



Early Light Academy

Parent Handbook

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Early Light Academy

Parent Handbook

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Early Light Academy (ELA). The mission of Early Light Academy is to deliver a high-quality education with a deep, rich and engaging curriculum utilizing effective instructional techniques and emphasizing history, taking our students from the Stone Age to the Space Age, the Information Age and beyond.

The purpose of this document is to help your family understand how we do things here at ELA. Please familiarize yourself with the contents and keep it handy for future reference.

The school website is your best first resource. Please familiarize yourself with it as well. If you have a question, please first review both the website and this document prior to calling the school's main number or posting your question in the parents' Facebook group.

The school website is kept current with staff bios, pictures, lunch menus, and any upcoming activities.

SCHOOL DRESS CODE (UNIFORMS)

https://earlylightacademy.org/dynamic/content/1077/153/dress_code_policy_MxzDp.pdf

Please thoroughly read the entire dress code document linked above and refer to it any time you have a question. If you think something isn't clear, please ask the front office for clarification. If you're notified of a dress code violation, and think it's actually an error, the front office staff can mediate and help sort things out. The goal is to have the dress code enforced in a consistent manner.

TEACHER ASSIGNMENTS

Teacher assignments and Jr. High Schedules are posted in Aspire (SIS) a week before school starts. For more information on Aspire (SIS) please refer to the Aspire (SIS) section.

ASPIRE (SIS)

<https://earlylight.usoe-dcs.org/Login/>

Aspire is a program we use to keep track of attendance and grades. Check this at least once a week to keep up to date with your children's grades and progress throughout the school year. From within Aspire, you can subscribe to an automated weekly email that will give you an overview of your children's progress. You can also use Aspire to track individual assignments. There's a link for Aspire/SIS on the school website. It's user friendly and easy to navigate. Only one username and password is needed per family.

If you are new to ELA or have not set up an account visit earlylightacademy.org and click on the ASPIRE icon at the top of the page. Then click on the blue link that reads [Request a Username](#) you will be prompted to enter a student number and birthdate, you only need to choose ONE student even if you have more than one child attending ELA. Once you have entered the requested information you will be prompted to set up your username and password. If you do not know your student ID, please call the front office.

ELA PARENTS' EMAIL LIST AND SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

If you haven't subscribed to the ELA Parents email list, please do so. This is the school's main avenue of communication with families. Please visit the school website under the mailing list icon and sign up to receive the emails.

We also publish a monthly electronic newsletter during the school year. Parents are notified of new newsletters by email.

If you read the newsletters and all emails from the school carefully and thoroughly, you'll stay well informed. Any questions about the parents email list or the newsletter should be directed to the ELA Office Manager, Megan Watt at mwatt@earlylightacademy.org.

CLASS SCHOOL SUPPLY LISTS

Class school supply lists are done by grade. Parents are asked to supply the items listed on the supply lists for their children's grades. You can find the list for each grade on the school website:

<https://earlylightacademy.org/classroom-supplies>

EMERGENCY RELOCATION PLAN

https://earlylightacademy.org/dynamic/content/1077/153/relocation_plan.pdf

The link above is to the school's emergency relocation plan. Please familiarize yourself with it. There are a few instances where an alternate facility other than ELA facilities will need to be used during or after emergency situations. The designated, off-site alternate facility is the LDS Church located at 11677 Grandville Ave, South Jordan, UT 84009 (phone: 801-253-1583); a key is maintained in the front office by the administrative staff.

