



ACADEMY OF INNOVATION

WHERE LEARNING TAKES FLIGHT

PARENT HANDBOOK
2021-2022

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PURPOSE

Academy of Innovation, Inc. ("AOI") is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to the remediation of learning differences (LD) for children in grades 1-12. A learning disability is generally defined as a cognitive dysfunction, frequently hereditary in nature, characterized by the inability to deal with written symbols, despite conventional instruction, adequate intelligence, and socio-cultural opportunity. Some of the characteristics include short attention span, distractibility, variability in performance, reading, spelling, writing or math disabilities, poor organizational skills, and slowness in finishing work. Some specific diagnoses include the following among others: dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, central auditory processing disorder (CAPD), and nonverbal learning disabilities.

AOI is based on the idea that every human being should have the opportunity to become the very best person possible. For the child with learning differences, this is difficult without proper intervention. He/she often becomes frustrated and gives up, resulting in feelings of inferiority that may sometimes produce a weak self-image. At AOI, students receive the proper academic remediation as well as participate in activities that help improve social skills and self-esteem. Once a child is prepared to transition to another educational environment, recommendations and assistance are provided to parents and the school as to the strengths, weaknesses, and needs of each student.

The goal of the school is to help each child maximize his/her potential. In addition, parents receive help in coping with the learning-disabled child within the family dynamic. These goals are accomplished through a teamwork approach, structured materials, and a dedicated staff.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

We believe that students with learning disabilities can be diagnosed through proper testing. We believe that our role as educators is to provide a structured, positive environment that will foster emotional, physical, and intellectual growth. We seek to emphasize the dignity, worth, and responsibility of each individual, both for himself and others. We believe that our students can learn the fundamental skills necessary for coping successfully in our complex world.

One of our primary educational goals is to teach students to be organized in their approach to schoolwork. A consistent and structured environment encourages quality work from AOI students.

Once students are part of a structured environment, they are expected to fulfill responsibilities that gradually increase as self-concept, remediation, and age increases. We feel that it is necessary to employ the following fundamental procedures:

- Maintain Attention
- Provide Structure
- Implement Multisensory Learning
- Utilize Repetition

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Academy of Innovation is to provide individualized, student-focused academic services that help maximize both the scholastic and career-related success of those students in the Northeast Georgia area who possess learning differences and challenges.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES AND GOALS

- To provide quality, trained teachers and staff.
- To maintain a student-staff ratio not to exceed 10:1.
- To use proven methods and teaching materials which are geared toward remediating the LD student.
- To keep the parent regularly informed of student progress through the students' agenda, reports, and conferences.
- To maintain a structured environment, suitable for learning.
- To provide a safe, positive school climate.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES & OPPORTUNITIES

- To get the child to school on time and in compliance with the dress code.
- To read and respond in the student's agenda daily in order to stay informed.
- To be knowledgeable of school rules and actively supportive of the school policies.
- To work and cooperate with the administration and faculty.
- To be financially responsible for the prompt payment of tuition and fees.
- To be punctual at arrival and dismissal times.
- To attend scheduled conferences.
- To attend school meetings and parenting groups.
- To assist with volunteer support whenever possible. Here are some ideas:
 - Library
 - Classroom activities
 - Special school events, such as the Biography Day, Field Day, etc.
 - Field Trips

POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

The students who benefit the greatest from the educational experience offered by AOI are those who attend regularly; therefore, the school discourages absences except in cases of emergencies or illness. The responsibility of school attendance is that of both parents and student. AOI strongly discourages parents from scheduling or permitting students to attend trips that interfere with scheduled school days. Please check the school schedule and calendar carefully to avoid such problems (See Appendices A & B).

