



Parent Handbook

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Mission Statement

IDEA Lab Kids is a S.T.E.A.M. themed (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) enrichment educational center that offers unique and cutting-edge classes, summer camps, workshops, after school programs, and tutoring services. Our mission is to equip students with a diverse and solid educational and social foundation so that they are prepared to lead in a rapidly changing global society. We have an engaging, proprietary curriculum that is interdisciplinary, such as drone engineering, 3-D Printing, Culinary Arts, Augmented Reality, Coding, Science Investigation, Robotics, and Entrepreneurship. Our students not only learn fascinating concepts, we also focus on developing crucial life skills: critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, confidence, and perseverance. We exist to strengthen our community by serving our families and investing in future leaders and innovators.

Curriculum and Philosophy

Some of the best years of our lives are spent in our childhood, creating memories, making friends and trying new things. As working adults in a fast-paced society, we sometimes forget just how precious and fleeting those years are. This is why we are here!

Our curriculum reflects the belief that students need to be well-rounded learners who understand how subject areas are integrated and interdependent. We believe kids learn best by doing, talking, collaborating, asking questions, testing out their questions, making mistakes, persevering through letdowns, and celebrating new learning. We value good questions more than right answers. That is why **IDEA stands for: Imagine, Discover, Explore, and Achieve!**

We understand that every child is different, developing at his or her own pace, each with unique interests and distinct likes and dislikes. We respect this individuality and our programs reflect this sensitivity to each child's social/emotional, intellectual and physical strengths. We incorporate activities and educational materials that are age appropriate for each developmental stage. We know that during a child's early years, the brain makes the most connections than at any other time in their lives. Young children need a variety of social interactions, opportunities to explore, experience unique textures, tastes, and smells, and learn how to manipulate and traverse different learning situations and environments. Childhood is the best opportunity for kids to develop essential brain connections they need to be healthy, capable, and successful adults.

Our time-tested, research-supported, educational programs incorporate a variety of engaging and enriching activities in all the important developmental areas that will benefit children throughout their lives.

Communication with Parents

We appreciate the trust that you place in Idea Lab when you leave your child with us. We want to make that time worry-free for you, and open communication is an important part of our partnership. We want you to be confident that we will contact you if there are any significant events in your child's day. Should a situation arise, we'll call to tell you what happened, how we handled it, and how we will prevent or address the situation in the future. Depending on the situation, we may also complete an Incident Report that we will also review with you at pick-up. At Idea Lab, you have our assurance that we will always call if anything is amiss, and that if we don't call, everything is fine.

Child's Progress

The Campus Director at Idea Lab is available to discuss your child's progress with you at any time and will occasionally bring matters to your attention that he / she feels you will want to know. The most important point to remember is that, as your partner, we want to share how your child is doing. We also ask that if you have a concern to please tell us right away. We want to address any concerns that you have, as quickly as possible. We also love to hear when you are particularly pleased with our services.

After-School Transportation

After-school children will be transported via IDEA Lab Vans and vehicles. Our drivers are licensed and have gone through transportation training.

Enrollment Policy

Initial and continued enrollment will be at the discretion of IDEA Lab based upon, among other factors, the best interest of the child, the expectation that he or she will benefit from the program, and the welfare of the other enrolled children, and the best interest of IDEA Lab. Enrollment decisions will be made without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, national origin or ancestry. IDEA Lab reserves the right to dismiss any student, for any reason deemed necessary, at the sole discretion of IDEA Lab.

Tuition and Fees

Late Pick-Up Fees: Children must be picked up from their designated program on time. All children must be picked up by closing time. Except for a first-time instance of tardiness, a late penalty will be imposed if your child is picked up after the designated dismissal time. The late pickup fee is \$1 per minute per child. These fees will be charged directly to your account and payable immediately. If you expect to be late, please call to advise us, so that we may reassure your child.

Not Sufficient Funds (NSF) Fee: A \$35 NSF (not-sufficient funds) fee will be charged for any returned check. The total amount of these charges will be due upon receipt of notification and must be paid in full in order for your child to attend Idea Lab.

Absences

Please keep in mind that you are obligated for payment of tuition during periods of absence from Idea Lab. **Tuition must be paid in full, without deduction for absences of any duration, or for any cause such as Holiday Breaks, Professional development days, or Spring break, and without substitution of other days of attendance as “make up” days.** This is necessary because staffing and other operational costs are incurred on the basis of fixed levels of enrollment. The only exception to this policy involves absences due to your child’s hospitalization, during which time tuition may be waived, with medical documentation, at IDEA Lab’s discretion.