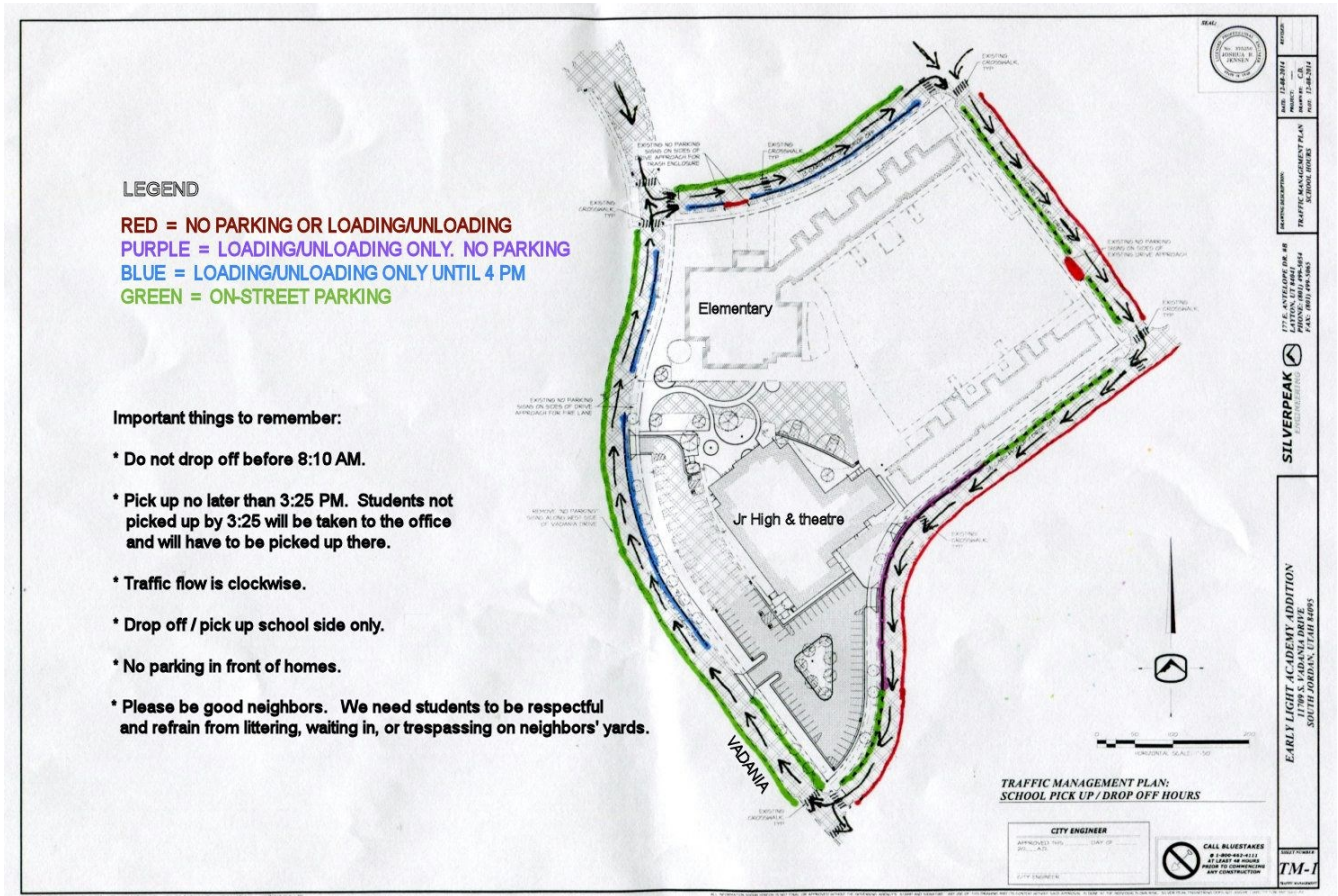
DROP OFF AND PICK UP (CARPOOL)

Please familiarize yourself with the map below. The traffic management plan was devised and approved by South Jordan City to improve congestion and increase the safety of our children. This map is also available on the school website.

For the safety of all of our kids please drop off/pick up on the curbside of the school. Students and parents must use the designated crosswalks. **DO NOT ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO CROSS THE STREET OUTSIDE OF THE CROSSWALK.**

We prefer you do not have your students meet you in the parking lot, we have had a few near misses with kids darting out between cars! If you choose to park in the parking lot, please plan on exiting your car to meet your child on the blacktop or sidewalk.

A few things to remember during carpool times: be respectful of the teachers and aides that are trying to keep your kids safe, be respectful of other drivers, stay off your phone, be idle free if possible, do not double park, use crosswalks, and be patient!



ADULT CHECK-IN PROCEDURE

All visitors (anyone who isn't staff) to the school during school hours must check in at the main office in order to be in compliance with state and federal laws. There is a laptop on the far end of the main office front counter you will use to login as a visitor or a volunteer. There is a small badge printer next to the laptop that will print an orange label badge for you. You must wear this badge while you're there visiting or volunteering.

