

LITCHFIELD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL



HANDBOOK

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LITCHFIELD, CONNECTICUT 06759
(860) 567-7520

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Please see the printed Handbook or the Litchfield Board of Education web site for these and other policies:

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Principal's Message

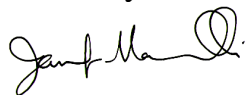
Dear Parents and Guardians:

Welcome to the 2009 - 2010 school year! I look forward to our partnership in providing the highest quality education for our students. Our faculty and staff anxiously await their arrival.

At LIS, we are committed to providing an exemplary and dynamic education for our students in an environment which is nurturing and supportive. This year, we will continue to develop our interdisciplinary approach to instruction in order appropriately challenge and support all of our students as they acquire and master literacy and numeracy skills. We believe this preparation will serve our students optimally as they progress throughout their education.

We welcome your input and communication as we join our efforts in making this school year enriching and exciting for our students. Please call, email, or visit the school if you have any questions. More information about our school is available at our district website, www.litchfieldschools.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jennifer Marinelli".

Jennifer Marinelli

LITCHFIELD BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board members are unpaid elected public officials with the responsibility for governance of the school district. The current members of the Litchfield Board of Education are:

Chairperson:	James Katzin
Vice-Chairperson:	Frank Gorman
Secretary:	Christine Reardon
Members:	Gail Carr, Elizabeth Fabbri, Donald Falcetti, John Noone, Frank Simone, and Wayne Shuhi.

Meeting times and locations are posted at the superintendent's office and on the district website. Parents, students, and other community members are welcome to attend the public meetings.

CENTRAL OFFICE PERSONNEL

Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Deborah Wheeler

Director of Business Operations

Pat Buccitelli

Director of Special Services

Gary Zaremski

Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Don Johnson

Facilities Manager

Tony Crowe

Litchfield Intermediate School Staff 2009-2010

Principal

Jennifer Marinelli

Lead Teacher

Lori Shuhi

Guidance Counselor

Rachel Caporuscio

Nurse/Health Teacher

JoAnne McCormick

Secretaries

Colleen Rodger, Sherri Irwin

Grade 4

Kirsten D'Amore-Jenks
Tara Kraut
Caitlin Van Stone
Christopher Vicare

Grade 5

Alison O'Leary
Julie Rooney
Christopher Stupak
Matthew Wallace

Grade 6

Melissa Brutting
Jennifer Digliani
Shelly Hill
Jason Kahn

Art

Nick Primo

Chorus

Peter Perkins

Information Technology Specialist

Bob Rice

Instructional Assistants

Jennifer Baldwin, Carol Dake, Connie Gillman,
Mary McDevitt, Linette Pronovost, Barbara
Sanford

Interns

Ashley Liuiza, Rebecca Murphy

Language Arts/Social Studies Coordinator/Supplemental Skills LA (4-6)

Katie Sullivan-Frome

Language Arts Coordinator (K-6) Supplemental Skills LA (K-6)

Robin Rosenfield

Library Media Specialist

Debra Benedict

Math Coordinator (K-6)

Supplemental Skills (4-6)

Lori Shuhi

Music/Instrumental

Daniel Porri

Occupational Therapists

Lisa Martin, Gloria McSaveny

Physical Education

Andy Parker

Physical Therapist

Laurie Piwonski

School Psychologist

Mary Lou Hunchak

Science Coordinator (4-6)

Melissa Brutting

Social Worker (K-12)

Lisa Heuschkel

Spanish

To Be Determined

Speech/Language Pathologist

Betsey Lynn

Special Education

Laurie Behmke, Jessica DeLucia

Custodians

Kevin Brennan, Tim Wilcox, Nancy Light

PREFACE

This booklet is written for our students and their parents. It contains required and useful school information. Both students and parents need to be familiar with its contents, which are intended to promote school safety and an atmosphere conducive for learning. Please be aware that the LIS Handbook is updated yearly, while Board of Education policy adoption and revision may occur throughout the year. Changes in policy, which affect portions of the Handbook, will be made available to students and parents through newsletters, web pages, and other communications.

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Litchfield Intermediate School community is to provide an education that leads students to a full and productive life. Our goal is to offer a safe learning environment in which all students develop to his or her full potential. We work to promote an atmosphere of collaboration, cooperation and open communication among students, staff, parents, and community. We strive, through encouragement and guidance, to have students become productive members of a diverse and changing society.

