

We firmly believe in Fairborn City Schools MISSION OF THE DISTRICT: "The Fairborn City School District, in partnership with our community, will provide a safe, nurturing environment that values individual differences and is relentless in the pursuit of personal and academic excellence that prepares all students for success." This mission is not just a guide but a beacon that should inspire and guide all of us- administrators, teachers, students, and community members. It's a commitment we all share, and nothing should come before or interrupt this mission. We are all aligned in our dedication to this mission, and it is our collective responsibility to uphold it.

FCS has prioritized "MEETING STATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS and identifying EDUCATIONAL OUTCOME GOALS" for each student in FCS. We are proud to say that we have made significant strides in this area. "The Board of Education believes that the mission of the District is being accomplished when there is valid evidence that its educational programs are making it possible for students to achieve one or more of the following educational outcomes commensurate with their ability and potential:

- A. job skills for the workplace and the skills and attitudes to obtain further education
- B. an understanding of others, including but not limited to those with social and cultural characteristics different from his/her own and of those with mental or physical disabilities and the ability to engage in responsible personal and/or support relationships with those who are different from one's social or ethnic groups
- C. use of the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to contribute effectively to the decision-making processes of the political and other institutions of the community, state, country, and world
- D. use of the knowledge, habits, and attitudes that assure good personal and public health, both physical and mental
- E. the willingness and ability to apply ethical principles and values to his/her own life
- F. the educational goals specified in individual education plans"

With this guidance codified in FCS policies, we have questions/concerns and observations regarding Lifewise Academy or any other RFRI programs.

Teachers, Bus Drivers and Volunteers Certifications:

- Teachers: ORC 3301.541 Criminal Records Check; OAC 3301.24 Licensing and Educational Programs.
 - Lifewise = teacher certification and background checks managed by "Protect My Ministry" which does not include FBI background investigations.
- Bus drivers: OAC 3301-83-06 Personnel qualifications
 - Lifewise?
- Volunteers: FCS Policies?
 - Lifewise?
- How does FCS manage group releases for other programs, such as before/after school programs?

Safety, Security, and Training:

- Will the Office of Safety and Security review all of Lifewise's operations to ensure the same level of protection?
 - Will all Lifewise personnel have the following training?
 - First Aid, CPR, Communicable Diseases, and High conflict situational training?
 - Recognition, prevention, and reporting of child abuse?

- Fire, Tornado, Active Shooter, and training for other emergencies?
- How will current medication (inhalers, EpiPen, seizure medicine, etc.) and application be handled?
 - Will medication be checked out from the clinic when they leave, along with the doctor's description of how to utilize it? Upon return, will the medication and information be reallocated to the clinic? That will take time and effort on the already overtaxed staff.
- Will Lifewise be required to consistently provide and carry an emergency bag as currently directed by the Office of Safety and Security?
- Will Lifewise be required to attend (at taxpayers' expense) or provide proof they have completed training on par with the training provided by FCS Office of Safety and Security?
- In an emergency, will Lifewise have a list of alternate contacts who can pick up a child?
- What are the procedures for students coming and going from the building?
 - Follow current procedures?
 - Adults must be on the parent's approved list.
 - Adults must show ID.
 - Adults will not be admitted to the school's interior but must wait in the reception area.
 - Lifewise volunteers pick up and return children to school. Are they consistent with the same volunteers throughout the school year? High turnover rate?
- Will Lifewise's buildings and vehicles be inspected, and safety certificates will be obtained?

Inclusion:

- What measures are in place to ensure the inclusion of students with special needs, IEPs, and 504 plans to meet federal laws? Pull out for speech, language, reading, gifted, BRIS, etc.?

Impact on Education and Compliance - Federal/State/District requirements:

- Ohio's Report Card metric = Student hour requirements = child participation, 1 hr. x 31 weeks = 31 hours a child could miss per school year while attending Lifewise.
- Ohio Legislation: Section 3301.079 | Academic standards - model curriculum.
 - PE – Section 3302.032 | Measure student success in meeting physical educational benchmarks and school compliance with related provisions. Ohio's Learning Standards/ Physical Education.
 - Recess – Section 3313.48 | (3) Morning and afternoon recess periods of **not more than fifteen minutes** per period for pupils in grades kindergarten through six.
 - Art/Music/Band/Orchestra – Ohio's Learning Standards | Fine Arts
 - Computer class –, Ohio's Learning Standards | Computer Science | adopted July 2022
 - Library – Ohio's Learning Standards | Library Guidelines
 - Lunch - USDA clarified that school meals for consumption during release time will be federally reimbursed to the school if the meal meets all of USDA's nutrition standards requirements.
 - Will OAC 3313.666 | District policy prohibiting harassment, intimidation, or bullying be adhered to?

FCS Parental Control and Scheduling:

- While we agree that parents have the right to religious education, it should fit within the current legislation and policies already adopted.

- Can parents specify which “special” class (such as art, music, or physical education) their child can miss to attend Lifewise?