To log in as a volunteer, you'll need to register first with Help Counter, the website and software we use to keep track of volunteer opportunities and hours. If you've used Help Counter at another school, you should be able to login with that account at www.helpcounterweb.com/volunteer and add Early Light Academy to the list of schools you volunteer at. Please see the Help Counter section for more detailed information.

If you haven't used Help Counter before, you can register as an ELA volunteer at https://www.helpcounterweb.com/welcome/school_apply.php?en=118325447

AFTER SCHOOL CARE AND CLUBS

ELA doesn't provide any type of after school care. If you need this, you'll need to make your own arrangements. School clubs can vary from year to year and may be offered at different times of the school year instead. If you thoroughly read all of the emails sent by the school, you'll stay informed about what clubs are being offered and when.

Clubs are sponsored by teachers and sometimes parents who are willing to spend their personal time to supervise and run a club. If you're willing to volunteer to run or help with a club, it's always appreciated. Please let the front office know if you'd be interested in running or helping with an after school club.

STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES

Instead of the traditional parent teacher conferences you may be used to, ELA does student-led conferences. Three times a year (Fall, Winter, Spring) the students put together a presentation for their parents detailing their current progress and give this presentation to their parents.

Elementary students do this during a 15 minute conference time slot their parents signed up for. Junior high students have an open house style format, with teachers available to conference with parents after the student presents their progress and portfolio. The students also set goals for the next quarter with their parents' input.

Student-led conferences teach the students leadership skills and accountability. The conference times for each quarter are on a Wednesday (late afternoon and evening) and Thursday (all afternoon - school gets out at 12:35 on these Thursdays). The dates are all listed on the calendar on the school website.

HISTORY FAIR

The history fair happens in the Spring, usually late May. History, our chosen curricular emphasis, fosters a culture of inquiry-based study and the history fair is intended to be the culmination of our major history projects for the year. Students participate in the fair by telling about historic events, people, and time periods through art projects, essays, food, song and dance, and a "wax museum". The history fair is in the evening and is a community event open to any family and friends you'd like to invite to attend.

FINE ARTS PROGRAMS

Tanner Dance

ELA is fortunate to be able to partner with Tanner Dance at the University of Utah to bring their interpretive dance program to our 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade classes. Each class in these grades gets

the opportunity to work with a Tanner Dance artist to create their own interpretive dance. Parents are invited to a performance when each group of classes are done with their instruction.

Great Artist Program

ELA is fortunate to be able to provide The Great Artist program for our K-6 grade students. The Great Artist Program uses simple and proven methods to teach students the foundations of how to draw. The program uses the great artists of the past to inspire and teach the great artists of the future. Students not only learn about great artists, they are given the skills and confidence to be a great artist.

Additional Arts Curriculum

The Arts programs for 1st and 5th grade are taught by University of Utah theatre students. They will be focusing on Drama and/or movement depending on collaboration with the classroom teacher. These are both a side-by-side model with the teachers and artists working together to enhance curriculum through art. 6th grade also completes a stop motion film project each year with a team of students from The U of U. The artists usually works with the classes for a 6 week span of time with an "informance" at the end.

Teaching children art isn't simply for sharpening creative skills. Children who participate in art education improve in:

- problem solving and critical thinking
- judging qualitative relationships
- appreciating how small differences can have large effects
- celebrating multiple perspectives

Our fine arts programs help cultivate these skills in our students. Parents can volunteer to help teach the Great Artist program. Please let the front office know if you're interested.

ELA PEAK

You're going to hear PEAK mentioned a lot. ELA PEAK is the school PTO (parent teacher organization). It's similar to the PTA, but we are our own separate entity as a PTO. In the Fall of 2014 we acquired 501(C)3 status for our organization. This means that any cash or goods you donate to PEAK are tax deductible.

The Early Light Academy Parents & Educators Advancing Knowledge (ELA PEAK) has been established to organize volunteers to fulfill the mission and vision of ELA, implement extracurricular activities, act as liaison between Early Light Academy and ELA Board of Directors, Parents, and ELA Students, and to raise funds to support these goals.