OUR GOALS

As an educational community, we strive to provide a comprehensive educational program which:

- Implements a challenging, developmentally appropriate curriculum
- Supplies the resources and materials which support the curriculum
- Recognizes the individual needs of students
- Ensures the cognitive and emotional growth of students
- Promotes wellness among students and staff
- Encourages the development of a strong self-image and respect for a culturally diverse society
- Fosters critical and creative thinking designed to promote students' problem solving skills

- Involves staff, family members, and community resources in the educational process
- Affords the opportunity for professional growth

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

At Litchfield Intermediate School we recognize that a child's education is a responsibility shared by the school and the family. Successful parental involvement should include the following components:

- Have your child at school on time.
- Ensure that your child is well rested and prepared for the school day.
- Ask to see your child's school assignments/assignment planner on a regular basis.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students at the intermediate or upper elementary level are expected to be accountable for their actions and preparedness. Successful Intermediate School students exhibit the following traits:

- Respect for self and others.
- Give your best effort every day.
- Be prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

The Litchfield Intermediate School is a part of the Litchfield Public Schools and is bound to abide by all Board of Education policies and Connecticut Department of Education guidelines. The school will provide the following:

- A challenging curriculum that is suited to the age and ability levels of the students in accordance with Connecticut State Frameworks and Guidelines.

- A safe environment conducive to student learning.
- Highly qualified, experienced teachers.
- Regular communication between school and home.

PROGRAM OF STUDIES

ART CLASS

In art class students learn and apply art concepts and skills that are age appropriate. Through the study of art history, students gain an appreciation for cultures and their impact on society. Interdisciplinary art lessons integrate the core subjects such as math, social studies, and science. Art lessons are linked to the art curriculum and state standards. Art allows students to express themselves while utilizing higher order thinking skills.

BAND

Band provides an opportunity for students interested in musical instruments to perform with a group, creating a feeling of accomplishment for its participants while providing musical entertainment for others. Band, like all music, is an opportunity for students to express themselves. It is a unique course because students and their teacher create and present a product together. It is also an activity that teaches self-discipline and dedication. Full band groups meet during Academic Enrichment periods. Small section lessons occur on a rotational pull-out basis. Students in Band are expected to have their instrument and music when required, practice their instrument in preparation for lessons and rehearsals, attend all rehearsals and concerts, and attend a lesson once each week.

Jazz Band: Participants are determined by audition. The Jazz Band studies and performs appropriate jazz literature from the 30's to the present. Students who wish to play saxophone, trumpet, trombone, or drums in the Jazz Band must be current members of the LIS Band.

CHORUS

The chorus program provides an opportunity for members to develop their musical talent and an appreciation of music. Music that is appropriate for the age level is chosen for practice and performance. Students participating in chorus are expected to attend all rehearsals. Students in chorus are expected to keep up with their other classes so that they can participate fully in the choral program. Chorus is a year-long commitment.

GENERAL MUSIC CLASSES

The LIS General Music Curriculum follows the National Standards. Composing and improvising provide students with a unique insight into the form and structure of music and at the same time help develop their creativity. Broad experience with a variety of music helps students to make informed musical judgments.

GUIDANCE CLASS

The Developmental Guidance Program at Litchfield Intermediate School is an integral part of each student's educational environment. The program is comprehensive and is designed to meet the developmental needs of all students. It includes sequential activities implemented by a certified counselor with the support of the administrator, teachers, parents, and students. The program addresses the needs of each student's personal, social, academic and career development needs. These needs are met through the use of a guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and program management.

HEALTH CLASS

The students in Grades 4, 5, and 6 are assisted in utilizing core information to analyze and evaluate health issues, information and resources in order to become a healthy and responsible citizen. Students are provided with a foundation of information to encourage them to choose health-enhancing behaviors.

The 4th Grade Health Curriculum begins with a review of cells. From cells, further study of the muscles, bones and the nervous system of the body

evolve. The digestive system then is reviewed with a focus on the body as a whole. Throughout the year, the immune system and how to stay healthy is discussed. Nutrition and fitness are threads of the Health curriculum throughout the year. Body changes for girls are reviewed in the spring with female students only.

In Grade 5, nutrition continues to be a focus along with fitness and exercise. The respiratory and the circulatory systems are concentrated on individually and as they interrelate. Diseases are discussed in an informational and preventative framework. Body changes are discussed with girls and boys separately.

In Grade 6, nutrition, fitness, and exercise are highlighted. Substance abuse information is covered. Alcohol, tobacco, inhalants, marijuana and other drugs are discussed. Information is presented, influences are analyzed along with interpersonal communication and decision making within the focus of long-term goal setting and individual lifelong health. Diseases and their prevention are reviewed. Wellness is viewed from the physical, emotional, and mental focus. Body changes are discussed with girls and boys separately.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY LITERACY

Through interdisciplinary collaboration with classroom subject areas, students build research and independent study skills using technology and the library resources.

