

THE DON SMITH LEARNING ACADEMY  
STUDENT HANDBOOK  
**2011-2012**

Don Smith Learning Academy  
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Beaver Dam Unified School District Mission  
**Learning for a Lifetime**

Beaver Dam Unified School District Vision  
**All Beaver Dam Students will excel in all academic areas, will develop social skills, demonstrate enthusiasm for life long learning, be of good character, and be a contributing member of society.**

Don Smith Learning Academy Mission

**To provide students with a uniquely supportive environment which will enhance their employability, and maximize their academic and social growth.**

Don Smith Learning Academy Vision

**By providing a safe learning environment that is conducive to learning; our students will find academic success and develop social & behavioral skills such as respect, responsibility, and integrity in order to become contributing members of society.**

Don Smith Learning Academy Themes

**Respect • Responsibility • Integrity  
Academic Success**

## School Overview

**The Don Smith Learning Academy is based upon the premise that all students can learn. All individuals are unique and thus every student learns best in different ways and different environments.**

The Don Smith Learning Academy provides a caring, supportive environment where learners who were unsuccessful in a traditional setting will be able to develop a course of study/training that fits their learning style. Students will collaborate with the Don Smith Learning Academy staff to map their individual educational and employment goals.

The Don Smith Learning Academy promotes the personal, social, academic, and career development of its students by providing alternative curricular methods, materials, and classroom environment. The learning context is flexible and focuses on real-life problem solving, a practical application of learning, and preparing students for the next stage of their lives.

The Don Smith Learning Academy targets students of all ability levels who; for a host of reasons, have exhibited a high rate of failure, behavior problems, low attendance, missed their graduation, or exited school.

The Goals of the Don Smith Learning Academy are:

- Students will work towards completing a successful school-to-work transition.
- Students will participate in career exploration, understand the concept of employability, and apply those skills to real life situations.
- Students will participate in wellness activities which enhance self-esteem and physical fitness.
- Students will use a variety of technological tools to express themselves.
- Students will actively participate in planning their educational experience.
- Students will develop a wide range of intelligences directed towards exploration and knowledge of the world
- Students will earn a certificate of accomplishment (i.e. a diploma)
- Students will develop inter/intra personal skills and apply them to real life situations.

## Don Smith Learning Academy Staff

Principal	.....	Ms. Lins
Secretary	.....	Ms. Zeman
High School Teachers	.....	Mrs. Henkel
	.....	Ms. Mueller
	.....	Ms. Polka
	.....	Mrs. Sorenson
Middle School Teacher	.....	Ms. Mueller
Art Teacher	.....	Ms. Gannon
Tech Ed Teacher	.....	Mrs. Gosdeck
SAPAR Teacher	.....	Ms. McIntyre
School Counselor	.....	Ms. Garner
School Nurse	.....	Ms. Chitko
School Psychologist	.....	Ms. Pivonka
School Social Worker	.....	Ms. Kelroy-Skelton
School Resource Officer/Police Liason Officer	.....	Sgt. Mosher
ATODA/SAP Coordinator	.....	Mrs. Jill Sarnow
Infant Lab/Tutors	.....	Ms. Beske
	.....	Ms. Grebel
	.....	Ms. Schroeder
Tutors	.....	Ms. Cromheecke
	.....	Ms. Griffith
Custodian	.....	Mr. Goss

# Don Smith Learning Academy Discipline Program

## Behavior Expectations

A. All students are expected to:

### **Be Respectful**

- Address people by their name
- Be alert and ready to learn
- Be tactful and know when to stop an action
- Know when actions / opinions become harassment
- Maintain personal space
- Accept differences in ideas, opinions, and identities
- Allow others to finish their thoughts before making comments
- Use appropriate language
- Be clean and sober
- Follow directions from staff
- Listen when someone is speaking
- Treat / use property appropriately

### **Be Responsible**

- Accept consequences for their actions
- Be present and on time
- Follow classroom and school rules/policies
- Use the Internet, computers, and electronic devices in a school-approved manner
- Ask for help when needed
- Clean up after themselves
- Stay on assigned tasks

### **Have Integrity**

- Act kind & considerate
- Be tolerant & accepting of others
- Do the right thing when no one is watching
- Be honest with themselves & others
- Be trustworthy & sincere

B. Behaviors that violate the expectations of respect, responsibility, and integrity include; but are not limited to:

- Dishonesty
- Disruptions
- Dress code violations
- Electronic device use
- Lateness
- Put-downs / teasing
- Refusing to work
- Throwing items
- Tone / attitude

C. After a student has had two total incidences of a lack of respect, responsibility, or integrity a staff member will hold a quick conference with the student. In this conference the student will be notified of the consequence of a third violation and given a choice of a way to re-focus.

