my peers and be careful when playing music, putting down lunchroom benches, and communicating with others.
2. *Respectful community*: I will be respectful to staff and peers. I will not name-call or use slurs of any kind. I will not use inappropriate language (including cussing or violence). I will wait for my turn. I will help keep Lionheart clean by throwing away my trash. I will go where I am expected to go and inform teachers when I need to use the restroom, visit my locker, or need to visit another staff member.
3. *Fostering Independence*: I will be responsible for my items at Lionheart. I will ensure my devices are plugged in at the end of each day, I will only take home my device with permission. I will keep track of my own belongings. I will remember to pack a snack, my lunch, and water bottle each day. I will practice good hygiene and follow my parent's directions for taking medication. I will take home my homework and bring it back to school.
4. *Developing Perseverance*: I will use my coping skills when I am frustrated and ask for help if I need it. I will ask for a break by saying "I need a break." I will say "this is too hard" instead of refusing to do an assignment. I will accept help when it is needed.
5. *Embracing Flexibility*: I will use my coping skills when plans change. I will try to recognize the size of the problem and take a break if I am having a big reaction. I understand that assigned seats may change, Canteen may run out of a favorite food, the schedule may change, recess might be rained out, and the internet can go out and despite all of these (and many other things than can go wrong) that school must go on and you have the skills to make it through the day!

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Lionheart Academy Parent Code of Conduct

Lionheart believes that a positive working relationship between parents/guardians and the school is essential to the fulfillment of the school's mission and responsibilities to its students. To meet the educational needs of our students, as well as, to provide them with a safe learning environment, we require all parents and guardians to adhere to the core values of Lionheart:

Promoting Understanding: Lionheart strives to be an inclusive environment that is designed to meet the needs of students with autism. We do our best to understand student needs; however, we are bound by regulations and strive to follow best practices. Parents should not expect that as a private school we can make exceptions to rules and regulations.

- Parents will recognize that all students at Lionheart have autism that impacts them in different ways. Parents are a member of our inclusive community and will not request exclusion of other students with particular autistic characteristics.
- Parents are obligated to read all policies, procedures, and school communications and complete necessary forms by the deadline provided.
- For a tardy or absence to be marked as excused, a parent must supply the data manager or front desk personnel with a doctor's note or a parent note that contains the name of the child, the dates that child was absent/tardy, and the reason for the absence or tardy. In order to be excused, absences must be related to medical appointments, illness/medication changes, or bereavement. Notes may be physical or digital.
- Parents are responsible for meeting all their school financial obligations. The NCSEEA program is not flexible, please ensure that you adhere to deadlines and requirements to maintain continued funding.
- If the student takes medicine at school, the parent is responsible for bringing the medication into the building and handing that medication to the appropriate staff. Students are not allowed to bring their own medications into the building. Parents are also responsible for ensuring that the medications at school stay stocked.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring that students are present for testing mandated by the state.
- Because of the needs of our student population, we often limit parents in the classroom in order to maintain routines and expectations. Parent volunteers must undergo background checks and any necessary training in order to volunteer.

Respectful community: in order to foster respect in our students, all members of the school community should model respectful behavior.

- Parents are responsible for aiding their students in compliance with all school policies and regulations, including but not limited to attendance, dress code, safety, and behavior.
- Verbal and written communication and in person interactions with staff must be in a respectful manner. This includes, but is not limited to refraining from profanity, offensive or derogatory language, yelling, making threats, harassment, or physical contact. Our students are often not the best reporters—we all want to work together to determine what happened and how we can remedy the situation. We ask that parents are constructive partners in this process.
- Teachers, staff, and administrators typically work 7:30-3:15 Monday-Friday. Many of our staff are dedicated and work extended hours to provide your student with the best possible education experience. We ask that you recognize obligations outside of school and respect working hours. Whenever possible, we ask that you communicate inside of working hours or recognize that you may not receive an immediate response outside of working hours.

Independence Fostering: we need help from families to ensure that students learn how to advocate for themselves, participate in activities of daily living, and adhere to procedures. By modeling and prompting, we can work together to ensure that students develop the most independence possible.