LANGUAGE ARTS

The LIS language arts program offers students the opportunity to build their literacy skills to meet grade level benchmarks and become life-long readers. Reader's and Writer's Workshop emphasizes an individualized literacy approach and serves as our instructional foundation.

MATH

Litchfield's math program utilizes a hands-on, conceptually-based approach to numeracy. Students work with real life applications to increase their

number sense and problem solving skills. Both of LIS' math programs support this foundation: Fourth and fifth grade use the *Growing with Math* program; sixth grade uses the *Impact* math program which is continued at Litchfield Middle School in seventh and eighth grade.

SCIENCE

Our inquiry-based approach to science offers students in all grade levels to learn about the world around them through research and hands-on investigation. All students participate in a school wide Science Fair.

SOCIAL STUDIES

LIS' social studies program emphasizes the acquisition of literacy skills through non-fiction reading and social studies content information. Students study history, communities, cultures, and geography.

SPANISH

Students in Litchfield begin their formal study of Spanish in fourth grade. Emphasis is placed on introductory vocabulary, conversation, and culture.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS

The physical education program at Litchfield Intermediate provides students with the fundamentals, knowledge, and basic skills to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle. Students are provided with activities that are age appropriate, such as, fitness, cooperative games, project adventure and an introduction to team sports. These activities not only allow the students to grow physically but also intellectually, socially, and emotionally. Students interact in an environment that demonstrates respect, responsibility, cooperation, teamwork and sportsmanship. Every student has PE class twice during each six day specials rotation.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT

LITCHFIELD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

CAFETERIA

Students at LIS may sit at any table at lunch. The District participates in the National School Lunch Program and offers to students nutritionally balanced lunches daily. Free and reduced price lunches are available based on financial need. Information on this program can be obtained from the school office or from the school nurse.

CLASS PLACEMENT

Every effort is made to place students with teachers where a positive student-teacher relationship will be established. Among the issues considered in the making of the groups are learning styles, special service needs, girl/boy ratio, reading partnership compatibility, personalities and friendships. The final decision for placement rests with the principal.

DRESS GUIDELINES

Students are encouraged to dress in clothing appropriate to the school environment and activities. We encourage students to wear comfortable clothing and sneakers. Students participate in recess every day, and sneakers are best for the playscape and the playing fields.

EARLY PICK UP FROM SCHOOL

In the event it is necessary for a student to be picked up early, a parent or guardian should send a written request to the office. Telephone requests for early dismissal of a student will be honored only if the caller can be positively identified as the student's parent or guardian. Only those individuals listed on the student's emergency form may pick up the student from school.

We will assume your child will ride the bus home daily (or walk if not assigned to a bus route) unless we received a written note stating otherwise. Please send a note to school with your child on the day of the change. Phone calls with changes are discouraged and will only be taken before 2:00 p.m. It

is very difficult to make changes to your child's dismissal procedure at the last minute.

Children may not change busses to ride to other children's homes for parties. Notes are necessary for after-school activities or parent pick-ups. This includes all Park and Recreation Department activities, Brownies, Cub Scouts, etc.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND GAMES

We encourage students to leave cell phones, iPods, or electronic games at home. These items are not permitted in class and risk being lost. Students are discouraged from keeping these expensive items in their lockers, as well.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION

In the event school is closed because of bad weather or another emergency, announcements will be made on the District's Alert Now automated telephone communication system and local radio stations WZBG (97.3 FM). Emergency closings will also be posted on Cable 5, and local NBC, ABC, and CBS affiliates.

LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

The mission of the library media program is to ensure that students and staff are effective users of ideas and information. The mission is accomplished:

- By providing intellectual and physical access to materials in all formats;
- By providing instruction to foster competence and stimulate interest in reading, viewing, and using information and ideas;
- By working with other educators to design learning strategies to meet the needs of individual students.

Students are invited to use the books, periodicals, newspapers, and other materials located in the library.

LOCKERS

Each student is assigned a locker. Sixth grade students are allowed to put school-issued locks on the lockers. Valuables should not be kept in a school locker.

LOST AND FOUND

Any articles which are found in the school or on school grounds should be turned in to the Lost and Found. Unclaimed articles will be given to charity after a period of time.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

The Litchfield PTO is a vital link between the school, community and the parents it serves. Parents are urged to join and take an active part in the PTO. Meetings and events are publicized in advance. The Litchfield PTO serves both Litchfield Center and Litchfield Intermediate Schools.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are sent home with students three times a year. Report cards are issued within one week of the end of the trimester.

