



Parent Handbook

Melvin J. Larson School

2023-2024

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Our Mission

To prepare students for future successes through high quality, comprehensive and individual, appropriate educational experiences, in collaboration with the family.

Program Overview

UCP-CDS Melvin J. Larson School serves Illinois Public Schools student's ages 3-22 who have significant educational needs related to their disability. Individuals appropriate for the school program are those who require significant interventions beyond what a public school can provide. Students with the following disabilities are served at the school: Autism, Developmental Delay, Emotional Disability, Intellectual Disability, Multiple Disabilities, Orthopedic Impairment, Other Health Impairment, and Traumatic Brain Injury.

The school program operates 220 days a year. To properly address the needs of the students, programming in the summer is identical to the regular school year, five days a week five hours a day.

UCP-CDS Melvin J. Larson School offers a small class size of 10 students with 1 Special Education Teacher and at least 1 paraprofessional in each class, 5:1 student teacher ratio. Larson School is able to serve up to 50 students.

All special education teachers and paraprofessionals hold a valid Illinois Educator License and are trained in CPR/AED/First Aid, and Safety Care.

School Hours

Monday through
Friday, 9:00 a.m. to
2:00 p.m.

Office Hours

Monday through
Friday, 8:00 a.m. to
4:00 p.m.

August 15, 2023	First Day of School
September 4, 2023	Labor Day <i>No School</i>
October 9, 2023	Columbus Day <i>No School</i>
November 22 - 24, 2023	Thanksgiving Break <i>No School</i>
December 25, 2023	Winter Break Begins
January 3, 2024	Return to School
January 15, 2024	Martin L. King Day <i>No School</i>
February 19, 2024	Presidents Day <i>No School</i>
March 25 - April 1, 2024	Spring Break <i>No School</i>
May 24, 2024	Last Day School Year
June 3, 2024	ESY Begins (Summer School)
June 19, 2024	Juneteenth
July 4-5, 2024	July 4th Break <i>No School</i>
July 25, 2024	Last Day ESY (Summer School)

Admission

Eligibility

To be eligible for admission to UCP-CDS Melvin J. Larson School, a child must be 3 years old or less than 22 years of age on or before the start of the current school year. All students must have an IEP for Special education services and be identified by his or her home school district as needing outplacement to a therapeutic day school. Larson School is not involved in the decision-making process regarding placement. Students are referred to Larson School by their home district. **We cannot accept students without home district referral.**

Registration

Each student must be registered with both his/her home school district and UCP-CDS Melvin J. Larson School. Parents/ guardians must meet all district requirements regarding residency and all state medical requirements.

Larson School registration is completed yearly or after the students' home school referral and acceptance into the programming provided by Larson School.

Transportation

Transportation is provided by the home school district. It is your responsibility to notify the transportation company in the event that your child will be absent from school or if transportation arrangements need to be changed.

If your child wears a safety harness and is dropped off at Larson School by a parent/guardian, the harness must be brought with your child or the transportation company will not be able to transport your child back home.

General Policies

Absences

To report your child absent from school, please call the UCP-CDS Melvin J. Larson office at **(815)744-3500** by 9:00 a.m. on the day of the absence. A message can be left at any time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to keep all students home with the exhibiting the following symptoms

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Fever over 100.4°F
- New onset of Cough, Nasal congestion
- Fatigue, Muscle pain

Individuals that arrive at UCP-CDS with any of the following symptoms in isolation: a fever of 100.4°F or higher, diarrhea x2, or vomiting, must go home and cannot return to UCP-CDS until the child is symptom-free without the use of medication for 24 hours.

A student sent home from school with a fever of 100.4°F or higher, diarrhea, or vomiting may not return to school for 24 hours.

Transportation

Transportation is provided by the school district. If you will be driving your child to school, please enter through Door D.

Emergency Closing of School

If the school must be closed because of inclement weather or another emergency, the announcement will be given as early in the morning as possible at the following public website: www.emergencyclosing.com.

If your school district closes for inclement weather, they will not transport even if Larson School remains open.

Visitors to Larson School and Building Security

Parent(s)/guardian(s) wishing to visit or arranging for a designated representative to visit their child's class should call the building to set up an appointment, unless it is in response to a general invitation or a special event.

- All visitors must enter the building through the main entrance. There they will sign in.
- At no time are parents or visitors to enter the school building and go directly to their child's classroom or any other area of the building. We value the health, safety and welfare of our students. Therefore, in an effort to protect our students, staff members will be required to escort individuals.
- After 9:00 a.m., no visitors may interrupt the instructional process by taking a teacher's attention away from their students while classes are in session. Parental interest in the educational process is the lifeline of school performance.

All placing districts, DCSF and ISBE may visit students at UCP-CDS Melvin J. Larson School with or without prior notice.