TARDINESS: Classes begin at 8:30 am. All students are expected to be at school by 8:15 A.M. Your child may arrive as early as 8:00 A.M and will be monitored at the school. Tardiness on the part of the student not only causes loss of school time for that student, but his/her late arrival also disrupts the entire class that they enter. Parents should come into the office to sign-in students who arrive after 8:30 am and should provide a doctor's note for appointments. *Three (3) tardies is the equivalent of 1 absence.*

ABSENTEEISM: A parent or guardian should notify the school office by 9:00 A.M. on the day of the student's absence, unless prearranged. Upon the student's return, the parent or guardian must send a written note or doctor's note for the student to present to their teacher. **If a student is absent more than 2 days, a doctor's excuse is required. If no written doctor's note is given, the student may be required to stay after school for each day they are absent. The purpose of the after-school**

class is to make up missed schoolwork. Parents will be charged \$25 daily for this service. Students must attend at least 4 class periods to be counted as present for the day. If a student has more than 10 absences in a school year, then a report will be made to the appropriate school system's truancy office.

DRESS CODE

CLOTHING: Students are to dress according to the school standards from the time they arrive until the time they leave (See Appendix C.) Girls are allowed to wear sandals or open-toed shoes. Hats or caps may not be worn in class. Boys may not have visible piercings, and girls may have only 2 or fewer ear piercings. Boys may not wear makeup while girls may wear appropriate makeup. (See Appendix C)

HAIR POLICY: Hair must be kept neat and well groomed. Radical styles including mohawks, tails, spikes, unusual shapes, steps, cuts, lines, directions, unusual colors, or partial shaves, will not be permitted for boys or girls. Boys' hair must be cut above the eyebrows, at the top of the ears, and above the collar, and may not stand more than one (1) inch above the head. Cornrows and braids are not appropriate for male students. Sideburns may be worn to the ear lobe. Beards and mustaches are not permitted. Girls' hair must be neat, well-groomed and off the face. The administration reserves the right to rule on the appropriateness of clothing and hairstyle

HYGIENE: Students are expected to take baths, wear deodorant, brush teeth, brush hair and change into clean clothing on a daily basis. Adolescents can keep extra deodorant at school. Girls who get their menstruation need to keep a change of clothes.

- **DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS:** Students are expected to dress properly at all times. When students come to school in inappropriate attire, parents may be called to bring a change of clothes or students will be provided with clothing from the lost and found.

CONDUCT

It is our belief that an important component of school is the development of self-discipline and organizational skills. The discipline system at AOI (See Appendix C) is designed to provide a learning environment free from disruptive or distracting behaviors that would keep students from learning. Each student should have the best education we can give him/her through a positive educational environment.

The *Discipline Committee*, which is comprised of an administrator and/or faculty members, will meet about persistent discipline concerns or any matters that are not covered under the classroom discipline system. Students will be referred to the committee for any major behavioral infractions which take place during school hours, during after school activities and/or field trips or that relate to AOI students, faculty, and staff. These infractions include but are not limited to fighting, harassment, cheating, stealing, damage of school property, forbidden articles, using profanity (written or verbal), etc. Even though some of these actions may take place off campus and outside of school, the impact is still felt on campus. The Discipline Committee may determine suspension, expulsion, or refusal for re-enrollment for a student.

CLASSROOM: Cooperation with teachers is expected and required. Students are expected to show respect to other students and to teachers. If misbehavior persists, a conference with parents, child and teacher will be scheduled.

DAMAGE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY: Students are required to report any loss of accident or damage to, school property. This includes Chromebooks, school-owned books, and other educational material.

Writing, scratching or any disfigurement of desks, tables, or walls is strictly forbidden. An amount covering repair or replacement will be charged when a student is determined to be guilty of careless or improper conduct.

FORBIDDEN ARTICLES: Forbidden articles include tobacco, vapes/e-cigarettes, knives, guns, toy guns (including paintball guns or cap guns), or any type of weapon. Any articles found will be confiscated and parents and/or appropriate authorities will be contacted. Any students who possess such articles will receive disciplinary action, suspension, or expulsion from school.