D. After a third violation, the student receives the consequence told to them and is to take a temporary break out of the classroom in an assigned area for a set amount of time (typically 15-20 minutes). The student has a behavior reflection form to complete at this time.

E. When the student returns to class, they are expected to have no further violations / issues. If they do, they will be assigned to a different work area for the remainder of the day. The student's parents will be contacted and notified of any further disciplinary action resulting from the violations.

## Discipline Consequences

These discipline consequences are in place not to punish students but to provide students with a chance to learn from their behaviors and to help ensure a school environment that is conducive to learning.

Student behaviors not in accordance with the expectations and policies of this handbook will result in, but are not limited to, the following discipline consequences and will be in accordance with school board policy:

### **Temporary Removal from the Classroom**

- The student is required to leave the classroom and go to an assigned area to rethink their behavior or diffuse a situation. The student is expected to return to class after a specific task or amount of time is complete.

### **Conference with the Principal**

- The student is asked to meet with the principal to discuss a specific behavioral situation. The student is expected to return to class after a specific task or amount of time is complete and follow very clear behavior expectations upon their return. The student's parent may be called in to participate in this conference.

### **Closed Campus**

- **Repeated behavior violations may result in loss of open campus for duration determined by principal/interim principal.**

### **In-School Suspension**

- The student is required to work in an assigned area for the duration of the suspension. The student is not allowed to sleep or leave the suspension room without permission and must comply with the requests of the suspension supervisor. The student will have specific academic or behavioral assignments they will need to complete as part of the suspension.

### **Out-of-School Suspension**

- The student is not allowed in school or on school property during the duration of the suspension. The student is required to complete any work missed while suspended.

**Any criminal behaviors will be directed to the Beaver Dam Police Department**

## Don Smith Learning Academy Attendance Policy

### Attendance

It is the belief of the staff at Don Smith Learning Academy that one of the keys to success in school is regular attendance. The habits we build now are the habits of a lifetime.

Maintaining at least an 85% attendance rate is one of the requirements of the Don Smith Learning Academy program. That means students are allowed a maximum of 5 absences per quarter (medically excused absences do not count towards this total). Any absences beyond that amount will need to be made up prior to graduation.

1. When a student is absent, it is his/her responsibility to find out what material was missed and to complete makeup work as required by the teacher. All missed work must be made up before credit will be given.
2. If a student leaves school without permission during the school day, it will be considered an unexcused absence. The student will need to meet with the principal upon their return to school to explain the reason they left. A detention or suspension may be given as a consequence for a student leaving school without permission.
3. Once a student's attendance rate drops below the 85% requirement, the following will take place:
  - A. The principal will meet with the student to complete an attendance agreement in which the student explains how and when they will make up their absences. Parents will be notified of the results of this meeting.
  - B. If attendance does not improve after the initial attendance agreement, a meeting will be set up with the student, parent, and principal to create another attendance agreement detailing how absences will be made up and the consequences if that agreement is not followed.
  - C. If attendance still does not improve, truancy may be filed and/or the student may be dismissed from the Don Smith Learning Academy program.

## Don Smith Learning Academy Tardiness Policy

## Tardiness

When a student comes into class late they disrupt the teaching and learning going on in the classroom. The staff at the Don Smith Learning Academy believes that students need to learn the habit of arriving on time. This will benefit students in their educational and employment future.

1. A student is considered tardy if they are not in their classroom and ready to learn at the time their class is scheduled to start.
2. Each time a student is tardy, they are required to make up 15-30 minutes of time.
3. If a student is more than 30 minutes late, they are considered absent for the day.
4. Students that accumulate 5 or more tardies will receive a detention.
5. When a student's tardiness becomes excessive or habitual, the following steps will be taken:
  - A. The classroom teacher will share their concern with the student and principal.
  - B. If the student continues to be habitually tardy, the principal will discuss the tardiness issue with the student and student's parent.
  - C. The student and parent will be notified that each following time the student is tardy they will be assigned to work in a separate area until their class's first lesson is over.
  - D. While in this separate area students will be working on required academic activities related to (but not necessarily the same as) the regular classroom coursework.
  - E. Students who choose not to work may face further disciplinary consequences.
  - F. This process will continue until the student has shown they can consistently be to class on time.