PEAK is the primary funding behind the Tanner Dance program & the Great Artist program. PEAK also funds our school's portion of the Inspirations art contest - the charter school version of Reflections - so there are no entry costs to students. We provide refreshments for 9th grade promotion, supplement the 9th grade La Caille trip, help fund things like Field Day, Red Ribbon Week, Teacher Appreciation week, athletics, Splore, science fair, field trips, meals for teachers during student-led conference days.

We set aside money to help teachers with supplies and things needed for their classrooms. We've also donated several thousand dollars thus far to help with needs the school has in relation to the expansion. When you participate in our fundraisers and/or donate your time, goods, or money to us in other ways, you're helping to make ELA a better place.

We're always in need of parent volunteers for PEAK. *Many hands make light work.* The more help we can get in regards to man hours, the more good we can do for the school. Besides the things mentioned in the Volunteer Hours section below, look for a display of specific ways you can get involved and help at Back To School night. You can also email volunteer@earlylightacademy.org and let us know you'd like to get involved and what types of things you're interested in helping with.

VOLUNTEER HOURS

Each ELA family agrees to contribute a minimum of 35 volunteer hours to ELA each school year when they accept or renew their students' enrollment at ELA. Volunteers are very important to keep our school running smoothly and to help give the students the best educational experience possible. Notifications of upcoming volunteer opportunities will be sent out through email to the parents email list and may also be posted in the ELA Parents Facebook group.

You can claim volunteer hours for any type of service you do for the school, including childcare for another parent so they can go volunteer at the school or go on a field trip. When you spend time preparing food for the PEAK Hospitality committee sponsored staff meals and/or treats, you can count that time as well. Additionally, every \$10 you spend on donated food or items to the school counts as one volunteer hour (this does not include the beginning of the year class room supplies.) You can also "buy" volunteer hours at the rate of \$10 per volunteer hour if you need to.

Background Checks

Early Light Academy requires a background check to be completed for all employees and volunteers that work unsupervised with children. You can still volunteer at school without a background check as long as you're supervised. You just can't be alone with any of the students without a background check on file. This includes volunteering with small groups in a classroom or breakout room as well as chaperoning field trips.

At the beginning of the school year ELA will arrange for Live Scan to come and provide the background check service at the school. The cost is between \$20-\$30 to complete the process and the background check is valid while your child is attending the school. Sometimes public school districts are provided with funding to cover background checks for volunteers, but most charter schools don't have this funding and must pass this cost on to their volunteers. Please contact the front office for more information on the date that Live Scan will be at the ELA. If you have missed the date that Live Scan was at the school or need it before they come, then contact the front office and they can give you a form which you can take to an approved Live Scan location.

Although you may have had a background check completed for another organization, you will need to have an ELA specific background check completed because organizations cannot share background

information. If you are unsure if you have a valid background check on file with ELA, please contact the office after the office opens in August for confirmation.

Help Counter

We use a product called Help Counter to manage volunteers and volunteer opportunities. If you've used Help Counter at another school, you can login and add Early Light Academy to your list of schools.

Help Counter made some changes in July 2015. If you haven't already, you'll now need to link your email address to a user ID of your creation. Each parent can now have their own user ID even if they share an email address.

If you haven't used Help Counter before, you can register as an ELA volunteer at https://www.helpcounterweb.com/welcome/school_apply.php?en=118325447.

Once you're registered, you can either log your volunteer hours through www.helpcounterweb.com/volunteer, or you can use the Help Counter app on the Facebook website at <https://apps.facebook.com/helpcounter/>.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook Group: Early Light Academy Parents.

This is a closed group only for the parents of children currently enrolled in Early Light Academy as well as staff. This group is used for questions, advice, posting thank you's, announcements for volunteer opportunities, pictures, and getting to know other parents and teachers at ELA. The group is moderated by PEAK leadership and ELA administration and is for school purposes only. It's not to be used for free advertising for your business.

Twitter: ELA has two Twitter accounts with two different purposes.

@ELA_PEAK - announcements and reminders from PEAK. Account managed by PEAK.

@ELADaybreak - generalized announcements from ELA. Account managed by the jr high journalism class.

Instagram: ELADaybreak - Photos of school happenings. Account managed by the jr. high journalism class.