DEVICES: Students may bring cell phones AND/OR any devices that are capable of Internet access onto school grounds but must put the devices away during the school day. Devices must be silenced or turned off. Students may only remove their device when teachers have given permission to do so. If a student is seen with their device without permission, it will be taken up and returned to the parent or guardian. Students may not use any other type of music players or electronic devices during school or after-school activities. Students are not allowed to bring gum, candy, hand-held electronic games, or toys to school.

DRUG POLICY: AOI policy states that the possession of drugs or drug-related paraphernalia, the selling of or making arrangements to sell or purchase, the condition of being under the influence of, and the use by students of alcohol and controlled substances is against the law. AOI cannot and will not tolerate a student's violation of this law on campus or at school functions or trips.

HARASSMENT: AOI is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination or harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments of a demeaning or insulting nature that are based on an individual's sex, race, ethnic origin, religion, personal appearance, or abilities will not be tolerated. This encompasses emails, texts and/or websites that mention AOI, AOI students or AOI staff by name or implication in any inappropriate or derogatory way. Sexual harassment includes unwanted questions about one's personal life, lewd comments, jokes with sexual connotations, unwanted touching, or suggestive or obscene notes, gestures, or letters. Such activity is strictly prohibited. Any student who engages in any form of harassment will be subject to the strongest disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion.

BULLYING/THREATENING STATEMENTS OR ACTS: AOI considers the safety and well-being of the school community to be of the utmost importance. We expect each student to respect his or her classmates and teachers. Actions or statements of a threatening nature to anyone in the school community will not be tolerated. Students who engage in this type of behavior (even if they themselves perceive it as "joking") will be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion.

HONOR SYSTEM: Because honor plays an important part in AOI's commitment to developing character as well as intellect, AOI expects honesty in both words and actions from all students. The honor system is fundamental to developing the entire student. Failure to adhere to the honor system will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion as determined by the administration.

Cheating: Any possession or use of unauthorized material in a testing situation is cheating. In addition, the verbal or written sharing of answers about any assignment (homework, quizzes, tests, exams, etc.) is cheating. Those who knowingly give and those who receive are found equally guilty.

Lying: Lying is defined not only as the conscious statement of falsehood (verbal or written), but also as the purposeful withholding of information or deception of any kind.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the use of ideas or words belonging to another person without permission from or acknowledgment of that person's contribution. Plagiarism is considered stealing and cheating.

Stealing: To take another person's property without permission, knowledge, or without the intention of returning it. This includes student or teacher possessions or school supplies.

PROCEDURES

MEALS

Meals are not provided by AOI. Students should plan to eat breakfast at home and must bring a healthy lunch & snack. Limited microwaves are available for heating lunches. The school cannot provide a full lunch for students who forget their lunches. Please label all lunch boxes and bags. Good manners and courtesy are expected in the kitchen.

COMMUNICATION

Parents can arrange conferences with teachers through the school's administrator or communicate with teachers by phone or e-mail. Teachers will be able to return e-mails and phone calls during their planning periods or after school. Parents should not drop by teachers' classrooms before or after school, unannounced. These times are reserved for teachers to work with students or prepare lessons. Parents should closely monitor any correspondence from students to teachers. At all times, students and parents are expected to be courteous, appropriate, and respectful in all communication with the school, whether verbal or written. Faculty members shall not engage in social networking websites with currently enrolled students or their parents.

Forms of communications at AOI:

- **Remind** – This is our main form of quick communication.
 - Parents are required to sign up for Remind messages.
 - Remind is a private mobile messaging platform that enables teachers, parents, students, and administrators in K–12 schools to communicate with everyone at once via text, email or the Remind app which can be downloaded from the iTunes or Google Play stores.
 - To get notifications via text simply text “@aoimain” to 81010. You will receive a welcome text from Remind. If parents have trouble with 81010, try texting @aoimain to (678) 619-2585.
 - The easiest way? Download the Remind app. Set up your account. Click on “Join a Class.” Class code is @aoimain. Done!
- **Email** – Parents and guardians are welcome to email your child's teacher with any concerns or requests. The front office is also available at frontoffice@aoiga.com from 8:00 to 4:00 daily for emails. We strive to respond as quickly as possible.
- **Phone calls** to (770) 536-6898
- **Facebook** – send us a message through Facebook Messenger and we will get back to you as quick as we can!

PHYSICAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

All AOI students are **required** to participate in recreation activities to meet the State of Georgia's Physical Education requirements. Students may bring a change of clothes for each of these activities. Students will get official grades for these classes.

HOMework

Homework assignments are such that most students should be able to do their work independently, however, some students may still need assistance reading the material. Parental responsibility consists of providing the time, place, and atmosphere in which this work can be done. Students are held responsible for all assignments. All late assignments may be reduced 10 points for each day late; assignments more than 3 days late may be recorded as a zero.

READING

Each student's daily homework assignment is reading either an assigned book or a book of the student's choice. This book may be read independently, with another person or the student may listen to the book using an electronic device such as a smartphone or tablet. Based on well-established research, we believe that our students must read **daily** to increase, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency skills. **Each AOI student is required to read 10 books per month.** All students read a minimum of 30 minutes per night.

NOTE: Every 100 pages counts as one book. For example, if your student reads two 50-page books, they have read one book.

POLICY ON MAKE-UP WORK & RETAKES

If a child is absent 1 or 2 days, make-up work will be given when they return. On the 3rd day of absence, schoolwork will be sent home at the parents' request. Tests should be made up before or after school within a week of the absence.

Students will be allowed to redo homework, quizzes, and tests if they score below a 70%. Parents should not request make-up work until a student has missed three consecutive days.

REPORTING PERIOD

The school year is divided into four, 9-week periods. Report cards are sent home at the end of each grading period in an envelope that is to be signed by the parent and returned. The report card enclosed is for the family's records. Teachers are available for conferences before, during or after the time report cards are issued.

ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

The Woodcock-Johnson test of Academic Achievement is administered every spring. When appropriate, new students will be given a different version of the Woodcock-Johnson in the fall to establish pre-test measures. These scores help monitor the child's progress.

Additional testing in reading and math may also be administered throughout the school year, such as the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test-III, the Test of Silent Word Reading Fluency, and the Gray Silent Test of Reading Comprehension.

Note: Students who are enrolled later than the school year start date may require additional tutoring and/or diagnostic testing at the parent's expense.

PAYMENTS, SCHOLARSHIPS & OTHER FINANCIAL ITEMS

TUITION: Tuition charges are billed to parents' credit cards monthly or paid by check. **Tuition is due by the first of every month.** A student whose account is 30 days overdue may not be allowed to attend class. All students must have a zero balance on their accounts to receive records. There is a \$35.00 charge for returned checks.

ONLINE COURSES: High School students must take online courses to meet graduation requirements. This \$550.00 rate is included in the monthly tuition payment. The cost covers two semesters or one full course. If additional courses are required, the cost is \$150.00 each. (Online course prices are subject to change based on our online course provider)

OTHER FEES: Occasionally there are other fees throughout the year that are not included in the monthly tuition charge. Below is a list of possible charges that could be incurred.

- Aftercare is \$14.00/day (from 3:15 pm to 6:00 pm)
- Clubs Fees are \$7.50/meeting (afterschool on specified days)
- Field Trips. These costs will vary depending on the trip.
- School Pictures

SCHOLARSHIPS:

Georgia Special Needs Scholarship (SB10)

- AOI is a participant in the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Program. Families of students who are eligible to receive the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship (students who attended public schools and received an Individualized Education Plan or IEP with the school system) will receive 4 checks throughout the course of the school year in 4 cycles (October, December, February, and May).
- These payments may only be applied directly to tuition costs. It may not be used for any other school expenses.
- The applying parent is required to come to the school to endorse the SB10 check each quarter for the school to receive these funds.
- The SB10 Special Needs Scholarship Award letter reflects the estimate amount of the scholarship. *Parents should be aware that if the scholarship drops below the estimate amount, they will be responsible for the portion of tuition that was not covered.*

GaSSO (Georgia Student Scholarship Organization)

The Georgia Student Scholarship Organization, Inc. is one of the oldest and largest non-profit corporations approved by the State of Georgia to accept and manage tax-credit donations that give Georgia children access to the educational choices they deserve and need.

