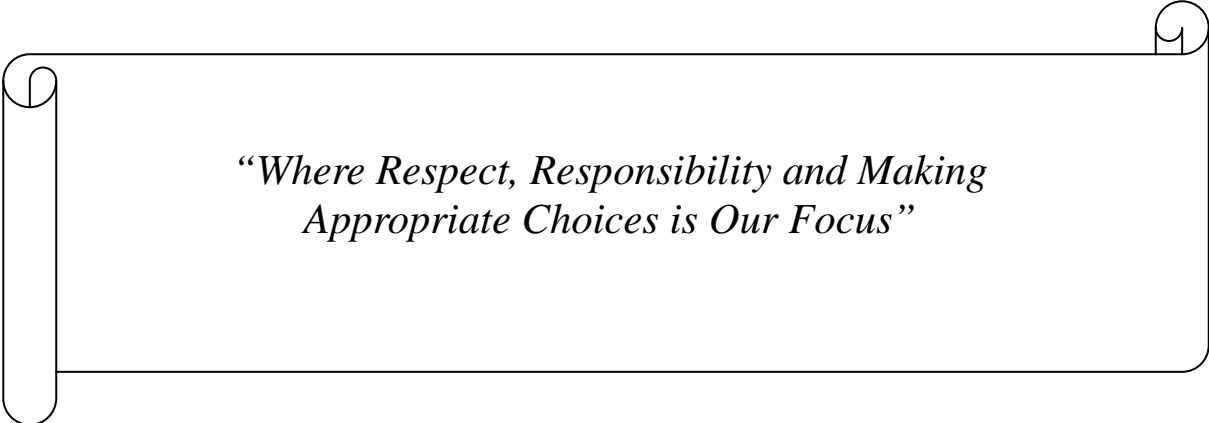


# *Circuit Breaker School*

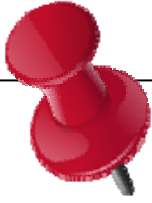
## *Parent/Student Guide*



*“Where Respect, Responsibility and Making  
Appropriate Choices is Our Focus”*

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## An Open Letter of Introduction

Circuit Breaker School is a public day school for special education students. Each student attending this school has been identified by a multi-disciplinary team as a student with Social/Emotional Disorders. The school is administered by the LaSalle/Putnam County Educational Alliance for Special Education (L.E.A.S.E.) Cooperative. L.E.A.S.E. was organized by school districts within LaSalle/Putnam Counties to coordinate the provision of Special Education Services.

Circuit Breaker utilizes a Classroom Community Model to teach the students problem solving and decision making skills. By teaching these skills students will make appropriate choices not only in school but in their community.

Circuit Breaker School is located in Peru, Illinois. We are very fortunate to have such a fine facility. It provides rooms for classes, offices, gymnasium, and counseling. It is well maintained and every effort is made to have it look and feel like that of a traditional public school. This Parent/Student Guide is a summary of our program/policies.

On behalf of Circuit Breaker School, and the LaSalle/Putnam County Educational Alliance for Special Education, I invite you to make arrangements to visit our program. As always, if I may be of any assistance, please call me.

Sincerely,

Phil Gassman, Principal  
Circuit Breaker School



## **Philosophy**

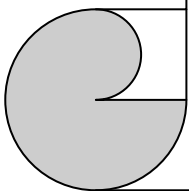
We believe that human behavior has meaning and can be understood only with some understanding of the person and of the environment in which the behavior and the responses to it occur.

When a student is placed at Circuit Breaker, it is because the multi-disciplinary team understands that the student is having difficulty in coping with other students, adults, or situations. The team knows that he/she is caught in a “circuit” of poor academic and social adjustment. Simply said the child has had many failures in school and is still deficient.

Additionally, we believe that Circuit Breaker School should be organized so that students have an opportunity to develop to their fullest potential. We also recognize that no organization should be so rigid that new ideas are difficult or impossible to implement. The organization must be able to adapt to the changing needs of the students, community and the educational system.

Therefore, our school’s name is derived from our purpose and our function. We strive to “break-the-circuit” by helping the student acquire skills, which enhance academic achievement and allow ideas to be communicated more appropriately and within the expectations of the community.