FCS Involvement and Support:

- Will FCS provide directory information to Lifewise without the parent’s permission and direction?
- Will Lifewise be able to send flyers home through FCS channels?
- Will FCS personnel be allowed to work with or provide information to Lifewise?
 - Provide students’ class schedules?
 - Provide student’s IEP and other personal and medical information?
 - Will FCS coordinate with Lifewise to develop a schedule that considers a child’s schedule?
 - Who oversees behavior issues reported by Lifewise?
 - Will this cause added workload for teachers to ensure students make up missed work?
 - Will this alter a teacher’s planning schedule and reduce instructional time for ALL students?
 - Will this put undue pressure on children not attending or cause a division between children?
 - Will this interrupt the flow of the school by students coming and going?
 - Classroom interruptions?
 - Will this cause a loss of classroom and educational time for all students?
 - Will FCS expend the time and resources required to accompany students to and from Lifewise’s transportation to their facility?
- If FCS allows Lifewise access to students, we see considerable involvement by the Office of Safety and Security. Will Lifewise be required to reimburse FCS for these costs?

Legislation:

- Ohio legislators have passed legislation defining PE, music, library standards, etc.
- HB 445 and SB 293 (not yet passed) will change RFRI language from MAY to SHALL
- If the legislation above passes, which legislation takes preference?

Additional Information/Concerns:

- Lifewise teaches an Evangelical Christianity curriculum that includes teaching purity culture, divorce is a sin, obeying God before family, and Anti LGBTQIA Policies.
- No Transparency of their curriculum.
- Incentivized Recruitment - children are encouraged to recruit friends with promises of bringing back swag to the classes. Could this be labeled as coercion or indoctrination? We know this is going to cause problems with the children not attending.
- Current Lifewise programs are blatantly abusing RTRI policies. Weren't RTRI policies meant to include nonmainstream religions? Lifewise is now using this loophole to get its foot in the door and will continue to increase its presence in our public schools to increase its “Mission Field” and reach the “unchurched children” they cite in their literature. Lifewise founder and CEO Joel Penton has extensively communicated with Representative Gary Click, Primary Sponsor of HB445.
- Why isn’t Lifewise offering before or after-school programs to minimize disruption to the academic schedule?
- Will they eventually try to be eligible for vouchers?

We are requesting FCS adopt the following policies or combination:

- Label all graded classes as core classes.
- Regarding Lifewise or other RTRI programs
 - 1. To Not Allow RTRI Programs: The Board is responsible for student attendance and believes being in school is central to academic achievement. To guarantee the maximum safety and the best learning opportunities for students, the district does not allow for any release time for religious instruction under any circumstances during regular school hours.
 - 2. To Allow RTRI Before or After School OR During Lunch and Recess: To ensure student attendance while also accommodating the desire of some parents for religious instruction, the Board permits release time to religious private entities with parental written consent, provided the instruction occurs off District property and (choose one):
 - 1) takes place before or after regular school hours OR
 - 2) may take place during lunch or recess, provided that the following requirements are met:
 - **(Safety Considerations)** Religious private entities shall be granted permission if they Provide and assume full liability for the students, starting at the pickup point until they are checked back into the school building.
 - 1. Maintain full daily attendance records and make them available to the district upon request.
 - 2. Conduct background checks for all staff and volunteers at least annually and provide them to the district upon request.
 - 3. Provide meals per the district's meal standards if students are with the entity during breakfast or lunch hours.
 - Refrain from providing students with any materials, snacks, clothing, candies, trinkets, and other items for their return to school.
 - 5. Ensure that all educational materials are aligned with federal, state, and District education materials. Religious private entities shall not undermine or contradict the education and philosophy of the district.
 - 6. Ensure their programs align with the district's anti-harassment, antibullying, diversity, equity, and inclusion policies.
 - 7. Provide the District with full financial records before being approved. Religious private entities shall provide financial records showing all income and expenses, down to the individual transaction level, every quarter. Records must be submitted before approval will be granted; and
 - 8. Act as the responsible party for the transportation of students. Transportation shall be aligned with District transportation standards.
 - 9. If any of these requirements are not met, the Board shall immediately rescind the permission of the religious private entity to receive students from the district.

- **(Staff Considerations)** District BOE and/or staff members shall not promote or encourage attendance of the religious private entity. Any promotion or solicitation for the religious private entity shall not occur on District premises or use District resources, such as District email or websites. Under no circumstances are District staff allowed to punish students who do not participate in Release Time by forcing them to attend study hall or other activities considered undesirable by students and parents. If District BOE or staff members support (by signing petitions or monetary support) religious private entities that wish to establish RTRI within the district, they must notify the district beforehand.

Sources of information provided.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1522693745167717>

<https://www.facebook.com/LifeWiseAcademy>

<https://www.honestyforohioeducation.org/>

<https://respectpublicschools.com/index.php> (maps and Lifewise's levels (1-10) per school district)