- Donors to the scholarship program receive a dollar-for-dollar tax credit off the Georgia State Income Tax Liability.
- Donors cannot specify their donation to go toward a specific student or students. All funds that come in will be given out to those applied.
- Who is eligible to receive his scholarship?
 - Student eligibility requirements:
 - Must be a Georgia resident and be 4 years old by September 1st.
 - Qualify to enroll in Pre-K, Kindergarten, or first grade – automatically
 - Was enrolled in public school last year – automatically eligible
 - If never attended public school, second grade and up must attend a Georgia public school for at least six weeks
 - The enrollment and six-week public school attendance requirements shall be waived in the case of a

student who:

- Based on residence, would be assigned to be a low-performing school
 - Documented cases of physical violence or verbal abuse threatening physical harm
 - Homeschooled year prior
 - Previously eligible
- Students that meet the eligibility requirements must complete an online application.
 - The GaSSO scholarship is awarded on a yearly basis. Applicants must submit the application each year after January 1st and before June 30th to be eligible.

AOI Scholarship

- The Academy of Innovation is proud to be able to provide financial assistance to families through the help of generous donors who make it possible.
- Scholarships may be awarded based on the family's financial need to students who attend the Academy of Innovation on a full or part-time basis. This may include a dual enrollment with another school.
- The AOI scholarship will be used exclusively for AOI tuition and not for any other school's instructional fees.
- To ascertain if a student is eligible for the AOI scholarship, parents must complete an online application with the School and Student Services (SSS), a national organization that estimates the amount of tuition that families can use for funding to pay for private schools. Total household income of each parent will be used in the evaluation of eligibility. Parents fill out the application and provide the required documents to see if they meet the scholarship criteria. After receiving the SSS report, a member of AOI scholarship committee schedules an interview with the potential parents to go over the SSS report. Then the committee will meet and review the SSS recommendations to determine if the family meets the scholarship qualifications. The AOI committee will make the final decision about scholarship awards. All financial records will be held in confidence.
- **The AOI Scholarship is awarded for 1 year and is not automatically renewable. Families must reapply for the scholarship on a yearly basis. The application can be completed anytime after January 1st and before June 30th for returning students.**
- The AOI scholarship committee meets in mid-July after the state releases the SB10 award letters to determine AOI Scholarship financial aid amounts for returning students. New families enrolling can complete and submit the application when they have been accepted to the academy.
- School and Student Services have webinars with good information that help with completing the application. If you have any other questions about their platform/portal you can always contact them at 800.344.8328. They are very helpful.

RE-ENROLLMENT

Students who have maintained appropriate conduct, continued to make appropriate academic progress, and who are in good financial standing will be offered re-enrollment on a yearly basis. Re-enrollment paperwork must be submitted and the Gradelink portal must be updated by the last day of school.

SCHOOL DISMISSAL

School will be dismissed regularly at 3:00 P.M. Children will be monitored until 3:15 P.M. At that time, all remaining students are required to go to Aftercare. (see *appendix F*)

TRANSPORTATION

AOI assumes no responsibility for providing transportation. Parents are encouraged to arrange carpools on their own.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In case of inclement weather, a message and email will be sent out to families. Families can also find the information by listening to WXIA, WDUN or checking accessnorthga.com, Channel 11 and Facebook for announcements.