We know that with the parents, as well as with the student, we become an intervention team for the meaningful benefit of each young person, regardless of his/her emotional or physical maturity.



## **General Information**

### **Academic Instruction**

Each student is assigned work directly related to their current achievement, ability and level of progress indicated in the student case-study evaluation and Individualized Education Plan (IEP). I.E.P. goals and objectives, both behavioral and academic if necessary, are developed based on the needs identified in the multidisciplinary staff conference. Instruction centers around regular school subjects with an emphasis on life-skills and pre-vocational skills. All students are expected to participate in P.E. activities unless they present a medical excuse.

Students may be required to have homework. If work is assigned and the student has not completed the work in class, it may be sent home to be completed. Students are given ample time to complete all assignments in class.

### **Asbestos Management**

Circuit Breaker School complies with all regulations relative to asbestos abatement. Management plans are available for review upon request at the building office.

### **Attendance**

Students are expected to attend school daily. Excused absences are for: illness, observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, family emergency, or situations beyond the control of the student that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's safety or health, as approved by the Director or designee.

Parents or guardians are asked to call Circuit Breaker School by 8:30 a.m. to report their son/daughter as absent and the reason for it. If a student is absent from school and there has been no phone call to report the absence, parents will be called that day to find out why he/she is absent.

Note: Missing the bus or being suspended from the bus is not an excused absence. Excessive absences or prolonged illness may result in a doctor's excuse verification. Excessive absences as defined by the student's home district policy will result in notification of the appropriate agencies (i.e. R.O.E.-truancy, probation, etc.) and the home district.

### **Audio-Visual Material**

All movies, films, videotapes, audio recordings, slide presentations etc. that are to be shown or played at Circuit Breaker School must be previewed by C.B.S. staff prior to it's use. Only movies rated "G" or "PG" and "PG 13" may be shown. Audio-visual material is used to reinforce instruction already presented in the classroom or as a behavior management intervention reward.

## **Breakfast Program**

Students unable or who do not wish to eat breakfast at home may take advantage of the breakfast program at Circuit Breaker School. All Circuit Breaker students are eligible to participate in the breakfast program.

## **Communication**

Phone contact between parent and staff are encouraged. We appreciate a good working relationship with parents to help meet student's needs and address problems and concerns.

Anytime a parent/guardian needs to speak to us, if necessary, they may call collect. If the staff member is unable to take your call they will return your call or email if preferred, before the end of the work day or the next morning.

## **Emergency Clothing**

Due to individual temperature preferences, it is recommended that, in cold weather students bring an appropriate sweatshirt to wear in class. If the temperature falls below 65 degrees in the instructional setting, students will be permitted to wear their jackets.

Clothing which has been worn but is in good condition is kept on hand for students who may need to change an article of clothing because the item they chose to wear to school was not appropriate as outlined in this guide.

## **Emergency Drills**

State law mandates that all schools practice periodic fire and disaster drills. Drills are held at various times throughout the year. The purpose of these drills is to familiarize students with a safe evacuation procedure should an emergency situation arise. During a disaster drill, students learn procedures to follow in case of a severe weather emergency, fire explosive, or bomb threat. Practice is also provided on how to respond should there be a situation necessitating a lockdown of the school. Drill procedures are posted in classrooms.

## **Field Trips**

During the course of the year teachers may wish to take the students on a field trip. When students have earned the privilege of participating in the field trips, a notice and permission slip will be sent home by the teacher indicating arrangements that need to be made, including financial ones. Any non-participating students shall be given an alternative experience.

## **Food Allergy Management Program**

Circuit Breaker School (C.B.S.) has a Food Allergy Plan as school attendance may increase a student's risk of exposure to allergens that could trigger a food-allergic reaction. A food allergy is an adverse reaction to a food protein. While it is not possible for C.B.S. to completely eliminate the risks of exposure to allergens when a student is at school, a Food Allergy Management Program using a cooperative effort among students, families, staff members, and students helps C.B.S. reduce these risks and provide accommodations and proper treatment for allergic reactions.