- Questions, concerns, and other student information related to the classroom must be communicated through the proper channels using the chain of command. In order for students to

thrive outside of Lionheart, we need to practice independence skills. We ask that parents encourage students to turn in notes, inquire about missing assignments, deliver payments, hand out birthday invitations, etc. If it is necessary for parents to intervene, the first communication should be with the office staff, teacher, or teacher assistant (as applicable). If a resolution cannot be reached, the teacher or parent may contact the appropriate Division Head (Academics, Behavior, Extracurricular Activities, Finance). If a resolution still cannot be reached, the Division Head may contact the Head of School. Please, allow a full 24 business hours for teacher or Division Head response to emails and phone calls.

Developing Perseverance: we maintain a growth mindset at Lionheart and believe that your students are capable of completing the work required for graduation; otherwise we would recommend alternative placement.

- State requirements are set for diploma track students. As a diploma seeking student, your child needs to learn the content that aligns with the state standards to the best of their ability to be prepared for postsecondary transition. We will differentiate in order to aid access to the curriculum and provide modifications and accommodations to testing in order to meet student needs, but some material will be difficult. We believe that students can grow and learn through exposure to material—we can do hard things! We are proud of the hard work that students put forward, even if it is not “A” level work. Parents should recognize that all students may not achieve high marks, but that does not mean they are not high achieving given the barriers they may face. We ask that parents support students and encourage them to persevere. The curriculum is aligned with state standards, and Lionheart cannot change the curriculum for a given student because we are not an adaptive program. Academic intervention and remediation is offered, but is meant to supplement the curriculum. Our overall program is designed to meet the needs of diverse learners, but cannot be tailored to each individual learner.
- We strive to limit homework for students, we also hope that they do not struggle with homework. If your child is struggling or completing in excess of an hour of homework daily, please send communication to the teacher and we will find time to work with them in school. We do not mark off for late work and we do not want you staying up late struggling with work. When students have planned absences, we may be able to provide advanced work—but it is often in the best interest of the student to catch them up when they get back. Please recognize that they may have increased homework after an absence in order to meet the course requirements after they have received the instruction. We cannot excuse all work missed during absences; even if the absences are excused..

Embracing Flexibility: we embrace flexibility, but also want to ensure the safest learning environment for all students. In order to aid with ensuring the safest environment parents must make staff aware of changes to circumstances so that we can be flexible with your student and utilize appropriate prevention strategies.

- Lionheart does our best to create classrooms with students who have similar social and academic levels. We try to create harmonious groups, but unfortunately, all students will not be grouped with their most preferred peers and may be in classes with peers that they do not prefer. This will also be true in the real world; when the students get jobs they cannot pick who else is on their shift or if they are assigned to work with their friends; therefore, we have to learn to be flexible. Lionheart has formal programming to teach how to communicate with people that we do not like and learning to be flexible to embrace our current circumstances. Parents will recognize that Lionheart cannot fulfill every request for homeroom or lunch assignments due to a variety of factors. Being a small school means that many of these requests will contradict each other. We ask that families are flexible and teach their students to be flexible with their assignments.
- All hospitalizations, medication changes, or other medical information and diagnoses that may impact a student’s education or the safety of the school environment, must be reported before the child returns to school. Parents must also inform the school of any medication shortages or other disruptions to medication.

- If the student forgets to take their morning medication, parents are required to contact the school as soon as they are aware of the missed medication. In this situation, Lionheart staff will do their best to make accommodations for the student, but the student will still be held responsible for upholding the student code of conduct. If the student is struggling to be safe without their medication, parents may be asked to bring the medication to school and administer it to the student or be asked to come pick up their child.
- Parents will also inform the school of any death's in the family, loss of pets, changes in living arrangements, or other circumstances that may negatively impact the student's behavior. This allows us to reduce demands and compassionately respond with the support your child may need.
- If behavior, changes to medication, medical conditions, or traumatic events negatively impact a student's ability to adhere to the code of conduct or perform in the classroom; alternative education options (such as either temporary or permanent homebound status) may be recommended in order to meet the current needs of the student.

Failure to meet the requirements outlined in the Lionheart Parent Code of Conduct, may result in dismissal of the student from the school and/or all school related activities and may impact the eligibility of the student to reenroll at Lionheart in the future.

Parent Name: _____ Child Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____