Visitors

An Idea Lab staff member greets all visitors at the front entrance. Visitors are escorted throughout the building while visiting and/or touring. Also, **for the safety of staff and students, the front door will remain locked during business hours. Please ring the bell for service.**

CONDUCT: All visitors to the facility must conduct themselves so as not to interfere with the daily operation of the facility program. Visitors should not interact with the staff during instruction, should not attempt to interact with students during the observation, and should not cause a distraction or disruption to the educational process. If the visit is deemed a distraction by either the teacher or director, the visitor will be asked to end the observation.

MEETINGS/APPOINTMENTS: Visitors may enter the main door during business hours Monday through Friday for observation appointments. Visitors should sign-in with the front desk staff and wear a visitor’s sticker for the duration of the visit. Upon leaving, at the conclusion of the visit, the parent should sign-out with the front desk staff before departing.

Lexa Class

It is important you create your account prior to the first day of afterschool. If you haven’t already created your free account, please do so by going to <https://app.lexaclass.com/register>, and following the on-screen prompts to getting registered. Please make sure to add each authorized pickup person as a guardian with their own unique phone number and mailing address in the Lexa account. This allows each of these individuals to enter their phone number and check in and out your children.

Release of Children to Others

We will only release your child to someone, other than yourself, when you have properly authorized us to do so. This may be done at the time of enrollment in your registration system (LEXA class) where you may list persons who may pick up your child at any time. This may also be done later by written communication with the Campus Coordinator. In all cases in which you authorize release of your child to a person who has not picked up your child before, and whom we do not know, we will ask the person for photo identification. Once a person has been approved as an authorized person for pick up, an IDEA Lab staff member will bring your child to them.

Sign In and Out Procedures

At IDEA Lab, nothing is more important to us than the safety and security of your children. That is why we have chosen Lexa Class as our children's check-in solution, where student's most pertinent information including allergies are clearly outlined for staff members

Drop Off and Pick Up

Parents may drop students off curbside right in front of our door. We will sign students in at the car or at the front door. You may also park and walk the students to the front door for check-in. Please do not walk to the classrooms as students are engaged in activities and will be distracted with others walking into the classrooms. Parents can pick up curbside in front of our door. An orange Pick Up sheet with the child's name should be displayed on the passenger side windshield, or a staff member will verify the adult and load the appropriate student into the car.

Unauthorized Child pickup

In the event that an unauthorized person attempts to pick-up a child from our campus, the child will be moved to a safe location. We will then contact the custodial parent. Upon management's discretion, the police may also be contacted.

Children not picked up at end of day

The Idea Lab program ends at 6:00 pm at our campus locations and at posted times (check schedules for each location). If a child has been left at the end of the day, attempts will be made to utilize all the parent's telephone numbers on file. If there is no response, we will call all the emergency telephone numbers in the child's file. If there is still no response, we will call the police or Child Protective Services typically after the first 30 minutes. If you know you will be late, please call or text us so we can be prepared and reassure your child.

Emergency Procedures

Each facility is equipped with a fire and smoke monitoring alarm system. Fire extinguishers are strategically placed throughout the building. Emergency drills (such as fire and tornado) are held on a regular basis, so that the children and staff are familiar with emergency procedures. Each classroom has a clear evacuation plan posted in each room. The staff at Idea Lab has been trained in safety, first aid and emergency evacuation programs. They will orient your child prior to the first time executing a drill, in order to help alleviate any fear or anxiety that may occur. It is our goal to teach your child what to do during an emergency so that he or she becomes familiar and comfortable with the procedures. If a dangerous situation arises, it may be in the children's' best interest to go into Lockdown procedures. If the campus goes into Lockdown, you will be notified of the details.

Emergency Evacuation

It is possible that an emergency evacuation may occur due to problems within the facility. If it is determined that the safety of the children is in any way jeopardized, you will be contacted to pick up your child. If your child is moved from the facility during an emergency evacuation, you will be contacted immediately.

Children with limited mobility or who otherwise need assistance in an emergency will be escorted by a staff member to the transportation vehicle. Staff will evacuate with the essential documentation including emergency medical and emergency contact information. Site director will attain the binder from the facility and bring it along in the event of an emergency. How staff will continue to care for each child until each child is released: Staff and site director will communicate with parents and local authorities to keep in contact with them about emergency and evacuation plans until the parent has come to pick up their child. In transport and at the evacuation site, staff will continue to follow standard rules to ensure the children's health and safety needs are met.