## **General Education Participation**

When a student is being considered for participation in general education classes at their home district, it is the responsibility of the I.E.P. team to conduct an I.E.P. meeting to discuss this option. The decision is based on information presented by the C.B.S. staff, other social agencies involved, representative(s) from the resident district and parent/guardian.

The student is expected to attend classes regularly. He/she will receive an excused absence only with a valid excuse as designated in the general education school's policy or procedure.

General education participation is one of the last stages of a student's progress through the level system. This stage indicates a student has gained control of his/her behavior and has acquired coping skills. The student's performance during general education participation will indicate the level of student progress and will be considered when determining if additional general education participation or the return to the students' resident district full time should be recommended.

## **Head Lice**

All students will be checked for head lice periodically throughout the school year. In the event a student is found with head lice or nits, the parent/guardian, resident school district and sibling's school district(s) will be notified.

The student will be removed from contact with other students and sent home for treatment. The parent/guardian must show proof of appropriate treatment (treating physicians and/or home school nurse's verification note) and all nits must be removed from the hair before the student will be re-admitted to school.

If it is determined the treatment has not been completed, the student will be removed from the general student population and sent home until the necessary treatment has been completed.

## **Homeless Liaison**

Circuit Breaker designates a staff member each year to serve as Homeless Liaison who also coordinates with student's local district.

## **Insurance**

Circuit Breaker students may obtain individual insurance through their home school district. If you wish to purchase this insurance, please contact your local school district.

## **Jewelry and Money**

Students are discouraged from wearing or bringing expensive jewelry to school. Students do not have a need for large amounts of money on their person. A large amount of money would be any amount in excess of \$20.00. Parents/guardians will be contacted should their son/daughter bring a large amount of money to school.

## **Lunches**

School lunches are provided. The cost is \$2.40. Those students qualifying for free or reduced lunch will need to complete the appropriate form. If the form was completed in the home district, that information will be forwarded to Circuit Breaker School. Each month a menu will be sent home so parents and students are aware of upcoming meals. If a student does not wish to purchase or order a school lunch he/she may bring their lunch.

## **Medical Emergency**

In the case of serious injury during the school day and we are unable to contact a parent/guardian, we will contact those individuals listed on the student's medical information identified to assume medical responsibility. School personnel will seek medical attention for your child.

## **Medication**

Students who need to take their prescribed medication during the course of the school day will have the medication administered at the designated time. Documentation of this is kept daily. If there are any changes in a student's medication please notify the school immediately. Medications must be sent to school in the original bottle or container. They should be given to the bus/vehicle driver to be given to school personnel. Self-administration of medication by the student is permitted with asthma or the use of an epinephrine auto-injector if pupil is at risk of anaphylaxis with appropriate staff supervision.

Non prescription drugs (i.e. Tylenol, Benadryl) may only be administered to a student if we have a parent/guardian signature and medical provider permission on file indicating you have given permission to do so. The administering of non prescription drugs is also documented and you will be notified by phone and/or by mail. All medication procedures are monitored by the principal or principal's designee.

## **Pagers and Cell Phones**

Electronic devices are not permitted. Any student found to be in violation of this rule shall have the device confiscated and parents will be notified.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences, Home and School Visits**

If you wish to speak with your son/daughter's teacher or schedule a conference, please call ahead to make an appointment to meet with them. However, if you are unable to come in and meet with the teacher and wish to have a phone conference, please call before 8:20 A.M. or after 2:00 P.M.

We encourage parent/teacher communication and stress the importance of communicating on a regular basis with any issues or concerns.

We encourage you to visit C.B.S. during the school year. We do ask that you report to the office upon your arrival. This procedure helps maintain a safe and orderly environment.

## **Pesticide Application Notice**

Our office maintains a list of parents or guardians who would like to receive written notification when any pesticide application should be necessary. If you would like to be added to this list please contact the Circuit Breaker School office.

## **Release of Information**

In order to release records, a parent/guardian must sign a "Release of Information" form. The form must be dated for the current school year. You will be asked to sign a release each school year. The release will be kept on file at Circuit Breaker. Depending on individual student needs additional releases may be required for outside agencies.