Lunch

Student meals and utensils will need to arrive at UCP-CDS in a "ready to serve" fashion. This includes meals that are in need of blending/grinding prior to mealtime. By meals arriving "ready to serve" the need of touch contact to prepare food will be reduced and decrease the risk of spreading germs. If meals/food items need to be heated prior to serving, staff will do so in the container food was sent in. The container/utensils will be sent back home for washing.

All lunches will be stored in the student's individual plastic container located within their classroom. Please remember to include a method of keeping meals cool if spoilage may be an issue.

Clothing

Please send 2 additional change of clothing in case of accidental soiling. If clothing is sent home with the student, please return a clean set of clothes as soon as possible. Please send individual toiletry supplies in monthly as storage is limited for surplus supplies.

Medication Policy

In accordance and with the support and guidance based on the Illinois Department of Human Services and the Illinois State Board of Education's recommendation for Professionals and Parents/Guardians in the administration of medications in school, the only time that Melvin J. Larson School will administer medication is if the student requires the medication to maintain their overall health or if it enhances their education and helps to create the conditions under which learning can be achieved. The plan for the administration of medication must be placed in a student's IEP and updated annually. Section 2: Persons Qualified to Administer Credentialed and titled school Administrators and/or a Registered Nurse, if available, in consultation with a student's health care provider, will administer medication to students. **All prescription and nonprescription medications require written authorization from the student's health care provider as well as the student's parent/guardian. All medication must be in the original labeled container bearing the name of the pharmacy and its contact information, the student's name, prescribed medication, recommended dosage, and instructions. Melvin J. Larson School requires all medication documentation to be updated annually of each school year.**

On a case by case basis, Melvin J. Larson School may elect to allow a parent or guardian or other approved adult family member to directly give the student a legal medication as if they were doing so at home. Students are permitted to self-administer medication with written parental / guardian consent, under the supervision of a Health Service provider or designate.

Curriculum

UCP-CDS Melvin J. Larson School utilizes Unique Learning Systems (ULS) as its curriculum. ULS aligns to the Common Core Standards and the mandates of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). ULS lessons and data collection support IEP development. ULS provides 30 lessons in each k-12 grade band per month. Transition has 21 lessons monthly; Preschool has 25 lessons. A topic unit is taught for a one-month period with all lesson differentiated across three levels.

UCP-CDS Melvin J. Larson School also utilizes Google Classroom, News-2-You, and Raz-Kids to supplement ULS within the classroom.

Data Collection

Data-driven instruction is the educational approach used at UCP-CDS Melvin J. Larson School. The teachers utilize individual student data to inform teaching and learning.

All students at UCP-CDS Larson School have individual student portfolio for data collection. Data collected includes skill tracking, learning profile, monthly pre- and post –assessment measures, benchmarking assessments, core rubrics (readiness skills of employability, communication, self-advocacy, daily living and social strategies) and behavior data forms. The data is collected weekly to monitor student progress, drive instruction and intervention.

Student Dignity

Diapering

Students may require diapering due to health, physical or intellectual disabilities which necessitate the use of diapers. These students may require changing either on a daily, scheduled basis or on an “as needed” basis. In any event, these tasks should be performed with dignity and respect for the student and in a private, safe, secure setting.

Toileting

As with diapering students, toileting is another task that requires a certain amount of equipment and supplies in order to ensure the safety of both students and staff. There are different reasons why a student may require assistance with toileting, including physical and intellectual disabilities as well as toilet training.

Student Rights

Formal Behavior Plan

A Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) will be completed by the Behavior Therapist or Program Director to determine what problem behaviors are occurring, what the triggers are, and what the consequences are when the problem behavior occur. Parents will be notified by the Behavior Therapist or Special Education Teacher about the problem behavior and inform them that data will be collected. The FBA will provide an operational definition of the problem behavior, so that staff will be able to identify the behavior to collect data. ABC Data will be collected on the problem behavior to see if there are specific times and triggers that increase the behavior. ABC data collects the antecedent, behavior, and the consequence. This data will determine if the problem behavior is occurring frequently or if it has a long duration. Once the FBA is completed, a Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) will set up to determine the plan of action for reducing the problem behavior. If a student comes in with a BIP, then the Behavior Therapist or Program Director will go over the plan and set up a data collection method.

Once a behavior plan has been established, a data sheet will be created. Depending on the problem behavior and the method of data collection (frequency, duration, etc.), staff will keep data daily. Staff will be trained on how to implement the BIP and how data should be collected. ABC data will be completed weekly to make sure that the function of behavior is still consistent. The Behavior Therapist Program Director will go into the classroom periodically to collect data to make sure that it is consistent between staff. If there is any inconsistency, the Behavior Therapist or Program Director will review the BIP and data collection methods with the classroom staff. Data will be collected yearly to be analyzed and interpreted at IEP meetings. This will show if the BIP is reflective of the behaviors exhibited by the student.