Inclement Weather

IDEA Lab will make every effort possible to be open during inclement weather days; however, safety for your child and our staff members will be the prime consideration for closing the campus. If there is any question whether the campus will be open, please call the main Idea Lab Campus phone number. Information concerning cancellation or a delayed opening will be emailed to all parents by 6:30am. In the event of severe weather during business hours, we will call you if your child needs to be picked up early. We take every precaution necessary to protect the children and the staff of Idea Lab. Campus closings will be based on the determination of threats to the safety of children and the staff and the recommendations of local authorities.

Health Records and Immunization Records

If your child attends another full-time school then immunization records are not required to be in their files at Idea Lab. State law requires that every child have a Certificate of Immunization on file at Idea Lab OR at your child's full-time school. This certificate provides a history of vaccinations against several childhood diseases. If your child has received all of the necessary vaccinations, you can obtain an updated, validated certificate from your physician, or local Health Department. It is imperative that you provide a current copy of this certificate or provide us with information that your child's records are on file with another school, prior to your child's first day of attendance.

If your child has not been vaccinated due to reasons of conscience or religious beliefs, an original copy of a Vaccine Exemption Affidavit form must be provided upon registration. The Affidavit must be signed and notarized.

Tuberculin testing Requirements

At this time Idea Lab does not require Tuberculosis testing for children.

Confidentiality of Records

The Idea Lab staff respects the confidential information of the children in our care. All personal records of children and families in Idea Lab are kept in the strictest of confidence. Information pertaining to admission, progress, health or disenrollment of a child shall be confidential, unless the parent(s) of the child has given written permission for disclosure.

General Illness

The welfare and health of your child are of primary importance. When particular symptoms are noted, such as a fever or unusual changes in personality, this information will be brought to your attention immediately. Of course, if your child appears to be seriously ill, or highly infectious, we will call you (or another person whom you have designated for this purpose) to ask that you pick up your child from school. For the safety of the other children, your child must be picked-up within one hour of your notification. Until you arrive, your child will be made as comfortable as possible in a room where he or she is supervised by an adult yet separated from other children.

You may not bring your child to school if he or she appears ill and/ or displays the following symptoms:

- a fever of 99 degrees F or higher within the past 24 hours
- vomiting or has intestinal agitation accompanied by diarrhea (may return once the condition has completely subsided for a minimum of 24 hours without medication)
- evidence of a communicable disease
- an undiagnosed rash (may return with physician's note that rash is not contagious)
- discharge from eyes, ears or profuse colored nasal discharge (may return when discharge is clear or child has been on antibiotics for 24-48 hours, according to physician's instructions)
- unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying or difficulty breathing (may return when symptoms have subsided with medications)

If your child shows any of the above symptoms while IDEA Lab, or any other symptoms enumerated in certain states' regulations, you will be asked to pick up your child immediately.

If the child's parents cannot be reached, the contacts provided by the parents will be contacted. When a child has been exposed to, or diagnosed, with a communicable illness, you are required to immediately notify IDEA Lab. IDEA Lab will notify the state Department of Health, when necessary, all staff members and all parents and guardians of children in our care. The child's confidentiality will be maintained.

COVID19

IDEA Lab will follow the North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services most up to date guidance for Summer Camps and Afterschool programs. We have instituted practices to comply with Social Distancing, Teacher PPE requirements, Sanitation Procedures for both people and surfaces and monitoring for COVID19 symptoms, including daily temperature checks. Information on guidance for Summer Camp and Afterschool programs with regard to COVID19 is constantly changing therefore, refer to the link below for the most up to date information. [About COVID-19 | NC DHHS COVID-19](#)

Accidents and Injury

In the event of an accident or injury, our staff will first tend to your child's needs and then summon the Director. The Director will notify you and, if necessary, call the physician or medical facility, as designated in writing by you. In rare situations, IDEA Lab may take additional emergency action, as deemed necessary, to care for your child. When such an action is deemed advisable, staff will contact 911 emergency services and follow the instructions of the emergency personnel. If IDEA Lab personnel are instructed by the emergency medical personnel to transport your child to the nearest medical facility, such action will be taken. In such emergencies, the school will contact you as soon as the situation allows.

Medicine

NO MEDICATIONS OF ANY KIND WILL BE DISPENSED unless a Medical Dispense Authorization form is filled out. Parents must give the medication and the filled out Medical Dispense Authorization Form to the Center Director.

Emergency Medical Facility

Atrium Health – Pineville, located at 10628 Park Rd, Charlotte, NC 28210 is the closest full service General Hospital and is where your child will be brought in the event of a serious, life threatening emergency if no other hospital is noted in your file, as determined by you. We will make every attempt to contact you to determine if there is an alternative hospital preference.