## **Report Cards**

Report cards/grades are sent home approximately every nine weeks. Student's home district policy for grade change will be followed when necessary. Attached to each report card you will find a report of your son/daughter's progress on their I.E.P. goals and objectives.

## **State Assessment**

Students in the identified grades for ISAT and PSAE will be informed of the timelines and procedures applicable to their participation in this assessment process. Any additional guidelines or accommodations for state assessments will be provided as indicated on the student's current IEP.

## **Substance Abuse Counseling/Testing**

C.B.S. and L.E.A.S.E. recognize that both the use of illicit drugs and the possession of alcohol are harmful and in violation of the law.

Manufacture, distribution, dispensation, and possession or use of a controlled substance and/or alcohol on school premises or as part of any of its activities is prohibited. Available to all students in all classrooms at Circuit Breaker School, are age-appropriate, developmentally-based drug and alcohol education and prevention programs which provide information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use illicit drugs and alcohol. Also available to students is information in accessing drug/alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, re-entry and assistance programs.

If a student appears to be displaying behavior due to the possible use of alcohol or drugs, a staff member shall whenever practical report the situation to the principal, who will seek professional help to determine the seriousness of the situation.

### **Vision/Hearing Screening**

Vision screening is not a substitute for a complete eye and vision evaluation by an eye doctor. Your child is not required to undergo this vision screening if an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months. Vision and hearing screening is mandated in the state of Illinois.

### **Weather Emergency**

In the event of an emergency with school closing before the beginning of the school day or during the day, parents/guardians may obtain needed information by checking the following radio stations:

LaSalle/Peru	WLPO 1220 AM	<a href="http://www.wlpo.net">www.wlpo.net</a>
Streator	WSPL 1250 AM	<a href="http://www.am1250wspl.com">www.am1250wspl.com</a>
Ottawa	WCMY 1430 AM	<a href="http://www.ottawaradio.net">www.ottawaradio.net</a>
Mendota	WGLC 100.1 FM	<a href="http://www.wglc.net">www.wglc.net</a>

Be aware that some school districts may be closed, but Circuit Breaker could be open and transportation still available for your child. The opposite may occur that Circuit Breaker may be closed and your school district may be open. Be sure to check closely the reports for the emergency closings for Circuit Breaker School and not your home district.

## **Student Discipline**

### **Aggressive Behaviors, Bullying, and/or Harassment**

"Bullying" shall be defined as any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including written or electronic communication, directed toward a student that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- (1) Placing the student in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or property;
- (2) Causing a detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;
- (3) Substantial interference with the student's academic performance; or
- (4) Substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying also includes cyber bullying.

"Bullying and/or harassment" is prohibited based upon a student's sex, color, age, ancestry, national origin, or mental disability.

For this program, when aggressive behavior, bullying, or harassment is gross disobedience or misconduct under this policy, an investigation and/or IEP meeting will be conducted to determine the appropriate consequences, remedial actions, and/or any necessary changes in the student's IEP plan as this is prohibited. School code states that no student shall be subjected to bullying:

- (1) during any school-sponsored education program or activity;
- (2) while in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities, or
- (3) through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.

Protection shall be provided to students against retaliation for reporting such conduct. Bullying prevention and character instruction is incorporated across all grades.

### **Behavior Management Interventions**

In keeping with the Illinois School Code a variety of behavioral interventions will be utilized with students. As needed, the IEP team can be reconvened to review programming and/or the functional behavior assessment (FBA) and behavior intervention plan (BIP) in order to identify and maintain the most appropriate intervention plan for each student's behavioral needs. Any intervention implemented is always under supervision of a C.B.S. staff member and properly documented. Parent will be contacted regarding the intervention(s).

Non restrictive interventions will be used, when appropriate, with emphasis on positive behavior change rather than behavior control. Such interventions would include but not be limited to: proximity, teaching alternative behaviors, modeling, redirecting the student physically or verbally, planned ignoring, prompting, verbal feedback, verbal reprimand, calming time within the classroom, token economy, contracting, and bonus points.