## Don Smith Learning Academy Dress Code

### Dress Code

The Don Smith Learning Academy needs to promote a safe environment which is conducive to learning and void of distractions. In order to do so, the following dress code is in effect.

Student dress and grooming must be in compliance with school board policy 443.1.

In addition, the Don Smith Learning Academy will not allow:

1. Visible cleavage (chest or rear-end), belly buttons (midriff), or underwear showing.
2. Any clothing/jewelry with inappropriate (profane, vulgar, sexually explicit/suggestive, racially/ethnically offensive, alcohol, tobacco/drug, or gang related) sayings, slogans, or graphics.
3. Any adornments (chains, spiked neck collars, etc.) that could be considered potentially dangerous.
4. Sun glasses, hats, hoods, bandanas or other items covering the head or face, **or on person.**
5. Backpacks, purses, and coats in classrooms or the community room during school hours. Students need to leave these items in their locker or other assigned area during the school day.

Violation of this policy will result in the following actions:

- A. The student will be asked by their teacher or other staff member to change their inappropriate attire by either removing or covering up the offensive article.
- B. If the student refuses to remove / cover up the item or repeatedly violates the dress policy, the principal and student's parent will be notified of the matter.
- C. Consistent non-compliance with the dress code may result in the student be sent home and receiving an unexcused absence for the day, as well as further disciplinary action.

# Don Smith Learning Academy Electronic Devices Policy

## Cell Phones

Students' use of cell phones in school is a troublesome issue. When a student is calling, texting, or checking their phone in class they are not concentrating on learning and are often distracting other students from learning as well. As a result the Don Smith Learning Academy cell phone policy states:

1. Student cell phones should not be seen, heard, or used (even as music players) at any time during school hours or school activities. **Exceptions to this rule include: before and after school, during breaks and lunch. These exceptions are at the discretion of the DSLA staff and administration and may be changed or terminated due to violations of this privilege.**
2. If a staff member sees/hears a student's phone or sees/hears a student using their phone, the student will be asked to give the phone to a staff member for the remainder of the day.
  - A. Students that refuse to give up their phone will be referred to the principal.
  - B. Students that refuse to give the principal the phone or refuse to meet with the principal will receive a detention or In School Suspension.
3. If a student needs to use a phone during school hours, they should ask their teacher. The teacher may let them use the classroom phone.

## Music Players

1. The only acceptable music files are those stored on a CD, flash drive, or MP3 player. Cell phones are not allowed to be used as music players.
2. Music must be listened to through headphones and kept at a level so only the individual wearing the headphones can hear it. Students need to bring their own headphones; headphones should not be shared among students.
3. It is up to individual teachers to determine if/when students may listen to music during class work time.
4. Music devices and headphones should be off during classroom instruction and discussion activities.
5. Students are not allowed to use the internet to search for / listen to music.

## Other Electronic Devices

- Use of other electronic devices such as, but not limited to, cameras and recording equipment are not allowed anytime during school hours or school activities unless special permission has been given by the classroom teacher.

Violations of the music player or other electronic devices policies will follow the same disciplinary procedures as outlined in the cell phone use policy.

## Don Smith Learning Academy Harassment / Bullying Policy

### Harassment

The staff at the Don Smith Learning Academy believes that the atmosphere within which you learn is an important factor in how well you learn. To promote a productive learning environment we must require an atmosphere which is respectful of individual differences, so everyone can learn in a non-threatening setting.

Harassment / Bullying can be, but is not limited to:

- Written, verbal, or physical threats of harm against individuals or their property.
- Verbal or written attacks on an individual or group based on race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, background, religious beliefs, etc.
- Words, actions, gestures, or writing that insults or demeans any individual or group.

Any student or staff member who believes they are being harassed may file a report with any staff member of the Don Smith Learning Academy. The procedures, guidelines, and consequences for these complaints will be in compliance with school board policy 411.1.