Bloomz: ELA faculty will be using Bloomz (available on the web at Bloomz.net and apps for both Android and iOS) as a primary school communication tool. Please create an account in Bloomz and ask for an access code from teacher(s) so you can join their classes and stay informed/engaged.

ELA SPIRIT T-SHIRTS AND FLEECE HOODIES

PEAK sells school t-shirts and fleece hoodies. They have sample shirts so you can see how they're sized before you order.

Shirts and hoodies are ordered online through French Toast. They can only be ordered during open campaign times. The open campaign dates are at the beginning of the school year and then again in November/December. The link for our campaign is <http://earlylightacademy.epluno.com/>

Each year the shirt/hoodie design and color changes. T-shirts are \$10, and hoodies are \$25. Contact PEAK if you have any questions.

FRIDAY SPIRIT DAY

Every Friday is “spirit day.” Participation in spirit day is optional. Students wanting to participate may wear a school t-shirt or sweatshirt and/or denim bottoms instead of standard uniform dress. Shirts and jeans must be free of stains and tears. Denim pants must be blue and in good condition. No holes, tears, stains, glitter, or markings.

PEAK sells school t-shirts and fleece hoodies that can be worn on spirit days. School club or Tanner Dance t-shirts may also be worn on Friday spirit day. Students may also wear t-shirts and sweatshirts with the embroidered school logo from vendors that are able to apply the authorized school logo.

BOX TOPS

PEAK collects Box Tops For Education as one of its ongoing fundraisers. A list of products that have the clip able Box Tops is here: <http://www.boxtops4education.com/participating-products>

The school has a box tops contest between classes once a year, usually in autumn. The class that brings in the most box tops wins a prize.

Box tops can also be used to purchase a wristband for the once a month Dress Down Friday. 20 NON-EXPIRED Box Tops turned in during a month earns one wristband for that month’s Dress Down day.

Please check the expiration dates on the box tops before sending them to school. Twice a year the school receives a check from BoxTops which is used for your children’s education. If the Box Top is expired the company will not accept it and PEAK will not receive money from it.

The Box Tops committee appreciates it when you trim your box tops along the perforated lines before turning them in to the school. The company we send the collected box tops to requires the box tops to be trimmed along the perforated lines in order to be accepted. Any Box Tops turned in to us that aren’t already trimmed have to be trimmed by the Box Tops committee before they can be submitted for payment.

DRESS DOWN FRIDAYS

The last Friday of the month that there is school is designated as Dress Down Friday. “Dress Down” means that students may wear regular clothes to school that day, instead of the standard uniform or regular Friday spirit dress. Tops and bottoms need to be in good condition, appropriate for school (no vulgar phrases/images), and free of holes, tears, and stains.

Dress Down Friday is a PEAK fundraiser and participation is optional. A student who wants to participate in Dress Down Friday may purchase a wristband good for that month from PEAK for \$2 or by turning in 20 NON-EXPIRED Box Tops during that month. You can also turn in a combination of Box Tops and money. One Box Top is worth 10 cents. There are 10 PEAK Dress Down Fridays per school year.

On Dress Down Friday's a representative from PEAK will be at the school to collect your money/Box Tops and will give you your wrist band.

Wristbands for the entire school year can be purchased for \$20 or 200 box tops per student (or a combination of the two) at Back To School night. Anyone who purchases the \$20 / 200 NON-EXPIRED Box Tops Free Dress wristbands for the school year at Back To School night will also receive a \$5 gift card for the school book fair. This is per student, so if you purchase the yearly wristbands for 3 students (\$60), you'll get three \$5 gift cards for the school book fair.

If you lose any of your yearly wristbands or forget to send them to school with your kids on Dress Down Day, you can purchase replacement wristbands for \$1 each from PEAK representatives before school in the hall in front of the main office on Dress Down Friday.