When less restrictive interventions have not been effective in changing the problem behavior more restrictive interventions shall be implemented. Restrictive interventions may include but not be limited to: removal of shoes, if student has a history of leaving the building, extended learning opportunity (an extended day beyond the regular school hours), use of the LEARNING room (a quiet place to settle down enabling him/her to return to the classroom), time out outside the classroom, suspension from school, and physical restraint (used as a last resort when the safety of student or staff are in danger). Students will be expected to complete their regularly assigned school work while in the LEARNING room. If behavior should escalate in the LEARNING room than use of the time-out room may result.

Time out is used to provide a student with an opportunity to regain control of his/her emotions. Students who are sent to time out, outside the classroom are asked by the staff member to go without "hands on." As long as the student does not present an immediate physical danger to self or others they will merely be escorted to time out. If the student does pose a danger to self or others he/she will have a "hands on" escort to time out.

Every effort to avoid a restraint is employed by staff in order to provide the student with opportunities to make alternative behavioral choices. If a student is not demonstrating any physical resistance which endangers him, others, or property, a physical restraint will not be initiated.

Before, after and at any point during a physical restraint, counseling of various kinds may be utilized. A staff member, aide, agency professional, principal, etc. may provide behavioral counseling as the opportunity arises or as needs dictate.

### **Damaged Property**

Any purposeful or willful misconduct by a student which causes damage to the property of Circuit Breaker School or property of staff, will be the financial responsibility of the student and his/her parent/guardian. It is the responsibility of the student and his parent/guardian to see that the cost of the repair or replacement of the property is fully reimbursed. Additionally, the police will be notified and charges filed.

### **Dress**

Each student is expected to dress neatly and wear clean, neat, well-kept clothes in good repair to school each day. Student behavior is greatly improved, leading to more productive working environment, when students are appropriately dressed. Clothing which the Circuit Breaker School intervention team considers clearly detrimental to any specific student's progress will be reviewed with student and parent/guardian. Clothing that promotes the acceptance and/or usage of drugs or alcohol and is "attention getting" or "suggestive" by their message are not permitted. Tube tops and mesh shirts may not be worn. They must be placed in the student's locker. An appropriate T-shirt must be worn under tank tops or "muscle" shirts. Students are permitted to wear tank tops without a T-shirt only in P.E. class. Shirts used as a jacket must be kept in the student's locker. Hats, headbands, wristbands, scarves and bandannas are not permitted.

Students should wear soft soled shoes and socks during the school day. Hard soled shoes may not be worn on the gym floor. Shoes with laces must be laced and tied. Articles of clothing or personal property which contains messages, pictures, initials, numbers, slogans or symbols, etc. that are questionable in taste and are gang and or drug related will result in the student being asked to remove the item and/or change into different clothing.

Student's dress and grooming must not disrupt the educational process. Students who wear an item of clothing, jewelry, or acrylic nails etc., that causes distraction to learning or disruption in the school will be asked to remove the jewelry item and/or change the item of clothing.

Students should not wear earrings to school. In addition to ears being pierced, students who have other parts of their anatomy pierced will be asked to remove the body piercing item. Students may not wear dog chains or collars to school. They will be asked to remove them and not bring them back to school or they will be confiscated.

### **Gang Related Activities**

The presence of or student involvement in gangs, or gang related activities, on school grounds is strictly prohibited. A "gang" is any group of two or more persons whose purpose includes committing illegal acts. This also includes displaying, wearing or using gang symbols or paraphernalia. Any student who violates this policy shall be subject to discipline procedures established by their home district.

### **Internet Access/Safety**

Students will have access to the Internet for further resources and support for daily instruction and skill development. Each student and his or her parent/guardian must sign permission before the student is granted access to live internet connection. Failure of any user to follow the terms of the Permission form for Internet access will result in the disciplinary measures shown within the form.

### **Leaving Without Permission**

Students are not allowed to leave the building without a staff member. If a student does leave the building without permission, it will be reported to parent or guardian, home district superintendent, police, truancy and probation if applicable. Parents may need to go to the police station to pick up their son or daughter. Students run the risk of not being transported home on their district transportation per policy and procedure in the home district.