The principal will investigate all harassment complaints.

1. Students engaging in and victimized by harassing / bullying behaviors will meet with the principal to determine an acceptable resolution to the matter.
2. The resolution may involve, but is not limited to, enrollment in the Restorative Justice program, suspension, legal action, or expulsion.
3. Failure to comply with the agreed upon harassment resolution; or continued harassing / bullying behaviors will result in further consequences and possibly dismissal from the Don Smith Learning Academy.

## Don Smith Learning Academy Tobacco-Alcohol-Drug Policy

If you feel that you have a problem with drugs / alcohol or if someone close to you has a substance abuse problem, there are many people on our staff that can help.

**In order to assure the best possible employability outcome for DSLA students, no smoking or loitering is permitted on school grounds OR in front of/near the DSLA or the ESC buildings between the hours of 8AM-6:30PM.**

### Tobacco

- Pursuant to City of Beaver Dam Ordinance 2-93 and Wisconsin State Statute 48.983, no minor may possess or use any cigarette or tobacco products. Any minor while on school premises, near school premises, or under the school's jurisdiction, who possesses cigarettes or tobacco products will have such products confiscated and may be referred to the police.
- The Don Smith Learning Academy prohibits all students from using any tobacco product while on school property (including the school parking lot) and during school activities (including community service and field trips). The school also strongly discourages students from loitering/smoking on our neighbors' property.

### Alcohol & Other Drugs

- Students shall not consume, deliver, be under the influence of, or have in their possession alcoholic beverages or controlled substances while in school, on school property, or while attending a school activity.
- In the event that a student sells, possesses, deals in, or delivers drugs (including prescription medications not prescribed for the individual) on school property or while attending a school activity, disciplinary action of a suspension and/or expulsion will occur. In situations where there are violations of the law, the matter will be referred to the police.

### Medications

- All medication (both prescription and over the counter) must be kept with the school secretary, in its original container with the pharmacy / manufacturer's complete label identifying the medication, dosage directions, and schedule. It must also be accompanied with parental permission for dispersal.

## Don Smith Learning Academy Weapons Policy

### Weapons

The Don Smith Learning Academy follows the school board policy listed below.

#### **Possession or Use of Weapons (443.6)**

- A. The Beaver Dam Unified School District is committed to maintaining a positive, safe, secure learning and work environment. In striving to attain such an environment, the District takes the position of **no tolerance for weapons** in any school facility, on any school grounds, or in a school zone as defined by State Statutes, on school buses, or at any school-sponsored function. Exceptions to this policy are weapons under the control of a law enforcement official, or those used for educational purposes, authorized in advance by the building principal or his/her designee.
- B. **A dangerous weapon is** defined in State Statutes and may include **any object which, by the manner in which it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting harm** or could pretend to be capable of inflicting bodily harm or endangering the health and safety of students or staff. Ammunition and explosives are included in the weapons category.
- C. Weapons or facsimile firearms confiscated from a student shall be reported to the student's parents/guardians and to law enforcement authorities, and students will be subject to disciplinary measures which may include immediate suspension and referral to the Board of Education for possible expulsion from school.
- D. Employees violating this policy shall be disciplined in accordance with employee policies and bargaining agreements and shall be referred to law enforcement officials for prosecution.
- E. Any other person violating this policy shall be referred to law enforcement officials for prosecution.
- F. This policy shall be published annually in all district student and staff handbooks.

# Don Smith Learning Academy Technology Use Policy

## Computer Use

The computers in the Don Smith Learning Academy are for educational purposes; use of them is a privilege, not a right. In order to retain the privilege of using school computers, students must comply with this policy.

Computers use must be in compliance with school board policy 361.2. In addition, the Don Smith Learning Academy computer use policy states:

1. All users are responsible for appropriate behavior on computers and the Internet, just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. All District and school rules for behavior and communications for all individuals apply, including harassment policies.
2. All communications, documents, files, and Internet histories are public in nature. Users should not expect any use of District computers to be private. Administrators may review files and communications at any time.
3. School computers / Internet are not to be used to search for music files / videos. Students may only listen to music stored on a CD, flash drive, or MP3 player (not cell phones that have MP3 capability).
4. Irresponsible and unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to:
  - A. Sending, displaying, or distributing offensive / obscene material
  - B. Harassing, insulting, or attacking others
  - C. Damaging computers, systems, or networks
  - D. Violating federal, state and local laws including, copyright laws
  - E. Using another person's password
  - F. Trespassing in / destroying another individual's folders, work, or files
  - G. Accessing inappropriate, obscene, or illegal sources
  - H. Engaging in intentional practices that threaten the network
  - I. Displaying or accessing any kind of sexually explicit image/document
  - J. Other behaviors in violation of district policy or regulations.