SCHOOL CATERED LUNCH

ELA does not have a kitchen therefore can't prepare hot lunches here on campus. We will be offering a catered lunch option on Mondays through Wednesdays. Lunch can only be ordered in advance via our website. Being that we use a third party vendor you must place your order the week beforehand, purchasing lunch at school or day of is NOT an option. Lunch includes the entrée, a milk or Capri Sun, and the fresh fruit and veggie bar. The cost for lunch is \$3.60 for students 1st through 6th and \$3.75 for students 7th-9th. ELA does not participate in the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch program. You will be able to order a month at a time but your order must be submitted by Monday night at midnight for the following week. Lunches are non-refundable unless they are cancelled the week before prior to the Monday at midnight deadline.

Additional white and chocolate milk and Capri Sun will be available for purchase a la carte in the cafeteria Monday through Wednesday for \$.50 each. This is the only money we will accept on campus day of.

PIZZA THURSDAY

Pizza Thursday is another PEAK fundraiser. Parents can order slices of cheese and/or pepperoni pizza online for their students' Thursday lunch for \$1.25 per slice. The vendor we currently use is Little Ceasars. Drinks are not included in Pizza Thursday and can't be purchased at the school that day.

Your student will not be able to buy pizza "on the spot" on Thursday's. All orders must be purchased in advance online by 11:59 PM on the Monday evening before the Thursday you want your student(s) to have pizza. You may order for multiple weeks at a time instead of just one.

Because it's a fundraiser, there are no refunds. If you know your child will be on a field trip or absent, you can cancel 24 hours before, but you'll get a credit to apply to a future purchase, not a refund.

How to order

The link to order pizza slices is <http://earlylightacademy.h1.hotlunchonline.net/>

You'll have to set up an account. Hot Lunch Online, the website we use to take the pizza orders, charges a very small transaction fee based on the dollar amount you spend. This fee is added on to your total at checkout.

Volunteer opportunity

We need parent volunteers to help serve pizza on Thursday's from about 10:30 AM until around 12:30 PM.

You can sign up in Help Counter to help with Pizza Thursday. The time you spend serving pizza counts toward fulfilling your family's 35 hour minimum volunteering quota.

RETAIL AFFILIATE LINKS AND PASSIVE FUNDRAISING <http://tinyurl.com/ncagadd>

The above link contains affiliate links for passive fundraising for the school. What this means is that if you start your online shopping for any of these merchants by clicking the link in the document, the school will get a small portion of your purchase. We currently have affiliate status with Amazon, Walmart, Crayola, French Toast, and Discount School Supply.

Target Red Card

Target recently discontinued their program supporting schools with linked red card accounts. Thank you for your previous support for this program.

Land's End

If you like to buy uniform items from Land's End, you can use preferred school code 900133711 when you purchase online, over the phone, or through a standard mail-in catalog order and ELA will receive a small percentage of your purchase.

ELEMENTARY ROOM PARENTS

Each elementary classroom has one or two room parents. If you're interested in being a room parent, you will volunteer for your own child's teacher. Room parents are there to assist and serve the teachers by organizing and running class parties, and decorating your teacher's classroom door for red ribbon week, college week, and teacher appreciation week.

We also expect room parents to organize activities to help the class show appreciation for their teacher during teacher appreciation week. Room parents will be given a packet in September that details their responsibilities and offers suggestions for how to accomplish them.

BOOK FAIRS

ELA hosts 3 Scholastic book fairs during the school year. ELA usually tries to hold book fairs in September, November and then again in April. The book fairs are held in the library in the elementary building.

HALLOWEEN

If Halloween falls on a school day, students may dress up as a favorite book character or a historical figure. This allows the kids to dress up while keeping the focus educational. No masks or weapons are allowed and modest dress code standards still apply. Based on the wellness policy at ELA, no candy or edible treats can be shared or distributed among students.

JUNIOR HIGH

The rest of this document pertains only to the junior high.

Orange Polo Shirts

Junior high students may wear orange polo shirts to school in addition to the standard light blue, navy blue, and white shirts. The orange polos are only for the junior high students and must be bought from the school office. They are \$12 each. No other brand or color of orange polo shirt is allowed.

Junior High Pride Room Parents

The junior high needs parental support similar to that of elementary room parents for Teacher Appreciation Week the first week of May, teachers' birthdays, and other events throughout the school year. Since the students have a variety of teachers throughout the day, the room parent support will center around the "Pride" classes. If you're interested in becoming a Pride room parent, please sign up at Back To School night or email PEAK at peak@earlylightacademy.org.