When leaving the building becomes an ongoing re-occurring problem more restrictive interventions will be used. Upon a student's arrival to school his/her shoes will be taken and kept in the office until the end of the day, at which time they will be returned to the student. This procedure will occur daily until such time staff feel there is no longer a concern the student will leave without permission.

## **Levels**

The number of points earned daily determines the student's progression on a six-tiered level system. Progress on the level system is a major indicator of overall progress in the program and readiness to return to the home school for either part or the entire school day. Progression on the level system directly relates to academics, behavior and attendance. Additional privileges are earned with each level attained. To move up a level, students must write a contract outlining the behavior improvements needed for advancement to the next level. This contract is signed by the principal, teacher, aides and counselors.

Students entering the program start on pre-orientation and move through the six levels to peer model. Homework must be returned 80% of the time to stay on Level C. At the peer model level homework must be completed and returned 90% of the time. Upon the student's return in the fall the student begins the year one level below where he/she ended the previous school year (with the exception of pre-orientation).

## **Lockers and Locks**

Each and every student will be assigned a locker for his/her personal belongings as well as school material. Upon the student's arrival to school, coats, hats, electronic devices, book bags etc. are to be placed in the student's locker. These items are not permitted in the classroom. Failure to comply with this procedure will result in disciplinary action.

If a student wishes to have a lock on his/her locker they must rent the lock from the office. Rental is \$1.00 which is returned at the end of the year when the lock is returned. Students may not bring locks from home. If this occurs the lock will be removed.

Lockers are the property of the school and may be subject to a search by school officials and authorities with or without prior notice.

## **Searches/Seizure/Safety**

Whenever there is reasonable suspicion of contraband, weapons, cigarettes and/or lighters and matches, a student and his/her locker, desk, and possessions (such as purses, wallets, book bags, etc.) will be searched in accordance with Illinois School Code.

Due to ongoing concerns by staff and to maintain a safe and orderly environment, the Director or designee including the Principal may request the assistance of law enforcement officials to conduct inspections and searches without notice to or the consent of the student. If a search produces evidence that the student has violated either the law or alliance rules such evidence may be seized and impounded by authorities with disciplinary action possibly being taken.

Signs will be posted to inform individuals that they will be required to submit to a screening for metal as a condition of entering Circuit Breaker School. The screening will be conducted by district staff who may be assisted by law enforcement officials when necessary.

If after any metal items are removed by an individual, the metal detector activates, the individual may be subjected to a “pat-down” search. “Pat-down” search conducted by school personnel shall be limited to clothing for the purpose of discovering items that may have activated the metal detecting device.

School personnel may inspect the contents of any briefcase, parcel, or book bag that activates the metal detector for the purpose of determining whether a weapon is concealed.

## **Smoking**

Circuit Breaker School is a **NO SMOKING** facility. Students are not permitted to use tobacco products anywhere on school grounds. Neither staff, nor students, nor visitors are permitted to use tobacco products anywhere on the school grounds. Any student found with tobacco products and/or lighters and matches in their possession will have them confiscated.

## **Suspension**

Suspensions out of school may be used up to 10 consecutive days in any one school year for behaviors that may endanger the student, others or property. Out of school suspensions will be used only when a student(s) presents an immediate and, or continued danger.

Any suspension shall be reported immediately to the student’s parent(s)/guardians. The written notice of the suspension shall state the reasons for the suspension, including any school rule which was violated, and a notice to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their right to a review of the suspension. When a student is serving an assigned out-of-school suspension, he/she is not allowed to be on school property unless under supervision of his/her parent.

## **Transportation**

The drivers are responsible for the safety and well-being of their passengers. Each sending school district provides transportation for Circuit Breaker students and has rules which govern the students’ behavior. Transportation is an extension of the school district. Students must adhere to the rule and regulations regarding appropriate and inappropriate behavior when riding the bus. Students who disrupt the safety and well being of the driver and his/her passengers will be warned and/or suspended from the bus for a period of time. During the bus suspension period the parent/guardian bears the responsibility to transport the student to school. Bus suspension is not a suspension from school. Students are not allowed to drive themselves to Circuit Breaker School.