SCHOOL HOURS

Regular school days at Litchfield Intermediate School begin at 8:25 AM and end at 3:20 PM. On early release days students are dismissed at 1:00 For 2 hour delay openings, school begins at 10:25.

TELEPHONE USE

Students are allowed to use the phone in the office with permission from the principal or office staff. The student must first ask permission and give a rationale for the call. Students may not use the phone to make after

school arrangements with friends. The use of cell phones is prohibited at school.

TESTING

All students in grades 3 - 8 will participate in the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT). The CMT consists of tests in Reading Comprehension, Degrees of Reading Power, Holistic Writing Prompt, Editing and Revising, Science, and comprehensive Mathematics tests. The CMT takes place in March.

TRANSFER AND WITHDRAWAL

Students withdrawing from school must notify the office in advance of their last day. Parents must complete a formal Release of Records form upon withdrawal.

TRANSPORTATION

School transportation privileges are extended to students conditional upon their satisfactory behavior on the bus. Unsatisfactory student behavior on the bus may result in suspension of transportation services or such other disciplinary action that is appropriate for misconduct. We encourage parents to remind students about the importance of bus safety: staying seated and calm voices.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

Parents and other visitors/volunteers are welcome at Litchfield Intermediate School. All visitors must first report to the office to sign in.

SCHOOL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAMS

FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Fire drills are held at regular intervals as required by state law. Students must follow the exit directions posted in each classroom. A crisis response

drill may be substituted for one of the required monthly school fire drills. The signal for a fire drill is a constant blast on a special horn. When the alarm sounds, students are to move along the posted exit routes in a quick, quiet and calm manner. Students should not return to the building until the return signal is given.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

Social services and counseling are rendered by professionally qualified members of the school staff. The responsibilities of the social worker and guidance counselor include helping students function more successfully within the school environment.

Individual counseling or group sessions are opportunities to talk with someone about things that are important to students. These opportunities to talk may be personal, social, or educational.

NURSE'S OFFICE

Our school nurse is on staff to provide care to students who become ill or are injured while in school. A cumulative health file is maintained for each student. This file includes notations of past illnesses, results of physical examinations, and other pertinent health information. Vision screening is performed on students in grades 4, 5 and 6. Hearing screening is done on students in grades 5 and 6. Scoliosis screening is done on students in grades 5 and 6.

When students visit the nurse and are ill or injured, parents are notified of any deviation from the normal pattern of health and suggestions are given for follow-up. Mrs. McCormick, our school nurse, is available to parents and students for conferences regarding health issues.

Administration of Medication: Parents of students requiring prescribed or over-the-counter medication during school should contact Mrs. McCormick. Special forms are required to permit the administration of medicine in school. They are available from the nurse's office. All medication must be in original container with proper labels and delivered to the nurse's clinic by a parent.

A diabetic student may test his/her own blood glucose level per a written medical order stating the need and the capacity of the student to conduct

self testing. Such self testing will be done in the nurse's office in her presence.

Communicable/Infectious Diseases: Students with any medical condition which within the school setting may expose others to disease or contagious and infectious conditions may be excluded from school and referred for medical diagnosis and treatment. Additional information concerning this may be obtained from the school nurse.

Before a child may return to school after an absence due to such condition, parents and students may be required to submit medical evidence that their child has recovered sufficiently to prevent exposing others.

Emergency Medical Treatment: Parents are asked each year to complete an emergency information form for use by the school in the event of a medical emergency. Updates throughout the year are encouraged as contact numbers change at home and work.

Health Assessment Requirements: All students must have a complete medical evaluation and completion of the State of Connecticut Health Assessment Record Sheet by parent and physician/P.A./APRN prior to school entry. In addition, students continuing to reside in Litchfield must have additional **medical evaluations in Grades 6 and 10**. The school physician will perform this health assessment if your child qualifies for free or reduced lunch. Please contact the school nurse for more information.

Immunizations: All students must be immunized against certain diseases and must present a written certificate of such. If the student should not be immunized due to medical or religious reasons, a statement from a physician or the parent as appropriate must be provided. There are no new required immunizations in grades 4, 5, or 6. However, there are specific requirements before entry into 7th grade. Students new to Connecticut must comply with all Connecticut immunization standards up to and including requirements at the age of registration.

Notes from the Doctor: It is important that parents notify the office in case of a student's illness. If a student is to be excused or limited for an extended period from participation in school activities, he/she is required to

bring a statement signed by a physician. In the event that an injury requires elevator use, a doctor's note is required. Students who are unable to participate in Physical Education or recess activities are required to bring a physician's note detailing the limitation and the length of restriction.