Discipline

Our discipline is focused on proactively helping children develop positive social and self-regulation skills so that they can manage their own behavior in socially approved and acceptable ways. Idea Lab's discipline techniques are based on respect for the child. We teach self-discipline, as opposed to motivation by fear or punishment. We believe consequences should be appropriate for the behavior and focused on learning and growing from the experience. The only acceptable forms of discipline at Idea Lab are positive guidance and redirections. The goals of these discipline techniques:

- Help the child in his or her growth toward self-discipline, while nurturing a healthy self-concept.
- Help children work through a conflicts, by helping develop their self-control and assuming responsibility for their own actions.
- Explain limits and consequences in a clear and comprehensible manner.
- Give preschool and school-aged children a reasonable opportunity to resolve their own conflicts.

Only if absolutely necessary will a child be removed from the situation of conflict and placed in an area where he or she can sit for a few moments to regain composure. When appropriate, a staff member will debrief and talk about next steps with the students. The child will return to the group when both the staff, and the child, feel it is appropriate. This will not be for a prolonged period of time, nor is it a punishment.

If a child's behavior is dangerous or habitually disruptive, parent contact will be made. If a child's behavior threatens the safety of others or himself, parents may be asked to pick up the child prior to normal pick up time. If habitually threatening or disruptive behavior occurs, the child may be suspended or asked to leave the program.

Disruptive Individuals: Our faculty and staff are entitled to conduct classes or other activities and to perform their assigned responsibilities without disruption. Accordingly, the faculty or staff member has the right to ask any individual who is disruptive or menacing to leave the classroom or vacate the area in which he or she is misbehaving. The facility maintains a code that governs the conduct of students and parents in the facility. This code prohibits students and parents from physically harming, verbally abusing or intimidating anyone, or intentionally interrupting a classroom. We have a zero tolerance for bullying.

Hitting and Biting Policy

Repeated incidents of hitting or biting will not be tolerated. Our objective is to ensure that each campus maintains the highest level of safety within our environment, and that our staff responds appropriately to aggressive behaviors. Incidence reports will be completed for these incidents.

Lost and Found

A lost and found box is located in the back cubby area. We recommend that you ask us to check this box periodically for items that may belong to your child. We encourage you to label ALL of your child's personal belongings, including water bottles, backpacks, jackets, hats, and any other items they may bring to our center.

Hours and Days of Operation

IDEA Lab classes operate at set times; Monday through Friday.

After-School Program: School Dismissal Time/3:30pm-6:00pm

Summer Camp Hours:

- Before Care Hours: 7:00AM – 9AM
- Camp Core Hours: 9:00AM – 3:30PM
- After Care Hours: 3:30PM - 6:00PM

OnSite Camps

- Based on each host site's schedule

Dress Code

Students should dress appropriately at Idea Lab as they would attending school. Due to the materials we use and daily gym time, students must wear closed-toe footwear with a strap around the heel. Please no flip-flops, open-toed sandals, or crocs. We recommend wearing tennis/athletic shoes at Idea Lab.

Emergency Contact

In case of any emergency please contact The IDEA Lab at the following numbers in this order

- IDEA Lab Campus Cell: 980.339.9396
- IDEA Lab Campus: 980.960.1739
- Corporate Office: 281-982-5126

Meals and Snacks

No meals will be offered during the After-School or Preschool Program.

The Preschool Program will have a brief mid-morning snack. If snack is not provided from parents, we will offer a small snack. The After-School Program will have an afternoon snack time. If snack is not provided from parents, we will offer a small snack.

Camp programs offers a small mid-morning snack for AM and Full Day camps, and a small mid-afternoon snack around 2:00PM for PM and Full Day camps. If a snack is not provided from parents, we will offer a small snack.

Students should pack a peanut-free lunch for full day campers. If needed, we can order a catered lunch for students via Door Dash for \$10 per lunch. Please call or text the director if a lunch needs to be ordered.

If your child has dietary restrictions, please review our snack menu and provide alternatives, if needed. We are happy to store a small supply of appropriate snacks for your child. Our Center is Peanut Free. Please do not pack any snacks or lunch items that contain peanuts or any tree nuts.

Snack Menu

- Cheez Its or similar crackers
- Goldfish
- Pretzels
- Animal Crackers
- Applesauce
- Cheese Sticks
- Fresh Fruit
- Yogurt Tubes

Acknowledgment

Once you have reviewed these policies, please place a check in the box that states, "I agree to the Parent Handbook Acknowledgement" on the Enrollment Form. If you have any questions, please contact us anytime via phone or email. 980-339-9396. ballantyne@idealabkids.com.