This handbook is not intended to be a complete and detailed account of all school policies. It is provided as a general guide to parents of children in AOI. The administration reserves the right to formulate new rules or change all current rules as deemed necessary.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: CLASS SCHEDULE

<u>Elementary & Middle School</u>		<u>High School</u>	
Time	Class/Activity	Time	Class/Activity
8:15 AM	Homeroom Bell	8:15 AM	Homeroom Bell
8:25 AM	Assembly	8:25 AM	Assembly
8:30 AM	1st Period	8:30 AM	1st Period
9:25 AM	End of 1 st Period	9:15 AM	2nd Period
9:30 AM	2nd Period	10:00 AM	3rd Period
10:25 AM	End of 2 nd Period	10:45 AM	4th Period
10:30 AM	3rd Period	11:30 AM	Lunch
11:25 AM	End of 3 rd Period	12:00 PM	5th Period
11:30 AM	Lunch	1:00 PM	6th Period
12:00 PM	Keyboarding/Science/Social Studies Rotation	2:00 PM	Monday-Thursday – Recreation Rotation Friday – Auction or Recreation
12:30 PM	Keyboarding/Science/Social Studies Rotation	3:00 PM	Dismissal to carpool or aftercare
1:00 PM	Keyboarding/Science/Social Studies Rotation		
1:30 PM	Keyboarding/Science/Social Studies Rotation		
2:00 PM	Monday-Thursday – Recreation Rotation Friday – Auction or Recreation		
3:00 PM	Dismissal to carpool or aftercare		

APPENDIX B: DRESS CODE INFORMATION

PANTS & SHORTS:

BOYS Jeans, khakis, or cotton shorts/pants in good repair.

GIRLS Jeans, shorts, or skirts. Shorts, skirts, and tunic type shirts worn with leggings must be longer than the middle finger when the arms are resting by the side. Little girls should wear shorts under dresses for recess.

SHIRTS:

BOYS T-Shirts (no sleeveless) with no inappropriate or offensive images or wording.

GIRLS T-Shirts and tops that cover the midsection and straps must be at least 2" wide.

FIELD TRIPS:

BOYS Khaki shorts or pants, AOI t-shirt. No jeans.

GIRLS Khaki shorts, pants, or skirts. AOI t-shirt. No jeans.

APPENDIX C: STUDENT DISCIPLINE SYSTEM

RULES:

- Follow directions the first time they are given.
- Be prepared and on-time for class with the proper materials.
- Raise your hand and wait for permission to speak or get out of your seat.
- Keep your hands, feet, and all other objects to yourself.
- Show respect to staff and other students; use only school-appropriate language and gestures.

One way we encourage students to follow the rules is by using a "Checkbook" system. Each student is given a checkbook register to keep up with "money" they earn for following the rules. "Money" is taken from the register for rule infractions. They can then use their money to purchase items in the monthly auction. This system of reward is usually enough to encourage responsible, appropriate behavior.

Donated items are always welcome as prizes at our auctions. Usually these are items that your child would love to receive. Here are a few ideas: Legos, gift cards (Starbucks, iTunes, etc.), food items, UGA or other college items.

APPENDIX D: DROP OFF/PICK UP

MORNING DROP-OFF

Students should be dropped off in front of the school each morning. Drop-off begins at 8:00 am, unless earlier arrangements need to be made (parents should talk with the administration). Each student must sign in at the table in the lobby with their name and time of arrival. It is important that the student be responsible for this procedure, not the parent. If parents need to come into the building, they should park in the parking lot.

All students who arrive after 8:30 am should enter with their parent at the front door and be signed-in at the office.

AFTERNOON PICK-UP

The carpool lane starts in front of the building and extends up the hill toward the church. At dismissal,

students will be kept inside the building until their ride is at the front of the line. When leaving, proceed up the hill and out the back entrance onto Longview Drive.

APPENDIX E: AFTER-SCHOOL CARE

The Aftercare staff provides a structured setting with time devoted to homework as well as leisure activities. This includes helping with organizational skills, explaining directions or assignments, helping students stay on-task, and encouraging students. The staff does not check every part of every assignment or assume responsibility for total completion of homework. We support students in developing responsibility and accountability for homework. Aftercare is not a tutorial setting.