Physical Disabilities: The school district will not discriminate on the basis of disability as required under ADA, IDEA and Section 504 and C.G.S. 10-76a and any similar law or provision. Arrangements will be made to accommodate students with disabilities on all off campus events or fieldtrips.

SAFETY/ACCIDENT PREVENTION

Student safety on campus and at school related events is a high priority. The cooperation of students is essential to ensure school safety. A student should:

- Avoid conduct that is likely to put the student or other students at risk.
- Follow the school's rules for behavior.
- Remain alert to and promptly report safety hazards.
- Know emergency evacuation routes and signals.
- Follow the instructions of adults who are overseeing the welfare of students.

PUPIL SERVICES

For students in need of Special Education programs, a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) is designed to provide communication and decision-making at the school level concerning the effective use of available resources. The team is also responsible for periodic review of all students presently in Special Education.

Referral Process: Any child identified as possibly needing special education and/or related services must first be referred to a Teacher Assistance Team. This team consists of a variety of teachers and staff members who determine the merit of the referral. Should strategies in the classroom suggested by the Teacher Assistance Team be ineffective, the student is

then referred to the Supplemental Skills Program. If after a reasonable amount of intervention with the Supplemental Skills staff the student is still struggling a PPT may be requested to discuss the situation with the parents and possible request formal evaluation.

The Parent's Role: Parents who have children served by special education should familiarize themselves with their rights as parents, timelines for evaluation, and the specific goals of their child. The parent is a key member of the PPT committee and their input is valued. While the teachers know the student academically, the parents know the whole child. A combined effort between the school and the parents results in the best outcome for the student.

The Parent's Rights: Section 504 Of The Rehabilitation Act Of 1973
(Appendix J 2006 CASE)

You have the right to:

1. Have your child take part in, and receive benefits from public education programs without discrimination because of his/her disability;
2. Have the school district advise you of your rights under federal law;
3. Receive notice with respect to identification, evaluation, or placement of your child;
4. Have your child receive a free appropriate public education. This includes the right to be educated with nondisabled students to the maximum extent appropriate. It also includes the right to have the school district make reasonable accommodations to allow your child an equal opportunity to participate in school and school-related activities;
5. Have your child educated in facilities and receive services comparable to those provided nondisabled students;
6. Have your child receive an individualized evaluation and receive specialized education services if s/he is found to be eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

7. Have evaluation, educational and placement decisions made based upon a variety of information sources, and by persons who know the student, the evaluation data, and placement options;

8. Have transportation provided to and from an alternative placement setting determined by the school district at no greater cost to you than would be incurred if the student were placed in a program operated by the district;

9. Have your child be given an equal opportunity to participate in nonacademic and extracurricular activities offered by the district.

10. Examine all relevant records relating to decisions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, educational program and placement and obtain copies of educational records at a reasonable cost unless the fee would effectively deny you access to the records;

11. Receive a response from the school district to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of your child's records;

12. Request amendment of your child's educational records if there is reasonable cause to believe that they are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of your child. If the school district refuses this request for amendment, it shall notify you within a reasonable time and advise you of the right to a hearing;

13. File a grievance; contact Gary Zaremski (860-567-7505) for the local equity grievance procedures/form.

14. Request an impartial due process hearing related to decisions or actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, educational program or placement. You and the student may take part in the hearing and have an attorney represent you at your own expense. The impartial Hearing Officer will be selected by the district. Hearing requests must be made to Gary Zaremski at 860-567-7505. This is the person in the district who is responsible for assuring the district complies with Section 504 requirement.

Information Regarding Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Appendix D 2006 CASE)

Section 504 is a federal law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with a disability in any program receiving federal assistance. The Act defines a person with a disability as anyone who:

1. has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (major life activities include activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working);
2. has a record of such impairment; or
3. is regarded as having such an impairment.

In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, the Litchfield school district recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel, students and their parents. No discrimination against any person solely due to his/her disability will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices in the school system.

The school district has specific responsibilities under the Act, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and if the child has a current disability and is termed to be eligible under Section 504, to afford access to appropriate educational programs.

If the parent or guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the school district, he/she has the right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) specifies rights related to educational records. This Act gives the parent/guardian or eligible student the right to: 1) inspect and review the child's educational records; 2) make copies of these records; 3) receive a list of all persons having access to those records; 4) ask for an explanation of any item in the records; 5) ask for an amendment to any report on the grounds that it is

misleading, inaccurate, or violates the child's rights; and 6) a hearing on the issue if the school refuses to make the amendment.

If there are any questions, please feel free to contact Gary Zaremski, the Section 504 Coordinator for the school district, at 860-567-7505.