If the BIP is not effective as demonstrated by consistent data collection and staff implementation, then a meeting will be set up to go over data and revise the BIP. A formal IEP would be needed as this time to amend the IEP as the BIP is an essential component of the IEP.

Time-Outs

Per Section 1.285 Requirements for the Use of Isolated Time Out, Time Out and Physical Restraint, "Time out" means a behavior management technique for the purpose of calming or de-escalation that involves the involuntary monitored separation of a student from classmates with an adult trained under subsection (i) for part of the school day, only for a brief time, in a non-locked setting. Time outs should have the Behavior Therapist involved and the staff members must remain in the rooms until the time out is finished.

Section 1.285 Requirements for the Use of Isolated Time Out, Time Out and Physical Restraint, "Isolated time out" means the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a time out room or other enclosure outside the classroom without a supervising adult in the time out room or enclosure. Isolated time out is allowed only under limited circumstances. If all other requirements under this Section are met, isolated time out may be used only when the adult in the time out room or enclosure is in imminent danger of serious physical harm because the student is unable to cease actively engaging in extreme physical aggression.

Section 1.285 Requirements for the Use of Isolated Time Out, Time Out and Physical Restraint: Isolated time-outs and time-outs does not include a student-initiated or student-requested break, a student-initiated or teacher-initiated sensory break, including a sensory room containing sensory tools to assist a student to calm and de-escalate, an in-school suspension or detention, or any other appropriate disciplinary measure, including a student's brief removal to the hallway or similar environment.

The goal is to create situations and recognize signals or triggers before problem behaviors occur. This will allow teaching moments to have the student request appropriate breaks when needed. Followed by the students recognizing when they need a break on their own and then requesting it without the help of a staff member. If there is a need for a time-out, then there is a built in area within the sensory room that would allow for the student to go into with the staff member in charge to allow for calming and de-escalation. Isolation time-outs are not to be used unless it is absolutely necessary. A trained staff member who is in charge of the student should be in the room at all times. If the situation turns into a crisis, the Behavior Therapist should be notified immediately and assess the situation.

Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment Prohibited

No person, including an United Cerebral Palsy- Center for Disability Services employee or agent, or student, shall harass, intimidate, or bully a student on the basis of actual or perceived; race;

color; nationality; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity; gender-related identity or expression; ancestry; age; religion; physical or mental disability; order of protection status; status of being homeless; actual or potential marital or parental status including pregnancy; association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics; or any other distinguishing characteristic. Melvin J. Larson School will not tolerate harassing, intimidating conduct, or bullying whether verbal, physical, visual, or cyber that affects tangible benefits of education, that unreasonably interferes with a student's educational performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Examples of prohibited conduct include name-calling, using derogatory slurs, stalking, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

UCP-CDS shall investigate alleged harassment of students when the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or Complaint Manager becomes aware of an allegation, regardless of whether a written report or complaint is filed.

Statement of Assurance

United Cerebral Palsy-Center for Disability Services is committed to protecting the safety, health and well-being of all students and staff. We want every family/employee to be assured that we are taking your concerns and the well-being of our employees seriously.

The Illinois General Assembly finds that a safe and civil school environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve. Bullying causes physical, psychological, and emotional harm to students and interferes with students' ability to learn and participate in school activities. The General Assembly further finds that bullying has been linked to other forms of antisocial behavior, such as vandalism, shoplifting, skipping and dropping out of school, fighting, using drugs and alcohol, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. Because of the negative outcomes associated with bullying in schools, the General Assembly finds that school districts, charter schools, and non-public, non-sectarian elementary and secondary schools should educate students, parents, and school district, charter school, or non-public, non-sectarian elementary or secondary school personnel about what behaviors constitute prohibited bullying.

Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of the school. However, nothing in the school's bullying prevention and response plan is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution or under Section 3 or Article I of the Illinois Constitution.

Melvin J. Larson School abides by the following Anti-bullying policy. The policy was submitted to bullyingpolicy@isbe.et pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(d) on December 28, 2021. Approval was granted on January 4, 2022. A complete disclosure of the accepted policy can be found at [UCP-CDS-Anti-Bullying-Policy.pdf](#).

Student Records

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997, the Illinois School Student Records Act, and regulations adopted by the State Board of Education, UCP-CDS Melvin J. Larson School will protect the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information collected by Larson School, during its collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction. The Board will protect District students and their families from invasions of privacy in the collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction of such information and provide access to recorded information only to those persons legally entitled thereto. Any requests for records will be forwarded to the student's home district.