Aftercare Info:

Time: 3:15 pm until 6:00 pm Monday-Friday

Cost: \$14.00 per day

Students who are not picked up by 3:15 will be sent to Aftercare, due to the liability of keeping students under adult supervision. Students may stay in Aftercare on a drop-in basis. Parents will come to the office to have their student sent down unless the office is closed then parents can use the provided two-way radio to call for their student.

APPENDIX F: SNACK SUGGESTIONS

Students may bring a snack daily for their break at mid-morning.

The following is a list of items that are appropriate for snack time.

Bagels	Fresh fruit (apple halves, banana, grapes, orange slices, strawberries, etc.)
Breakfast muffins	Graham crackers
Cereal bar	Granola
Cheese	Popcorn
Chips	Pretzels
Crackers (plain, with cheese or peanut butter)	Raw vegetables (carrot sticks, celery sticks, etc.)
Dry cereal without sugar frosting	

We ask that students not bring any of the following for snack time: cake, candy, cookies, or sodas. Students are responsible for bringing their own snacks. If you have any questions about anything on the list, please feel free to call the school office.

Parents should notify the school of any potentially harmful food allergies that students may have.

APPENDIX G: GRADELINK

AOI is proud to partner with Gradelink, a Student Information System. All families are given login information to get into the Parent and Student Portal of Gradelink.

Parents and students can access the school calendar, grades, conduct, performance, teacher comments and upcoming assignments online. Automatic Grade Monitoring allows parents to receive email alerts about their child's current progress.

All Gradelink accounts are protected by a secure login. Your school's data gets backed up and archived off-site

daily. Even if your PC fails or is stolen, data remains safe at Gradelink.

Gradelink also has an app! The Student/Parent app makes it easy to view class and assignment grades, attendance, and more. Download it for free on the [App Store](#), [Google Play](#) and [Amazon Appstore](#).

APPENDIX H: W.A.F.F.L.E.

What does a W.A.F.F.L.E. have to do with AOI? Great question! Does it involve butter and syrup? Not exactly, but we can't promise we'll completely rule it out!

W.A.F.F.L.E. stands for What A Fun Fantastic Learning Experience! We have realized, over time, that our students have extraordinary talents. They may not show up in a typical classroom, but they can shine in so many other arenas that can be important in the present as well as later life. For example, there is a youngster who wants to become a videographer. This middle schooler faithfully films his church service on Sundays and helps to man the technical board that controls the service's sound and slide presentation. Wouldn't it be wonderful if this young man could have some time at school to learn more about filming, what it takes to pursue a career in broadcast media career? What if he were able to shadow and learn from a professional videographer, even though he is only in middle school? This is what we envision as a W.A.F.F.L.E.

So, what does it look like? 90 minutes is dedicated weekly to students pursuing their passions and interests. Teachers will model and teach areas that they have passion for and be the guides for learning versus the "sage on stage." There will be rotations of these classes beginning in September and all students will participate in these rotations. Students will also determine if they want to do a product, service or performance as the culminating event for W.A.F.F.L.E.

We anticipate this learning experience to be exciting, messy, but extremely rewarding. Some benefits of W.A.F.F.L.E. will be increased school attendance, better attitudes and motivation about school, students will see that learning can be fun, positive peer pressure, and differentiated learning will occur naturally. In addition, students will learn by experiences that help build long-term memory and subject mastery. Think about it - don't you remember or learn more from something you do versus something you only read or hear about? AOI students will also be able to apply the basic skills that they are learning in their other classes when they research their interests.

We know that students will also encounter some false starts and possible failure along this unorthodox learning journey. These missteps can be valuable for our students as well. The life lessons learned from minor failures help build grit and perseverance, other traits that our youngsters need to develop. At the end of the semester, though, we predict that our students will have a new dose of confidence and self-esteem because they tackled challenging projects and had products, services, or performances as a result of their hard work. The plan is to have an event in the spring to showcase the students' passion projects.