Violation of this policy will result in, but is not limited to, the following actions:

- Loss of computer use / access for a set period of time
- Detention / suspension
- Police involvement / charges filed
- Other disciplinary procedures as stated under other policies in this handbook and school board policy 361.2.

# Don Smith Learning Academy Locker Use Policy

## Locker Use

The locker assigned to each student is the property of the School District. At no time does the District relinquish exclusive control of such lockers. Lockers are provided for the convenience of students for the storage of school supplies and necessary personal possessions. No student shall use the locker for any other purpose.

- A. Students should expect periodic general inspections of lockers by school officials at any time for any reason, without notice, without consent, and without a warrant. The search may be conducted by the district administrator, building principal, police-school liaison officer, or other district employee designated by the district administrator or building principal.
- B. Any unauthorized item found in the locker may be removed. Items removed from the locker may be retained for disciplinary proceedings or turned over to law enforcement officials. Adult students or the parent/guardian of a minor shall be notified of the items removed from the locker and turned over to law enforcement officials.
- C. The use of trained drug-sniffing dogs may be used when and at such intervals deemed appropriate, at the discretion of the district administrator or their designee. The use of drug-sniffing dogs shall be approved and overseen by the school principal or their designee. Under normal circumstances, the use of the dogs shall be limited to sniffing students' lockers, possessions (such as backpacks or jackets, when removed), or cars in the parking lot of the school. Dogs shall be used for sniffing drugs only under the supervision, and at the request, of the school principal or their designee. Use of drug sniffing dogs is not intended to constitute a police search.
- D. In order to protect the safety and well being of students and staff; backpacks, purses, and coats will not be allowed in the classroom or community room during school hours. Students must leave these items in their assigned locker or other designated area.
- E. The school district is not responsible for thefts of books or personal items from student lockers. Lockers should be emptied at the end of the year.

## Don Smith Learning Academy Parking Lot Use Policy

### Parking Lot

All student vehicles must have a registration form on file in the Don Smith Learning Academy office. **The first two rows in the parking lot are reserved for staff.**

- A. Students who display reckless/unsafe driving behaviors may lose their privilege to park in the school lot. In addition reckless/unsafe driving activities may be referred to the police.
- B. Individuals not enrolled in the Don Smith Learning Academy are not allowed to meet or congregate on Don Smith Learning Academy property.
- C. Students are not allowed to sit in vehicles during school hours.
- D. Individuals found loitering on Don Smith Learning Academy property (including in parked cars in the parking lot) during school hours may be referred to the police for loitering as defined by City Ordinance 2-95.
- E. The Beaver Dam Unified School District and Don Smith Learning Academy are not responsible for items missing or stolen from vehicles in the school parking lot.
- F. Any vehicles parked on school grounds may be searched by designated school district personnel at any time without consent. There is no expectation of privacy when motor vehicles are parked on school grounds.
- G. The entire parking lot is school property. As such, all rules/guidelines stated in this handbook and school board policy apply to the parking lot area.

## Don Smith Learning Academy Academic Dishonesty Policy

The Don Smith Learning Academy considers academic dishonesty a serious offense. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, copying answers, plagiarism, and falsifying work in others manners.

Students at the Don Smith Learning Academy will receive extra time and assistance on their schoolwork based upon their individual needs. As a result they should not feel the need for any sort of academic dishonesty. Any student struggling with an assignment or the work load should discuss their needs with their teacher or the principal.

If a student commits or participates in an act of academic dishonesty, the follow steps may be taken.

- A. The teacher and principal will meet to discuss the incident with the student
- B. Any work completed from an act of academic dishonesty will need to be re-done on the student's own time. The school will have the discretion to choose the new activity to complete.

In the case of large scale or repeated acts of academic dishonesty, parents will be contacts, and competency credits may be lost.