

Laura Jeffrey Academy Volunteer Handbook

2016-2017



Laura Jeffrey Academy (LJA), is a Twin Cities tuition-free charter school offering a unique [year-round](#), girl-focused educational experience, grades five through eight. Students learn through rigorous study, by asking questions, solving problems, and participating in the community. LJA's [interdisciplinary learning and teaching model](#) provides students with the experiences and skills that result in academic and personal success - students who are critical thinkers and leaders. LJA is committed to ensuring equal access to all volunteer opportunities in the program without regard for one's race, color, gender, sex, creed, religion, national origin, age, marital status, disability, sexual or affectional preference or orientation, ancestry, family status, or any other characteristics protected by law. LJA shall make arrangements to the physical and mental limitations of a volunteer unless such arrangements would impose an unwarranted difficulty on the ability of both LJA and the volunteer.

Our Promise

Laura Jeffrey Academy will provide an environment where students are free to learn, to explore their potential, to discover their brilliance and develop their intellect.

LJA's motto is "Asking questions, making choices." Learning to ask key questions is crucial to becoming a critical thinker. Students create success by making informed choices that have a positive impact on self and community.

Our Principles

- **Searching for Truths.** We build communities of inquiry capable of supporting free and open conversation on the most important issues.
- **Building Empathy.** We recognize that it is difficult to always have consistency between what we value and how we practice those values. When we practice empathy, we understand another's difficulty and we help each other build the skills to be more consistent in practicing our values.
- **Developing Generosity of Spirit.** We assume that each of us tries to do what we believe is right and just, and we ask each other how we see things that lead us to act as we do.
- **Becoming Competent.** We help each other become increasingly able to bring about the results we each desire. We believe that effort creates competence and competence helps build confidence.
- **Practicing Mutual Responsibility and Individual Accountability.** We work together to solve problems and are accountable for our own choices and our impact on the community as a whole.
- **Acknowledging Paradox and Dilemma.** We make progress at LJA by opening our minds to complexity while continuing to take action in response to the paradox or dilemma.
- **Recognizing Strength in Vulnerability.** We value help from others in seeing our short comings and potential as we continue to evolve and grow.

Your Rights as a Volunteer

- To be a volunteer regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, age, or financial status.
- To know about LJA's policies, programs, and staff.
- To be treated as a valued team member.
- To offer suggestions and have opinions validated.
- To evaluate the program you service.

Your Responsibilities as a Volunteer

- To be honest about your interests, skills, expectations, preferences and availability.
- To share significant medical or physical information that may impact your volunteer duties.

- To be aware of the program’s purpose and the requirements and expectations of your volunteer assignment.
- To respect the confidentiality of your agency and/or student information.
- To follow LJA policies and procedures.
- To be dependable, perform duties promptly, appropriately, and reliably.
- To keep cell phones and other electronics away during volunteering.
- To participate in training and accept the guidance and direction of your supervisor.
- To notify appropriate staff members if you will be late or absent.
- To act professionally and avoid chewing gum or wearing jeans when volunteering.

Communication

In order to always improve our programming, we need your support. Any ideas or feedback that you may have are much appreciated. It would be great to know how things are going, how we can better support you, etc.

Drug & Alcohol/Smoke free Environment

Regarding the effects of drug use and the unlawful possession of controlled substances on Laura Jeffrey Academy premises or where a youth is present, it is LJA policy that:

1. Volunteers are expected to report to activities on time and able to perform their assignment.
2. The unlawful sale, transfer, manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, use or being under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance on company premises or while in the presence of students is prohibited.
3. Volunteers are prohibited from buying for or from a student controlled substances, alcohol or merchandise or using alcohol or controlled substances with students at any time.
4. Smoking is not allowed around students in the program. There is no smoking on the LJA premises.

Mandated Reporting and Procedures

Laura Jeffrey Academy staff, volunteers, mentors and interns are required by MN Statue, Section 626.556 to report any suspected abuse or neglect of students (whether physical, emotional or sexual). You do not need to have extensive experience or training in detecting maltreatment - your concerns and observations are what matter. If at any time you suspect a child has been harmed or is in danger of being harmed, you must report your suspicions of abuse/neglect to your Program Coordinator **within 24 hours** of when you become aware of the suspected abuse. If your Program Coordinator is not available, you can **contact any LJA staff with concerns**. The Program Coordinator will discuss the situation with you and the Social Worker. It is the Social Worker’s responsibility to contact the student for more information. If the Social Worker determines the student is at risk, the Social Worker will contact Child Protection and file a report. As mandated reporters, LJA staff, leadership, volunteers and mentors will have immunity from civil or criminal liability for good faith reporting and given support through the reporting process. If the Social Worker determines the student is not at risk, s/he will follow up with the Program Coordinator and the student.

Confidentiality

Volunteers may have contact with and access to confidential information not generally known outside of Laura Jeffrey Academy. Confidential information may be developed or maintained by a volunteer as a result of the volunteer’s relationship with the organization. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, all student records and information. Confidential information must never be discussed, released, removed from school premises, copied, or in any other way used by volunteers for any purpose outside the scope of the volunteer relationship or assignment. Failure to follow this policy may be grounds for immediate termination of the volunteer.

Any information a youth or family communicates to a volunteer or staff person is considered confidential unless there is concern the youth is in any danger of abuse, neglect, or of hurting him or herself. In this instance, see Mandated Reporting and Procedures. In using email correspondence with Laura Jeffrey Academy, volunteers should avoid using the student's full name. Use of their initials or substituting "my student" is sufficient to fully protect their privacy.

Contact Information

Laura Jeffrey Academy

info@laurajeffreyacademy.org

651-414-6000

1550 Summit Ave.

St. Paul, MN 55105

Acknowledgment and Confidentiality Agreement

I, _____, have received a copy of Laura Jeffrey Academy Volunteer Policies and Practices. I acknowledge that I have read and understand and agree to its contents and acknowledge that:

- The manual is only intended to provide a general overview of LJA Policies and does not necessarily represent all such policies or practices enforced at any particular time.
- The manual supersedes and replaces any previously or contemporaneously stated written or oral policies or practices covering the same or similar subjects or matters, including but not limited to, those contained in any manuals, handbooks, correspondence, memoranda, or oral discussions.
- Neither this manual nor any other written or unwritten policy or practice of LJA creates, nor is intended to create an express or implied contract, covenant, promise, or representation between LJA and me.
- I agree to the policy on Confidentiality as contained in this manual. I will maintain the highest standards of confidentiality in my work with Laura Jeffrey Academy. I will not reveal, now or in the future, any information to which I have access in my work with LJA. Further, I understand that a breach of confidentiality will/may result in immediate termination of my volunteer position.

I understand that my volunteer services are terminable at will any time. I also understand that Laura Jeffrey Academy reserves discretion to add, change, or rescind its policies and/or practices at any time.

Signature: _____ Date: _____